

**The Problem with Zombies
Living Life in Christ, Even In Sardis
Revelation 3:1 – 6**

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Revelation 3:1–6

“To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: ‘I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’” (NASB95)

We have examined the body of the mostly dead church at Sardis. We discovered there is still a partially alive small remnant there, basically a tremor in the heart of a body so dead. Jesus, the Great Physician, has provided His diagnosis of death and has provided what the needed action is to restore life to the dead. If the recommendation is followed, the prognosis is good. Ignore the diagnosis – zombies everywhere.

The real problem for us as 21st century believers living at the end of the age is, there are already an awful lot of zombies wandering around out there and the number is growing.

How do we deal with a church that has elements of Sardis in it? This is not to be confused with the Laodicea church or the Thyatira church. We are talking about a church is full of dead men and women walking – zombies.

The Problem with Zombies

1. They are dead, yet they are still walking around, they are missing one half of their soul, the part that has been born again.

The church that is infested with these has creatures has, in reality, a real problem with unsaved people who think they are alive. They think they are saved and have their fire insurance. In reality, they represent the enemy. This is a real problem in many churches. We see it even show up from time to time here at Calvary and trust me, there are several of us running around with defibrillators to try and solve the problem.

Jesus called us to be fruit inspectors. As fruit inspectors, at times, we find no fruit, but leaves only. They look like a fig tree, but nothing is really going on.

Because of the zombie nature of many in a Sardis laden church, it is only natural to assume that many times it is because of a total lack of teaching of the scriptures. Zombies do not know what is in the Bible. They tend to be Biblically illiterate and that is a problem. For the church today, Biblical literacy is in deep trouble.

George Barna has examined this problem, and it is one that is not getting better. “Biblical illiteracy is already high. The reduction in the amount of instruction adults— much less their children— are receiving is bound to leave us even more ill-informed about the substance of the Bible. Churches, of course, could begin to turn that situation around by strategically increasing people’s exposure to biblical teaching. However, the trend in church life is to reduce rather than increase church programming and to expedite rather than prolong people’s time spent engaging in church events.” (Barna 2016, Kindle Locations 629-633)

Matthew 7:21–23

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter into the kingdom of heaven—only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. On that day, many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons and do many powerful deeds?’ Then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you. Go away from me, you lawbreakers!’” (NET)

2. Zombies react to only one external stimuli; they see you and want to eat you.

A church that has an infestation of zombies that is not dealt with by the Gospel has a serious problem on their hands. They have an infection of unbelief. As with any disease, the infection of unbelief will spread to other parts of the body. A bad case of false doctrine will spread quickly throughout the body and soon, the understanding of what is a Biblical world view and what it should be, will not happen. The church looks ok on the outside, but on the inside, there is a problem. They have one unified desire; obedience to the one who they are following, and that is not Jesus.

Nationally, we are seeing a shift take place in the marketplace of ideas. A reticence to acknowledge faith in Jesus. “A growing number of Christian leaders have been expressing their concern that biblical allusions in public speech are being curtailed by the politically correct police, but three-quarters of Americans do not presently experience or fear such intolerance. Then again, that may be because so few of them discuss or share biblical content in their conversations.”(Barna 2016, Kindle Locations 698-702)

1 Peter 5:8–9

“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.” (NASB95)

Psalm 27:1–3

“The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the defense of my life; Whom shall I dread? When evildoers came upon me to devour my flesh, My adversaries and my enemies, they stumbled and fell. Though a host encamp against me, My heart will not fear; Though war arise against me, In spite of this I shall be confident.” (NASB95)

People’s lifestyles are characterized by behavior and goals that are the opposite of that which pleases and reflects the image of God; humans are largely selfish, pleasure-seeking, lust-filled, jealous, quarrelsome, greedy, dishonest, and unfaithful creatures. (Barna 2016, Kindle Locations 2263-2265)

3. If you have been attacked by a zombie or been touched by them or sustained an injury caused by them, you may be contaminated.

2 Peter 2:1–3

“But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.” (NASB95)

Ideas are infectious, and churches are dying all around us.

The church at Sardis would have issues today to include LGBTQ+, marriage, heaven, hell, scripture – but not the gospel. The gospel would not be an issue as they would not teach it. When scripture is used, it is many times used eisegetically rather than exegetically. A way to identify those involved – they preach an empty gospel devoid of truth to a packed-out house. For a church, like Sardis, that has a zombie problem, the infection of unbelief is so pronounced that there is only one treatment possible per Jesus and that is repentance.

Yes, we do have a way of dealing with the contamination caused by zombies and can eliminate the problem to the body.

1 John 1:6–10

“If we say we have fellowship with him and yet keep on walking in the darkness, we are lying and not practicing the truth. But if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we do not bear the guilt of sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous, forgiving us our sins and cleansing us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us.” (NET)

4. To get rid of a zombie, you have to go for the head.

That can be a problem today. Who exactly is the head? In some cases, the infection comes via a podcast or by way of Christian television. Infection is possible even by radio or by reading and digesting the wrong books. The leader of zombies will work to find others they can infect and if they come into the church, they must be dealt with. They will overwhelm you with their personality and almost cult like behavior.

Jude 10–11

“But these men revile the things which they do not understand; and the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed. Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.” (NASB95)

Jude 16

“These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage.” (NASB95)

Jude 19

“These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit.” (NASB95)

We are talking about the living dead providing the leadership and marching blindly to an end that will be discussed further into the book of Revelation.

It is the folly of people who say they believe in God but who in the tenor of their lives and in the whole of their conduct daily forget God and live exactly as if He did not exist. (Lloyd-Jones and Catherwood 2005, 25)

The reality is that not everyone who calls themselves a Christian is truly a Christian, and some of the most horrific acts of evil have originated not in secret societies but in the church. (McGuire and Anderson 2015, 81)

Many who come from Sardis will continue on into the tribulation thinking everything is okay as they become part of the one world religion that will overwhelm the earth during the tribulation.

Revelation 17:3–5

“And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery, “BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”” (NASB95)

5. After getting rid of zombies, check for contamination. Zombies always leave behind the potential for contamination and an examination of the premises does need to take place after they are gone.

They will create the impression that you are ok, there is no need for repentance or cleansing, you can continue to live like hell acting as if you have your fire insurance to prevent you from going there.

2 Peter 1:10–11

“Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.” (NASB95)

Galatians 5:19–26

“Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, depravity, idolatry, sorcery, hostilities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish rivalries, dissensions, factions, envying, murder, drunkenness, carousing, and similar things. I am warning you, as I had warned you before: Those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God! But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also behave in accordance with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, being jealous of one another.” (NET)

6. Beware, the zombie apocalypse, yes, the Bible does indeed warn us of an impending zombie apocalypse.

We are already seeing a widespread and global increase of zombie like behavior in areas where they have taken over a church, a denomination, a county, a state, or a country. Unbelief is rampant, the flesh is a willing partner that has to be constantly watched.

Romans 7:18–8:2

“For I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my flesh. For I want to do the good, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but I do the very evil I do not want! Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer me doing it but sin that lives in me. So, I find the law that when I want to do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God in my inner being. But I see a different law in my members waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the life-giving Spirit in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.” (NET)

The solution for zombies – Jesus

The cure = repentance

The cure for dead religion which is devoid of Jesus is Jesus

But many who are dead think everything is just fine

There is nothing here to see citizen, move on along

Part of the problem is we are looking at the wrong things as a measure of spiritual health for a church.

“Churches and their leaders facilitate this belief by aggressively promoting participation in a variety of

programs and pointing to participation rates as an indicator of people's spiritual health. In turn, that approach is largely dictated by the way in which churches gauge ministry success, which is accomplished by measuring attendance, donations, program involvement, staff expansion, and space requirements. The assumption is that an increase in bodies, programs, dollars, employees, and square footage reflects a dynamic, healthy, growing ministry through which lives are being changed. Unfortunately, research within and across churches demonstrates that these assumptions are faulty: virtually no correlation exists between those factors and life transformation." (Barna 2016, *Kindle Locations* 903-908)

Matthew 28:19–20

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (NASB95)

One mark of the degeneracy of the Gentile world is certainly the worsening moral condition of the professing Christian church as it comes under the influence of its surrounding culture. (Thomas 1992, 254)

Romans 10:8–13

"But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we preach), because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and thus has righteousness and with the mouth one confesses and thus has salvation. For the scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." For there is no distinction between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all, who richly blesses all who call on him. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (NET)

In Sardis, Jesus recognized that there were some who had successfully fought off the zombies. They were not part of the living dead, they were part of the truly living.

Revelation 3:4

"But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy." (NASB95)

These members of the church had not become infected by those around them. As seen with the nation of Israel, where there was always a remnant of those who were faithful, we see this now extended into the church. They were living just as Jesus had taught the disciples to live who in turn had taught these new believers. There were some who were still faithful.

The fact that they had "not stained their garments," as had the rest, reveals that the manner in which most of the Sardian Christians were suppressing their witness was by assuming a low profile in idolatrous contexts of the pagan culture in which they had daily interaction. (Beale 1999, 276)

There are some who are still pure. "The moral stains here referred to especially include *πορνεία* (cf. 14:4.) "The language reflects that of the votive inscriptions in Asia Minor, where soiled clothes disqualified the worshipper and dishonoured the god. Moral purity qualifies for spiritual communion."" (Charles 1920, 81)

To those few souls at Sardis who remain loyal, a special promise is made: they shall walk beside me in white, for they deserve to. And not only at Sardis, but doubtless in many other communities there existed small groups of believers who steadfastly refused to follow a doubtful example set by their fellows. (Kiddle 1940, 46)

In the Old Testament, we have a graphic example of what has been offered to the majority of the church at Sardis, and what the "few names" have stuck with.

There are a few names, remember the new names of Revelation 2:17. Jesus had a habit of giving His disciples new names, nicknames, and He has that for us as well, those who keep “the Name” are a name and will receive a “new name.”

Back to the OT example, Joshua was the high priest

Zechariah 3:1–5

“Next I saw Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, with Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. The LORD said to Satan, “May the LORD rebuke you, Satan! May the LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Isn’t this man like a burning stick snatched from the fire?” Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood there before the angel. The angel spoke up to those standing all around, “Remove his filthy clothes.” Then he said to Joshua, “I have freely forgiven your iniquity and will dress you in fine clothing.” Then I spoke up, “Let a clean turban be put on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the LORD stood nearby.” (NET)

Here the reference is doubtless to heathen impurities into which the Sardians had plunged, spiritual deadness having issued in indifference to moral evil. (Swete, ed. 1906, 50)

Soiled

μολύνω occurs three times in the NT in the sense of religious and cultic defilement. In 1 C. 8:7 contact with what is pagan (εἰδωλόθυτον) means defilement of conscience for the weak in faith. The two passages in Rev. (3:4: ἃ οὐκ ἐμόλυναν τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτῶν, and 14:4: οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ μετὰ γυναικῶν οὐκ ἐμόλυνθησαν· παρθένοι γάρ εἰσιν) are inter-related. 14:4 refers to all the members of the community (14:1). Hence it cannot imply just sexual continence in the ascetic sense. On the other hand, μολύνω cannot mean only sexual transgression, for the subject παρθένοι would rule out those that are married in the community. In both places the οὐ μολύνειν is surely a symbolical expression for the faithfulness which has been maintained by the community, the bride (2 C. 11:2: παρθένον ἀγνήν παραστήσαι τῷ Χριστῷ), to its Bridegroom, Christ (→ I, 486). (Hauck 1964-, 736-737)

Turning to a positive image of garments, the few remaining faithful are told that they will walk with him in white, a powerful word picture of purity and victory, which is the meaning of “white” in the book. There are two ideas in this image: first, the white linen worn by angels and signifying glory and purity; second, the pure white toga worn at a Roman triumph and signifying victory. (Osborne 2016, 87)

The ones in Sardis who have not soiled, defiled their garments are those who have remained faithful to Jesus. Because they are faithful to Jesus, unlike those who are going to be surprised by judgement, these will be walking with Him in white.

We are being given a picture here that is familiar in the culture of Rome. In Roman culture, there was the triumph. When this took place, the conquering general would enter into Rome at the head of his army along with some of the items he had taken.

Roman citizens who were attending and watching the parade would wear white. But they would watch. The picture Jesus gives is different, He is the one in triumph and those who are in white garments are walking with Him.

The conqueror’s children sometimes accompanied him, and sometimes rode in a second chariot, escorted by the lieutenants and military tribunes who had served in the war. The consuls, senators, and other magistrates followed the general’s chariot on foot; and the whole procession was closed by the victorious army, drawn up in order, crowned with laurel, decorated with the gifts which they had received for their valor, and singing their own and their general’s praises. (M’Clintock and Strong 1881, 560)

We see examples of the Roman Triumph showing up in the New Testament, notably, in Revelation 19

Unlike the triumphing Roman general who would only have his face painted red and be wearing purple and gold with a gold wreath on his head, Jesus' robe is red.

Revelation 19:11–14

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.” (NASB95)

Something else about Jesus and His coming in Revelation 19, which we will look in more detail once we get there, the triumph takes place prior to the final battle so certain is the outcome. Those in Sardis who are walking with Christ at His return are doing so in expectation of His return and since they are watching and waiting, take part in His triumph.

Revelation 3:5

“He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.” (NASB95)

The progression has been from the Church, to you, to they which are those who are worthy. Since the majority need to wake up and they are the you, those who are faithful are the “they.” Now moving on, Jesus talks about those who are faithful, those who are the “they.”

Once again, we see the term “overcomer” referenced. This is a major theme in the book of Revelation. The Greek word translated “overcome” is νικῶν (nikon) from νικάω (nikao).

The word group denotes “victory” or “superiority,” whether in the physical, legal or metaphorical sense, whether in mortal conflict or peaceful competition. (Bauernfeind 1964-, 942)

This νικῶν will be manifested as such and receive his inheritance, and the “heavenly music of the word” “victory” will find true realisation, when there is a new heaven and a new earth, 21:7: ὁ νικῶν κληρονομήσει ταῦτα. The word νικάω is in the NT a word of promise, an eschatological word. But the promised νικῶν is materially no other than the νικῶν of Christ, 3:21: ὡς κἀγὼ ἐνίκησα. It takes place through His blood, 12:11. It rests on the fact that God makes believers His children (→ γεννάω) and that through faith in His promise (→ πίστις) it makes men victors. Hence the promised victory is present already, 1 Jn. 5:4 f. (Bauernfeind 1964-, 945)

We have already seen aspects of what it means to be an overcomer as a result of what Jesus Christ accomplished for us on the cross.

Overcomer

Revelation 2:7 – the overcomer is granted to eat from the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.

Revelation 2:11 – the overcomer will not be hurt by the second death.

Revelation 2:17 – the overcomer will eat hidden manna and will be granted admission to the kingdom and be given a new name from Jesus that only they will know.

Revelation 2:26 – the overcomer will rule and reign with Jesus.

Revelation 3:5 – the overcomer will be part of the Triumph of Jesus Christ at the end of the age privileged to wear white and walk with Him as part of the conquering army, as such, the overcomer is guaranteed to have their name in the book of life with no possible erasure of the name and Jesus Himself will confess the name of the overcomer to His Father and all of the Divine Council.

And there is more to come

Again

Here in Revelation 3:5, the overcomer is the recipient of three promises from Jesus

1. They will be dressed in white
2. Their names will not be blotted out of the book of life
3. Jesus will personally acknowledge the overcomer before God and the Divine Council

It would seem, therefore, that the white garments promised to the overcomer here represent an attire appropriate to the heavenly state. Since they are made white by being washed in the blood of the Lamb (7:14), the figure is highly appropriate to portray justification. (Mounce 1997, 96)

“White” represents not mere purity but a faithful, noncompromising spirit, which stands in contrast to those who have “stained their garments,” that is, have compromised. (Beale 1999, 278)

These are those who have been tested and stand true and faithful to their Lord and Savior. There is no deadness here as the Spirit has given each and every overcomer new life, the only possible way they can even be overcomers.

Walking in white is not just a future event to look forward to, backup to verse 4, ““they will walk with [Christ] in white garments” (3:4) may refer, not only to the reward in the next life, but to the blessing of walking with Christ in the imminent future in this life.” (Beale 1999, 279)

...it is clear that the white garments represent the resurrection or heavenly bodies of the faithful... (Charles 1920, 83)

2 Corinthians 5:2–4

“For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, inasmuch as we, having put it on, will not be found naked. For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life.” (NASB95)

We long to put on the exact thing which the watchers took off as they descended to earth in Genesis 6. Jude 6 tells us “And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day,” (NASB95)

The Book of Life

The second promise to the overcomer, the inability to having your name erased or blotted out of the book of life. There are numerous books referenced in the scriptures and we will see several in Revelation. We saw this idea of a book that contains the names of those who are faithful when we studied Daniel. For the overcomer, there is no way your name can even be erased or blotted out; it simply is not possible.

Daniel 12:1–2

““At that time Michael, the great prince who watches over your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress unlike any other from the nation’s beginning up to that time. But at that time your own people, all those whose names are found written in the book, will escape. Many of those who sleep in the dusty ground will awake— some to everlasting life, and others to shame and everlasting abhorrence.” (NET)

When we were given a view of the Divine Council in Daniel 7, a view we will see again in Revelation 4, again, the books were visible.

Daniel 7:10

“A river of fire was streaming forth and proceeding from his presence. Many thousands were ministering to him; Many tens of thousands stood ready to serve him. The court convened and the books were opened.” (NET)

Philippians 4:3

“Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.” (NASB95)

The difference is there are those who claim the name, such as we saw early in verse 2 where they have a reputation or name but no reality, then there are those who have or possess the name.

Revelation 22:4

“...they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.” (NASB95)

One is simply a claim, while the other is a reflection of true ownership. The claim is inauthentic and as such, subject to authentication whereas the true believer, has the name, it is authentic.

Other heavenly tablets recorded tribulations (Ps. 56:8), judgment (Dan. 7:10), acts of faithfulness (Mal. 3:16), and one’s destiny (Ps. 139:16). (Osborne, Revelation, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament 2002, 180)

When a criminal’s name was removed from the civic register of an Asiatic town, he lost his citizenship; but it was citizenship of the heavenly society that the faithless were destined to lose. (Kiddle 1940, 47)

Moses is the first one to bring up the idea of a book in Exodus 32:31–33 as he discusses the problem of what to do with the people after they had a golden calf problem. “Then Moses returned to the LORD, and said, “Alas, this people has committed a great sin, and they have made a god of gold for themselves. But now, if You will, forgive their sin—and if not, please blot me out from Your book which You have written!” The LORD said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.”” (NASB95)

This is, quite literally, the citizenship records of the City of God, and to have one’s name found in that book also triggers something else. “...and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.”

Matthew 10:32

“Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven.” (NASB95)

I am reminded of certain formal settings when a guest is announced to all of those in the room, so you know who has arrived. This promise is incredible. Stop and think about this for a moment. Jesus, who died on the cross for us so we could be with Him forever, is so much in love with you and me, that when we are there with Him, He will personally announce you and me to the Father and to all of the Divine Beings of the Divine Council. When Jesus vouches for you, personally with the Father, you are in and have nothing to fear, but there is another side to this as well .

Matthew 10:33

“But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.” (NASB95)

Matthew 7:21–23

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’” (NASB95)

When Jesus announces you before the Father and all of His Heavenly Hosts, He is stating unequivocally that your name is in the book of life. He died for everyone, but unlike those whose names were erased, you and I took action on the gift that was offered, and we made a decision for Him. Our names are in

there. But as we just saw, those who reject the gift, deny Him before men will be denied by Jesus. Just as He will acknowledge us, He will not acknowledge those who rejected Him and will deny that He ever knew them.

Revelation 3:6

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (NASB95)

This is a message, not just for the folks in Sardis, but to all of the churches in Asia Minor as well as throughout time. We are included. This is why it is important for us to understand the message to each church. We need to understand what was going on that would cause a point of concern or conversely, something that was praiseworthy.

The question is simple. Are we embracing the world’s definition of success, like Sardis; or are we looking forward to when Jesus says to each of us, “Come up here.” The bottom line, we need to wake up and tell our story of what Jesus has done for us.

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