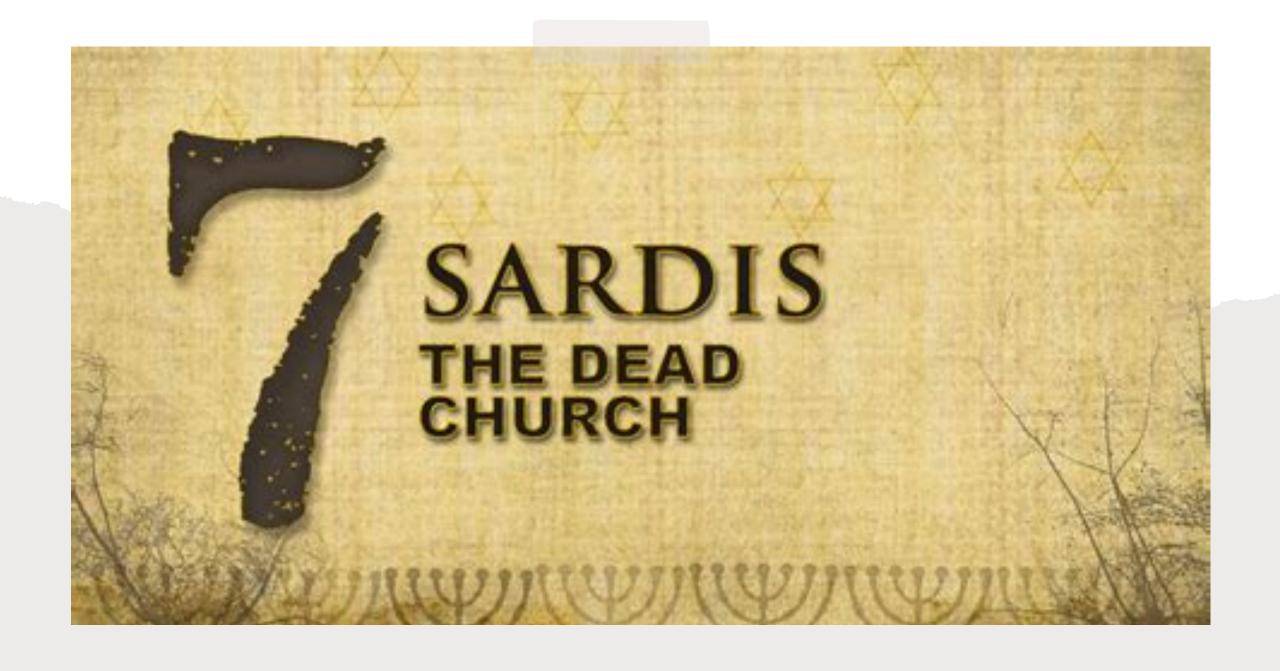


The REVELATION of JESUS CHRIST

ALPHA / OMEGA





Seven Churches of Revelation

Chapters 2-3

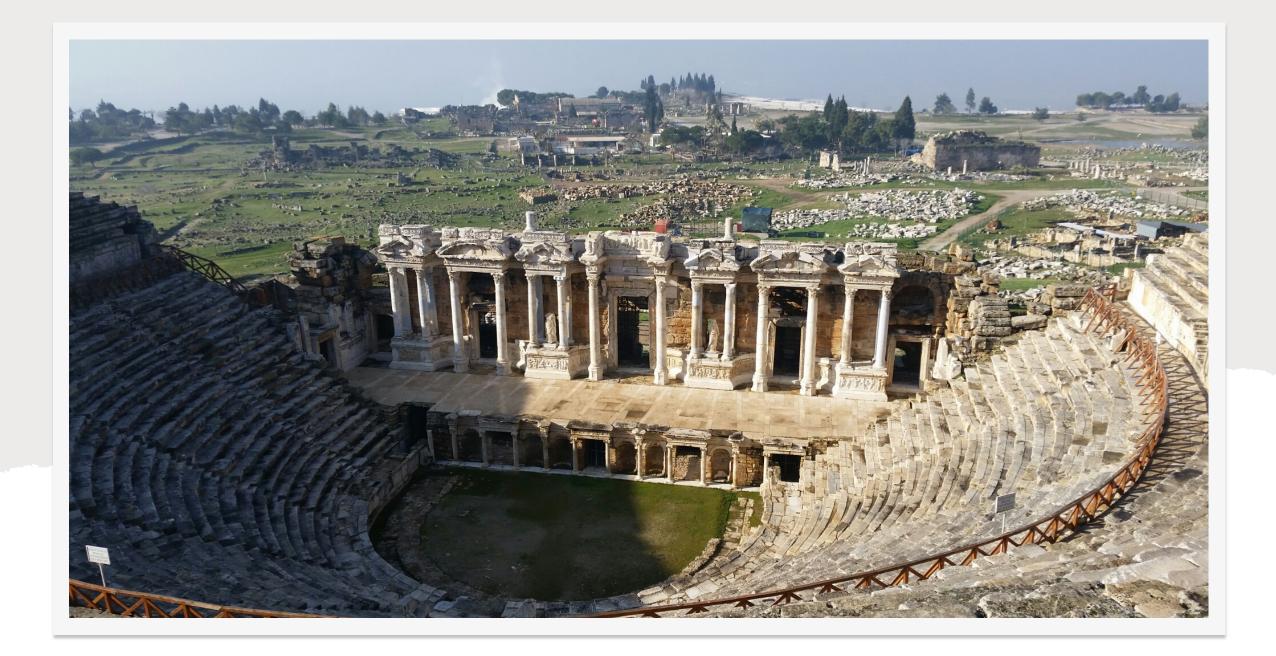
- Ephesus
- Smyrna
- Pergamos
- 4 Thyatira
- Sardis
- O Philadelphia
- Laodicea

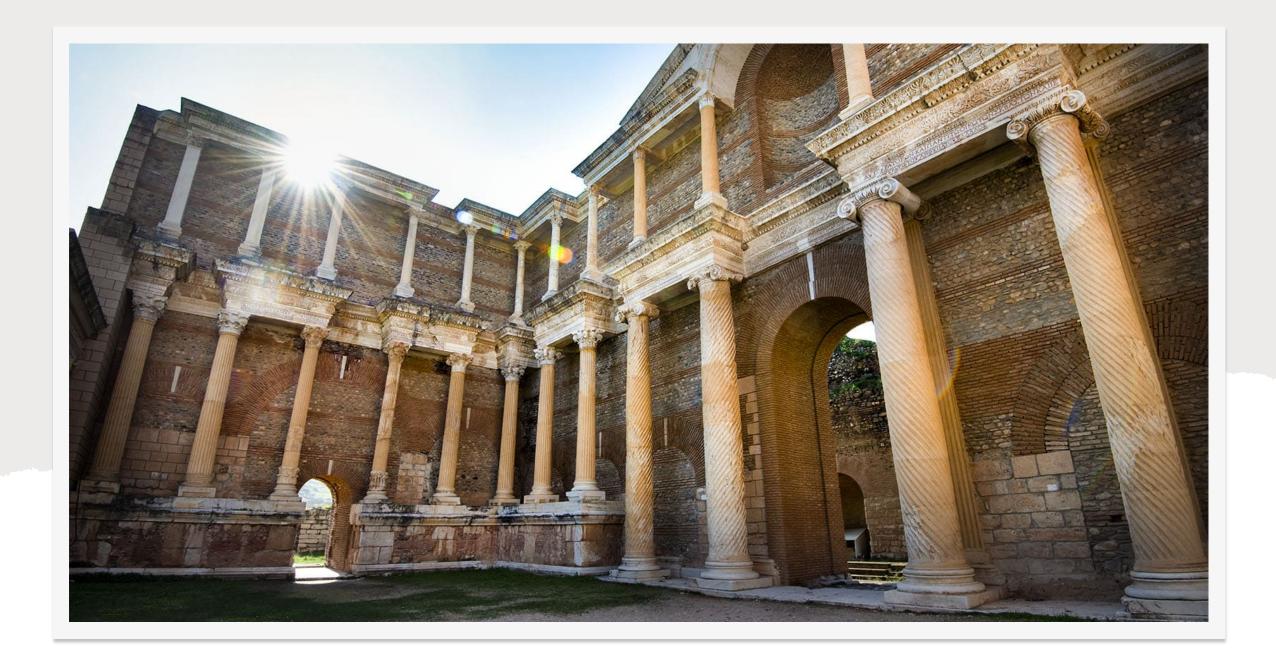
Island of Patmos: where John received the vision



Historical Background









- Name of unknown origin, but could be related to sardius stone (Rev. 4:3)
- ➤ One of the oldest and wealthiest cities in Asia Minor.
- ➤ Patron goddess was Cybele – or Diana (Artemis) – and her son Midas (touch of gold)
- Elevated and virtually impregnable, yet conquered many times.

Seven Design Elements In Each of the Letters

- 1. Name of the Church
- 2. Title of Christ Chosen
- 3. Commendation
- 4.Concern
- 5. Exhortation [Repent]
- **6.Promise to the Overcomer**
- 7. "He that has an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

"And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: 'The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars." [Revelation 3:1]

Commendation

CONCERN



"'I know your works. You have the **reputation** of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God." [Revelation 3:1-2]

We all by <u>nature</u> are born spiritually dead and **powerless** apart from **Christ** and His **free** gift of eternal life. [Ephesians 2:1-9]

"And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— **3** among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind." [Ephesians 2:1-3]

"But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, **5even** when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— 6and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

[Ephesians 2:4-6]

"So that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **8For by** grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

[Ephesians 2:7-9]

True saving **faith** always will be **completed** by works and expressed in love for the least of these. [James 2:14-22]

"What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? 17So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." [James 2:14-17]

But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! 20Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? 21Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? 22You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; [James 2:18-22]

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 51 am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned."

[John 15:4-6]

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. 32Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. **34**Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

[Matthew 25:31-34]

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 361 was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me ... And the King will answer them, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me." [Matthew 25:35-36, 40]

AWAKE OSLEEPER

Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. 13 But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, 14 for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

"Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." [Ephesians 5:11-14]

"Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. 12 The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. 14But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires."

[Romans 13:11-14]



"Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you.

[Revelation 3:3]

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures"

[1 Corinthians 15:1-4]

Like a Thief WILLYOU BE READY?

The Revelation of Jesus Christ "Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you. Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy.

[Revelation 3:3-4]

The Day of the LORD will come like a thief in the night to surprise only those who are not spiritually alive, awake and **ready** for His **return**.

"Therefore, **stay awake**, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. 43But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. **44**Therefore **you also must be ready**, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

[Matthew 24:42-44]

"Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. 2For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon **them** as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape."

[1 Thessalonians 5:1-3]

"But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. 5 For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. 6So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be **sober**. **7**For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. **8**But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation."

[1 Thessalonians 5:4-8]

"For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. 11Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."

[1 Thessalonians 5:9-11]

"But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, **being kept until the day** of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

[2 Peter 3:7-8]

"The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."

[2 Peter 3:9]

"But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed."

[2 Peter 3:10]

The Revelation of Jesus Christ "Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

[2 Peter 3:11-13]

("Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!") And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.

[Revelation 16:15-16]

Although no one knows the exact **day** or **hour** of the Lord's coming, we can and should know when His return is very near.

"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. 33So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. 34Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. 35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away."

[Matthew 24:32-35]

"And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, 26 people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 27And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." [Luke 21:25-28]

Commendation

"Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy." [Revelation 3:4]

"Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few."

[Matthew 7:13-14]

Dressed in White



"Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy. The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments ... [Revelation 3:4-5]



When we **believe** in Jesus and are **justified**, God **clothes** us with the **righteousness** of Christ.

"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

[2 Corinthians 5:21]

But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, **26** for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. **27** For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have **put on Christ**."

[Galatians 3:25-27]

"Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator." [Colossians 3:9-10]

"Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, you are very great! You are clothed with splendor and majesty, covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent."

[Psalm 104:1-2]

"And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light." [Matthew 17:2]

"And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow." [Matthew 28:2-3]

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, **clothed in white robes**, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

[Rev 7:9-10]

The Revelation of Jesus Christ Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." [Rev 7:13-14]

"Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure" for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

[Rev 19:7-8]

"I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels."

[Isaiah 61:10]

- 1) **Local:** literal churches. Researched archaeologically by Sir William Ramsey and others ...
- 2) **Admonitory:** "...<u>churches</u>": all of them. Each message applies to each, to some extent. Meant to be shared and read and circulated among all the churches
- 3) **Universal:** "He that hath an ear..." Applies to all churches in all places of every generation.
- 4) Profile of Church History: In their particular order, they lay out the history of the church???
- 5) Prophetic for the Last Generation: describes the various complexions, conditions, and characteristics of the end-times church and therefore uniquely relevant.

Prophetic Profile





Many churches maintain the <u>appearance</u> of <u>godliness</u> while denying the true <u>power</u> of God and <u>robbing</u> Him of His <u>glory</u>.

"But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good ...

[2 Timothy 3:1-3]

"treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people." [2 Timothy 3:4-5]

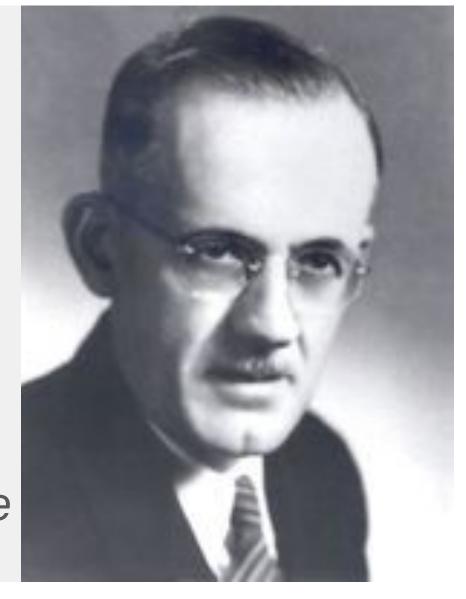
But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."

[1 Samuel 16:7]



'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord Almighty. Zecharian 4-6

"If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95 percent of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference. If the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn from the New Testament church, 95 percent of what they did would stop, and everybody would know the difference." [A.W. Tozer]



Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness.

These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. **24**You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!"

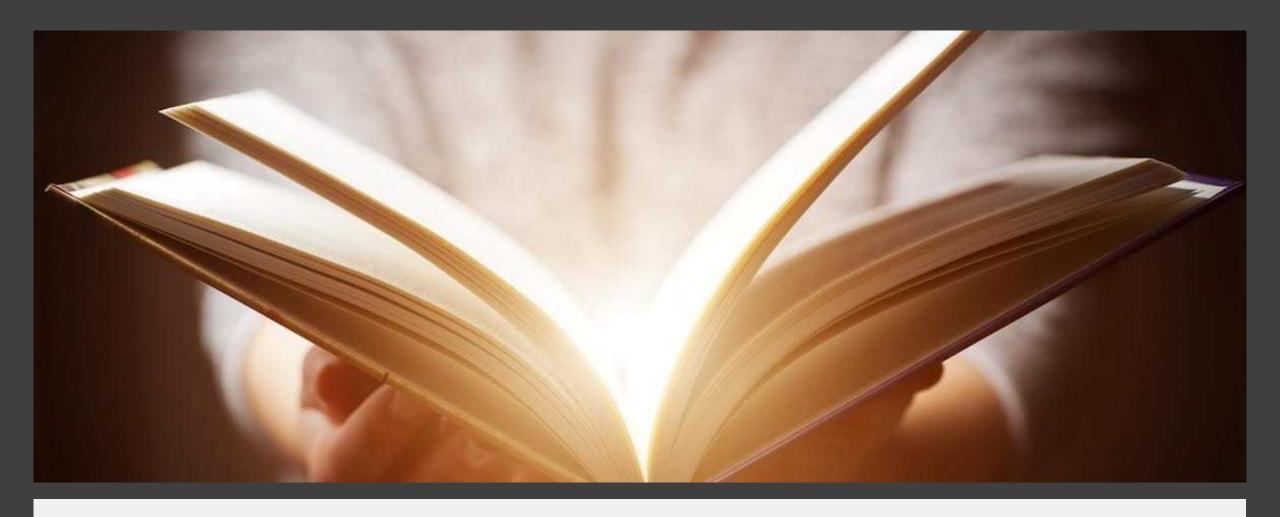
[Matthew 23:23-24]

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. 28So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness." [Matthew 23:27-28]



The Revelation of Jesus Christ "The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. 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."

[Revelation 3:5-6]



The Book of Life

It is infinitely better to stand alone with Jesus and be judged by the world than to to stand with the world and be judged alone by Jesus.

So Moses returned to the LORD and said, "Alas, this people has sinned a great sin. They have made for themselves gods of gold. 32But now, if you will forgive their sinbut if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written." 33But the LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot out of my book."

[Exodus 32:31-32]

"Add to them punishment upon punishment; may they have no acquittal from you. 28Let them be blotted out of the book of the living; let them not be enrolled among the righteous." [Psalm 69:27-28]

"In that day the branch of the LORD shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and honor of the survivors of Israel. 3And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, everyone who has been recorded for life in Jerusalem, 4when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of judgment and by a spirit of burning."

[Isaiah 4:2-4]

"At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. " [Daniel 12:1]

And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. 20 Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

[Luke 10:18-20]

"Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. 12And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had

[Revelation 20:11-12]

"And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. 14Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15**And if** anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." [Revelation 20:13-15]

"And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God ... But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life." [Revelation 21:10,27]

"So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, 33but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven. 34Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword."

[Matthew 10:32-34]

"And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God, **9**but the one who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God."

[Luke 12:8-9]



APPLICATION



- ✓ Has the power of Jesus transformed you from death to life?
- ✓ When you die, will you stand blameless before God, dressed in the righteousness of Christ, and find you name written in the book of life?
- ✓ Repent and wake up church!
- ✓ Read Revelation Chapter 3 out loud multiple times - take notes
- ✓ Outline the Letter to the church at Philadelphia