

The Book of Revelation

Study 5

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The Church at

Sardis

Chapter 3 verse 1.

And unto the Angel (or Pastor) of the Church in Sardis write these things say He Who has the Seven Spirits of God and the Seven Stars: I know your works that you have a name that you live, and are dead.

Once again God, who has the Seven Spirits, the number seven here being symbolic of divine perfection, reminds another of the Seven Stars His Angels or Pastors that He is fully aware of the works done in the church in Sardis. We again remind ourselves that He is also fully aware of works done in every church on the planet. No church escapes His searching eye that is likened to a flaming fire, He is aware of all that goes on in the name of Christ no matter what denomination or creed. God recognises this church in Sardis has a reputation for being a live church. A lively church will attract the young, and the middle-aged who still think they are young, the Sardis church thought they had it all, the star in the church shone brightly on the outside but God who looks at the heart said the church was dead. Verse 4 says that there were a few that had not defiled their garments, out of a church full of people only a few had remained faithful to their God the others had chosen to lead a questionable self-pleasing life that was displeasing to God. In comparison to the Church in Smyrna, Smyrna was put to death and yet lived for God whereas the Sardis church appeared to be alive but was dead.

The light from a distant star travels 186,000 miles a second, that's fast. That light travels through space and takes years to reach us on earth. As we are told by Nasser stars can be plunged into darkness but the light it once had is still traveling towards earth, still bright, still on the move, still appears to be alive but in fact it is giving a false impression, it is dead, it is shining on its passed reputation the core of the star is dead. One night a star could be pouring its light down upon the earth as it had always done but ultimately that traveling light will run out and flicker to a stop. The thing that gave it light gradually became lifeless at its core unable to shine. God said the church at Sardis was just like this star. I remind you that the star in each of the seven churches that was sent the message from God was the Angel or the Pastor or Leader responsible for the eternal destiny of the people in his church.

Verse 3

Remember therefore how you have received and heard and hold fast and repent. If therefore you shall not watch I will come on you as a thief and you shall not know what hour I will come upon you.

Verse 4

You have a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments and they shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy.

Jesus said those that had not defiled their white garments by sinning were counted worthy to walk with the Lord. We are made worthy only by our faith in the blood of the Lamb and the Cross, nothing to do with what we are or what we do, it is all about Jesus.

Verse 5

He who overcomes the same shall be clothed in white raiment and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life, but I will confess his name before My Father and before His Angels.

To blot out

We have come across this subject many times throughout scripture during our studies, in fact from Exodus to Revelation God mentions it 12 times so it is important to Him. Here's a thought, if God didn't want us to spend time getting to grips with this subject all He had to do was NOT mention it at all! If He didn't want us to be concerned about our walk with Him and live separate lives from the world He could say nothing and accept that we could mix worldly pleasures with our close walk with Him and not be accountable for it.

The Greek word 'to blot out' is *exaleipho*, 'to smear out and off the page'. The Old Scribes were masters of their trade in days when there were no printing presses, and no typewriters only men who took great pride in writing everything by hand. The few mistakes they did make caused them to find liquids like the muriatic acid that removed the oriental inks made of burnt ivory, cork and gum and by using a small sponge dipped in this acid the writing could be completely removed leaving no trace of ink at all thus with pride they produced a spotless page.

God promises not to blot out the names of those who will obey the commandments of the verses 2 and 3 in Chapter 3 they are:

Be watchful v2
Strengthen the things that remain v2
Remember your teaching v3
Hold fast v3
Repent and be watchful v3

What if someone should refuse to obey these commands would their names not be blotted out? If we say as some do that would be impossible, we then accuse God of using vain threats on His people. Some teach that when a person gives their heart to the Lord and becomes a Christian it is impossible (and some use that very word) for their name to be removed. Maybe God will always keep His word but what if I want to change my mind? I know many who have gone back into the pull of the world, I know some godly men, good Bible teachers and some with worldwide ministries with books, tapes, films etc. all had to be thrown away because of the testimony that they have given up. I also know married men who have been upstanding examples in the church who have left their faith, as in the Ephesian Church, left their wives and children and followed after other women, and one another man!. Will they be around the thrown? Will they be caught up in the Rapture?

If as we all believe God did not create us as puppets on a piece of string but gave us free wills to come to Christ and accept Him as Saviour and Lord choosing to do so out of our free wills. We still have that gift of free will after we accept Jesus so; if I, out of that free will choose to turn away from Christ and go back to my old sinful ways do I have the right to be included in the Rapture? You must agree that God gave His creation free wills, so as someone once said "if man wants to go to hell God can't stop him" That choice to go to hell can be made even after I have given my heart to Jesus. And please don't say that I could not have been saved in the first place that is an argument from the pit, Satan wants to deceive you into thinking you can have the best of both worlds! Think about that please. God's people the Egyptians, who He had saved out of Egypt, sinned a great sin against their God, Moses who knew God's word about this subject, pleaded with God to forgive them; he said that if He would not forgive them then blot my name Moses, out of your Book which you have written. God defiantly promised Moses concerning any man who sinned, 'HIM WILL I BLOT OUT OF MY BOOK'

Exodus 32v33

Whosoever hath sinned against me him will I blot out of my book?

Psalms. 69:28

Let them be blotted out of the book of the living and not be written with the righteous.

Rev; 22v18

God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the Holy City.

Here God is confirming the belief of Moses that names can and will be blotted out of the Book of Life when men sin and incur the eternal death penalty for sin. This is God's Word not the word of man, and it is definite, not doubtful, but universal and eternal in application, it's not limited or changeable.

This subject is cropping up more and more as time is getting short and the rapture is imminent. There can be a cosy complacency in this belief. Not only the Bible but common sense tells us sin will not be tolerated in heaven and anyone who has accepted God's great gift of salvation and later turns their back on Jesus cannot expect to join the redeemed in the rapture.

Hebrews 6v4

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the Heavenly gift and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit and have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away to renew them again unto Repentance seeing they crucify themselves the Son of God afresh.

(By the way the AMP renders it even stronger!)

I have given much time and space to this subject because there are Christians who are clinging to this dangerous belief, thinking it's OK because the Pastor says so but will find that on the Judgment day they will be found wanting including that Pastor and hear God say depart from me I never knew you. The amount of time given to this subject shows how much this false and dangerous teaching which is from the pit of hell is and it is heavy on my heart. Can you hear the laughter of Satan and his evil angels vibrating round the walls of hell when you end up for eternity where you did not want to go and thought you were safe from?

May God keep you from this dangerous and evil doctrine and if you still take pleasure in the world and think God won't mind then ask Him, pray about it, ask your Pastor if he agrees with what is written here. Take care though I talked about this with my Pastor only to find he, with some of our elders did not agree and he then preached 'eternal security' from the pulpit for the next few weeks, it was Jesus who warned against false prophets.

Verse 3

Remember therefore how you have received and heard, and hold fast, and repent (go back to the cross) If therefore you shall not watch, I will come on you as a thief and you shall not know what hour I will come upon you.

Judgment will come to Sardis, and perhaps many other churches in the church age, They will not see or here because of spiritual blindness and false teaching.

Verse 4

You have a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments and they shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy.

We are made worthy only by our faith in the blood of the Lamb and the Cross, it is nothing to do with what we are or what we do, it is all about Jesus.

Make sure for yourself, do your own reading and study, come to a decision based on God's Word not what man says, remember you will stand before God to give an account of the deeds done in *your* own body and the thoughts you make about God and His Son Jesus. You cannot blame your Pastor or Home Group teacher for the false teaching you accept and take into your spirit. That is why the Bible says there were only a few names that had not defiled their garments. That is why there were only a few who were found worthy. That is why God said that it is only he who overcomes shall be clothed in white raiment. That is why only these folk Jesus will confess before His Father God and before His Angels. Let him who has an ear let him hear.

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Be blessed

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