Audio Transcript of Sermon
November 21, 2026
The Church in Sardis

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. The recent midterm elections in the United States were brutal for Republicans. They lost control of the House and Senate in Congress, and my home state of Texas which had consistently voted Republican for the last thirty-two years, elected Democrats to all statewide offices. Naturally, Democrats are excited and Republicans are trying to figure out why voters didn't vote for them. Among Republicans are those who blame what they call RINOs, R, I, N, O, or Republicans in name only. According to Republicans these are people who call themselves Republicans, but they are seen as not endorsing Republican positions. Within the Republican party and the broader political sphere, being called a RINO is meant to be an insult. Now, when I hear the name RINO being tossed around it takes me back to my days in elementary school when some of the kids would accuse other kids of having cooties. I'm not sure we ever actually understood what a cootie was, but we knew we didn't want to be accused of having cooties. Back then the girls saw the boys as having cooties and the boys saw the girls as having cooties, and if any student did anything gross, like pick and eat their own boogers, or eat arts and crafts paste, those students were definitely seen as having cooties. Maybe being called a RINO is just the Republican equivalent of saying somebody has cooties, but is it important for us to consider if there is anything about us that we are in name only?

For instance, if a person claims to be a safe driver, but that person is known to drive recklessly, is that person a safe driver, or is that person a safe driver in name only? If a person claims to be caring and concerned for the welfare of others in their community, but is known to be stingy and unsympathetic, is that person a caring and concerned person or is that person a caring and concerned person in name only? We know the Bible tells us by their fruits you shall know them, and that applies to just about any set of circumstances that we find here on this side of eternity. More focused for us, we claim to be followers of Jesus and God our Father. We claim to be Christians. What is important for us to understand is are we Christians, or are we Christians in name only? Jesus reminded the church in Sardis of this hard fact in the message to the church where He acknowledged

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their works and that they had a name, but that they were dead. Revelation three verse one.

Revelation 3:1-6
1. And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.
2. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.
3. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.
4. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.
5. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.
6. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Imagine being told by Jesus you are a Christian in name only. That's effectively what the church in Sardis was told. Even though Jesus acknowledged their works, they were told their works were not found to be perfect. When we think of perfect, we typically think of a perfect score. For kids in schools that means getting every single answer correct on a test or assignment, and for athletes that are judged and evaluated based on their performance, like in gymnastics, diving, and figure skating, perfect means maxing out on points. Since our focus is spiritual, it's important to consider how perfect is used in the Bible. The Greek word translated as perfect in the passage we just read is the only instance of that Greek word being translated as perfect, but it does appear in other passages translated into different English language words. For instance in Romans the Greek word translated as perfect in the message to the church in Sardis is in Romans translated as fill and fully preached showing a focus on being complete.

Paul told the Romans that God would through the Holy Spirit fill them with joy and peace so they would abound in hope, and Paul knew he fully preached the gospel. Romans fifteen verse thirteen.

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Romans 15:13-20
13. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.
14. And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.
15. Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,
16. That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.
17. I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.
18. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,
19. Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.
20. Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:

From what Paul wrote to the Romans, if we want to verify that we are not like the church in Sardis whose works were found not to be perfect, one thing we can consider is the joy and peace we have within ourselves in believing the gospel that the Kingdom of God is real and that Jesus Christ will one day return. Do we have joy and peace, or as time marches on do we find ourselves spiritually fatigued and indifferent? If Paul wanted the Romans to have joy and peace thousands of years ago, we should apply that same standard to ourselves knowing that joy and peace will look differently for people based on their circumstances and personality. The introvert and the extrovert can both be people of joy and peace, but because of personalities joy and peace might look different.

When the church in Sardis was told its works were not perfect, the Greek word for perfect is translated as supply all in Philippians. Paul was telling the Philippians that he could do all things through Christ Who strengthened him even in the face of affliction. Paul reminded the Philippians that God would supply all their needs

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as he could do all things through Christ Who strengthened him. Philippians four verse thirteen.

Philippians 4:13-19
13. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.
14. Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.
15. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.
16. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.
17. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.
18. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.
19. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

When it was found that the works of the church in Sardis were not perfect, it was like even though God was willing to perfectly supply all their needs, the church still came up short. Several decades before a major earthquake had devastated the city of Sardis to the point where the Romans temporarily stopped collecting taxes and provided tax revenue in an effort to help the city rebuild. We don't know much about the city when John wrote the Book of Revelation, but from the message to the church it seems like daily hardships had sapped the energy from the church to the point where it was a church in name only and the people were Christians in name only. From the church in Sardis we can learn that no matter how hard our daily hardships may be, we need to remember that God supplies our needs through Jesus Christ, and we need to live our lives with works that are perfect, fully complete, and worthy of what has been done for us spiritually.

When the church in Sardis was told that their works were not found to be perfect, we need to remember that we need to be complete in Jesus Christ. The Greek word for perfect is translated as complete in the passage from Colossians we are going to look at. We can be complete in Jesus Christ by doing those things which are spiritually expected of us as we gratefully live our lives of faith being

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constantly aware that there will be those who will seek to use philosophy and deceit to knock us off spiritually. Colossians two verse six.

Colossians 2:6-10
6. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:
7. Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.
8. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.
9. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.
10. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

To avoid being found with works that are not perfect, we need to be filled with the knowledge of God's will and wisdom that comes with spiritual understanding. In this passage also from Colossians, the word for filled, as in filled with the knowledge, is the same Greek word for perfect. Knowledge is commonly thought of as power, but knowledge has no power unless it is correctly used. If we want to avoid being found with works that are not perfect, we need to know and use the full knowledge of God's will and wisdom that we have been given. We cannot choose to pay attention to some parts and ignore other parts. Colossians one verse nine.

Colossians 1:9-12
9. For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;
10. That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;
11. Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;
12. Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

The church in Sardis was told it had a name showing it was living even though it was dead. We know that names stay with the memory of a person upon their death. In the United States, we remember George Washington as the first President of the United States. We tend not to think of the first President of the

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United States as a person who when they were alive was George Washington. With this thought in mind we can dive deeper into the church that had a name that showed it was living. I find it strange that a church would seek a name to affirm that it is living, because eternal life does not come through any church. Eternal life comes through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ through whose sacrifice the penalty of sin has been paid. I am not familiar with verses that say because of this church or that church you will be hated by all people. I am familiar with verses that link persecution to faith in Jesus, and through the name of Jesus we will be hated by all people. Matthew ten verse seventeen.

Matthew 10:17-23
17. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;
18. And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.
19. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.
20. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.
21. And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.
22. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.
23. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

I am not familiar with verses that tell us that because we are a member of this or that church that we will be criticized, but Peter reminds us that being reproached for the name of Christ is possible, and that when we are criticized for Christ, we should find happiness. First Peter four verse twelve.

1 Peter 4:12-19
12. Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

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13. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.
14. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.
15. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.
16. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.
17. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?
18. And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?
19. Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

Not only did the church in Sardis have a name it valued, but it was also like they were living for themselves and not Christ. The message told them they had a name that they lived but were dead. One thing we can do to make sure that we are not spiritually dead is to live our lives for righteousness as we are putting sin out of our lives. For us it is not good enough just to get sin out. Righteousness must become the basis by which we live our lives. That means we are led by the Holy Spirit instead of trying to lead the Holy Spirit, and we surrender to the will of God and Jesus Christ in our lives. First Peter two verse twenty-one.

1 Peter 2:21-25
21. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:
22. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:
23. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:
24. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.
25. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

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Sardis was told they had a name that they lived but they were really dead. Did the church in Sardis forget to allow Christ to live in them? If we are not allowing Christ to live in us, we could very well be allowing sin to live in us. We either live a life aligned to what is sin, or we live a life aligned to righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ. Galatians two verse fifteen.

Galatians 2:15-21
15. We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,
16. Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.
17. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.
18. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.
19. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.
20. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.
21. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Paul reminded Timothy that widows were to be honored and that even as a person to whom honor was due, widows were expected to live their lives to Christ and not pleasure. Widows who lived their lives to pleasure were described by Paul as being dead, much like the church in Sardis had a name that it lived but was dead. First Timothy five verse three.

1 Timothy 5:3-8
3. Honour widows that are widows indeed.
4. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.
5. Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.
6. But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.

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7. And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.
8. But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

Living for pleasure is being spiritually dead, and it's important to understand the Greek implies living to gratify the senses. What we shouldn't think is that widows and others of the faith have to live unhappy lives. We should be able to find happiness and joy through Jesus, and as we live, we need to remember we need to live doing those things that God and Jesus would expect of us. Similar to widows, James warned those who are financially rich to not live their lives in pleasure while exploiting those with less money. James five verse one.

James 5:1-6
1. Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.
2. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten.
3. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.
4. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.
5. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.
6. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.

Paul wrote the Romans telling them as Christians to remember that each day we are closer to the return of Jesus. He reminded them of the need to cast off works of darkness and put on the armor of light walking honestly, to put on Jesus Christ and not to make provision for the flesh. Romans thirteen verse eleven.

Romans 13:11-14
11. And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.
12. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

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13. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.
14. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

One way Christians can be duped is through false teachers. These false teachers use great swelling words of vanity, in other words they use words to make people feel really good about themselves, and these same words seem to confuse the people about what they should do. When people are confused by great swelling words affirming the worth of the person instead of focusing on Jesus Christ, eventually who and what the person is becomes more important than Jesus Christ. These are the people who believe they have freedom and don't understand they are controlled by sin. If allowed to continue uncorrected, these are people who eventually leave the way of righteousness to live a life of sin. Second Peter two verse eighteen.

2 Peter 2:18-22
18. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.
19. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.
20. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.
21. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.
22. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

The church in Sardis was told to be watchful, to be vigilant. The church that was living yet dead forgot the need to be vigilant, to be spiritually vigilant. That reminder to them should also remind us of the need to be spiritually vigilant. We tend to be vigilant for those things important to us, and nothing should be more

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important to us than God and Jesus Christ. When we lose focus on what is important in our lives, we begin to focus on other things. When we are not spiritually focused on what is righteous, we allow ourselves to focus on what is sinful, and that comes with a huge problem. Moving our focus away from Who and what is righteous gives place to sin, and to the spiritual forces of darkness that promote sin. Peter reminds us of the need to be sober, to be vigilant, because Satan walks around as a predatory animal seeking whom he may devour. We remain vigilant by constantly resisting him in the faith. First Peter five verse six.

1 Peter 5:6-11
6. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:
7. Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.
8. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:
9. Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.
10. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.
11. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

In a parable, Jesus taught the disciples of the need to watch and pray, to be prayerfully vigilant. He gave an example of wise and foolish virgins and showed how we must be wise. He showed how the foolish allowed the oil of their lamps to go out, and how the wise were unable to share the oil they had because they saw danger to themselves in running out of oil. Matthew twenty-five verse one.

Matthew 25:1-13
1. Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.
2. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.
3. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:
4. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
5. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

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6. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.
7. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.
8. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.
9. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.
10. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.
11. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.
12. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.
13. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

The faith of others is insufficient for us. Each of us must individually have faith. Each of us individually must be doing what God and Jesus Christ expect of us. We cannot presume that because we are part of the Church of God that the faith of others is sufficient for us. Each of us must still watch and pray. When we fail to be spiritually vigilant, it is like we are spiritually asleep, and we cannot allow ourselves to be spiritually asleep. Part of spiritual vigilance is knowing what is written in the Bible and understanding the return of Jesus Christ. We cannot rely on others and let them understand these details for us. We need to have the understanding for ourselves so we can be spiritually vigilant and be fully aware that one day, Jesus Christ will return when the promise of eternal life will be made manifest. First Thessalonians five verse one.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
1. But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.
2. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.
3. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.
4. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.
5. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

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6. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.
7. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.
8. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.
9. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,
10. Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.
11. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

The message to the church in Sardis told them to strengthen the things which remain. That indicates that much had been lost by them. This was the church that saw themselves as being alive when in fact they were dead. Peter was told by Jesus to strengthen the brethren once he was converted. Even though Peter was a loyal disciple, even he would deny Jesus three times during the final night of Jesus' life. Luke twenty-two verse thirty-one.

Luke 22:31-34
31. And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:
32. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.
33. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.
34. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

Peter would go on to serve the early church, and even though he found himself in a dispute with Paul over fellowshipping with gentiles, he would continue the mission given to him by Jesus to strengthen the brethren. It was Peter who told the brethren to diligently add virtue to faith, and then to add knowledge. He continued that the brethren needed to exercise self-control and patience. He would add the need to add godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. He showed that it was not enough to simply put sin out of our life by showing the need to add these to our spiritual life. He urged the brethren to make their calling and election

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sure to gain access to eternal life and the Kingdom of God. He then added of the need to be established in the present truth. As Christians we need to be established in what we know. While we seek first the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness, we seek those things now by faithfully doing what is expected of us and adhering to and being established in the present truth. Second Peter one verse two.

2 Peter 1:2-12
2. Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,
3. According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:
4. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.
5. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;
6. And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;
7. And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.
8. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
9. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.
10. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:
11. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
12. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.

When we consider that the church in Sardis was told to strengthen the things which remain, we can see they must have lost a great deal of truth. They had a remnant of the truth. That truth includes keeping the commandments of God and having the testimony of Jesus Christ. In the Book of Revelation when Satan is thrown down to Earth, he makes war with the remnant of the church. By this time

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most of the church is protected from the evils of Satan, but for the remnant that remain, Satan wages a spiritual battle against them. Revelation twelve verse thirteen.

Revelation 12:13-17
13. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.
14. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.
15. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.
16. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.
17. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

In reading the message to the church in Sardis, we see a church that saw itself as being spiritually alive when it was spiritually dead, and it allowed so much of the truth to slip away. Why this church saw themselves as being spiritually alive when they were spiritually dead merits further thought by each of us, lest we find ourselves doing the same thing. Maybe the church had confirmation bias thinking that because it was part of the Church of God, they had to be right with God and doing those things pleasing to God, and yet in thinking they were right with God they failed to see they were very near spiritual death. As Christians today, what can we take from this message? First, we need to continue doing those things that God and Jesus Christ would expect of us, and broadly speaking that means we live our lives to be filled with fruits of righteousness. That means in a world that is mostly focused on sin, what we do must be aligned to what God expects of us, and we can only know what God expects of us by being well-versed of what's in the Bible and by being led by the Holy Spirit, and what we do we do through love. Philippians one verse nine.

Philippians 1:9-11
9. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

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10. That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;
11. Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

Second, as we are led by the Holy Spirit, we not only yield to the Holy Spirit, but we allow the Holy Spirit to spiritually strengthen us so that love is the foundation of what we do, so that nothing, absolutely nothing keeps us from the breadth, length, depth, and height of what it means to be a child of God so that we can be filled with the fullness of God. Ephesians three verse fourteen.

Ephesians 3:14-21
14. For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
15. Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,
16. That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;
17. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,
18. May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;
19. And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.
20. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,
21. Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

The church in Sardis saw itself as a living church that had made a name for itself, even though it was quite spiritually dead. Somehow in the process of being a church, it was like they forgot they were part of the Church of God. They somehow allowed truth to escape their presence, and even though they had works, well, their works were not found to be perfect. What they did came up very short. We have to endure to the end and instead of making a spiritual name for ourselves, we need to remember the name of Jesus knowing that one day we may very well find ourselves persecuted because of that name, but by the same token, by the name of Jesus we will very much have eternal life in the Kingdom of God. Between now and the return of Jesus we need to continue doing what is

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expected of us as we live our lives based in love never ever surrendering even an ounce of truth.

Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.

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