

STUDY & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR

JULY 5, 2020

REVELATION 3:1-6 (NASB)

“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. ²Wake 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. ³So 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. ⁴But 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. ⁵He 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. ⁶He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

STUDY IT

- How can someone (in this case, a whole community!) be alive, *but also dead?* (v.1)
- Just as Jesus raised the little girl (Mark 5:35-42), he tenderly and powerfully commands the dead to wake up. (v.2)
 - How does Jesus demonstrate *grace and truth* in commanding the church to “wake up?”
 - What else might *sleep/death* symbolize?
- What might be the deeds that need to be completed in God’s sight? (v.2)
- Does God require our deeds (our works) to be found as righteous? If not, then what is the Son truly commanding this community to be? (v.2)
- How would you describe the tone of Jesus’ threat to the church? (v.3)

- What do soiled garments symbolize for the people? What is the promised reward for their faithfulness? (v.4)
- What is the Book of Life? Are names in the Book of Life *erasable?* (v.5)
- How does Jesus advocate for (and defend) those whose names will be spoken to the Father? What does this affirm about his role in heaven? (v.5)

APPLY IT

- Are you merely *existing* or do you live with a purpose?
- Where have you been lulled asleep by family, environment, or culture? How do you deal with *complacency* in your life?
- How are we called to encourage one another by addressing complacency in each other’s lives?

WORDLIST

Here are some definitions that might help you in your study:

Wake up – In the New Testament, sleep is often used as a description of physical death (ie. 1 Cor 15:20). Here, the metaphor is reflected back as though the church’s complacency (i.e. spiritual laziness) is akin to death – and just as fruitless.

Soiled Garments vs. White Garments – The stains of our sinful acts are not visible to our human eyes. But to God, it is as though our sin sticks out like an embarrassing stain. God often uses clothing to describe his sole ability to remove such soiled garments and clothe us with his brilliant white robes of holiness and worthiness. See also *Zechariah 3:1-5*.

The Book of Life – This book is mentioned three times in John’s Revelation (3:5, 20:12, 15). The book contains a list of all those who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Jesus speaks of the names in this book with confidence...not a threat to remove it. The act of overcoming (by faithfulness) is celebrated in heaven.