

Revelation 3:1-6

- Wake UP! Sardis -

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Foreword

- ❖ The prophetic message of Christ, which has been sent to the church in Sardis, has much to say to the church of the 21st-century.
 - To mention some points of attention:
 - A Christian can have the reputation of a successful and vibrant church and attract many people but at the same time dead in the sight of God.
 - It is important to remember the reception of the Gospel, and if necessary to repent and to renew the obedience to Christ.
 - One of the main themes of the Revelation is “kingdom of priests to serve his God and father (Rev 1:5, 6). This priestly office of the church is an important aspect of this message. White clothes are a symbol of this priestly service.
 - Christ warns every church not to compromise the Christian life with an ungodly society.
- ❖ The context, form and structure, theological notes, technical and hermeneutical notes given in this sermon outline show some overlap with other sermon outlines taken from the Book of Revelation. This makes it possible to use this sermon outline as a “stand alone.”

Context

- ❖ The prophetic message of Jesus Christ to the church of Sardis is part of the Book of Revelation. The Book of Revelation is like a large painting. You need to look at the whole in order to understand the details.

❖ A brief outline of the Book of Revelation:¹

Introduction (Rev. 1:1-3)	
	The origin and command to write this Revelation down.
The Book of Revelation (Rev. 1:4-22:21)	
Rev. 1:4-8	The opening liturgical setting.
Rev. 1:9-3:22	PART 1
Rev. 4:1-22:11	PART 2
Rev. 22:12-21	The closing liturgical setting.

- PART 1: The risen and exalted Christ and his seven messages to the seven churches in the Roman Province Asia.
- PART 2: The heavenly courtroom and the judgment of God, ending with the descent of the new heaven and earth.

Part 1 (Rev. 1:9-3:22)	
Rev. 1:9-20	The risen and exalted Christ reveals himself to John and to the churches.
Rev. 2:1-3:22	The seven messages to the seven churches of Asia. Jesus Christ knows the deeds of each church and of each individual. He calls them to repent where necessary to prepare them for the things to come, which they need to overcome.

❖ There is much discussion about the date of writing of the Revelation.

- Some commentators propose a date near the reign of Emperor Nero (AD 68).
- Others propose a date during the reign of emperor Domitian (AD 81-96).
 - In the case of the message to the Laodiceans, the outcome of this discussion is of lesser importance. The Laodiceans did not suffer persecution at the moment of writing. Their own faith was weak or lukewarm. They were not prepared for “the great tribulation” (Rev. 7:14).

¹ This outline for sermons is very brief and does not discuss all the (many) different theories about the structures and outlines of the Book of Revelation. Beale (1999) provides a detailed outline. For discussion see Garrow (1997).

- ❖ The socio-economical and historical-geographical context of 1st-century Sardis is also important, although there is scant information. See below.

Form and structure

- ❖ Each message to one of the seven churches has the same structure:

		reference
Commission to write	Rev 3:1	
Presentation of the exalted Christ	Rev 3:1	Rev 1:20
Praises and commendations ²		
Call to repentance	Rev 3:2, 3	
Promise ³	Rev 3:4, 5	Rev 20:11-15
Call to listen	Rev 3:6	

Theological notes

General remarks

- ❖ The Book of Revelation is trinitarian (God – Holy Spirit – Jesus Christ; Rev. 1:4-5) in character.
 - God is the first and the last (Rev. 1:8) – Jesus Christ is the first and the last (Rev. 1:17).
 - Jesus Christ speaks to the churches (Rev. 2:1-6) and the churches are summoned to listen to what the Spirit (Rev. 2:7) says.
- ❖ The Book of Revelation is foremost a liturgical book with prayers, doxologies, confessions, prophecies and visions. It shows the heavenly liturgy in images and this liturgy affects the history of this world when the plagues of God strike this earth. Rev. 4:11 explains why: **“You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”**
 - The first priority in the life of every human being is to glorify God.
 - This liturgical book reminds us of the liturgy in the tabernacle (especially) and the temple of the Old Testament. This explains the many references to the altars and the priestly appearances of Christ and some of his angels.
- ❖ The Book of Revelation is also a prophetic book about the past, the present and the future. It sheds light on the past, the present situation of the seven churches in Asia Minor, and the future, culminating in the promise of the new heaven and the new earth.
 - From chapter 4 onwards the judgment of God is the dominating theme. He will do justice (Rev. 4-5; Rev. 6:10; Rev. 21:1-15 and other passages).

² Jesus Christ didn't praise this church!

³ From this message onwards the “promise” precedes the “call to listen.”

Technical and hermeneutical notes

- ❖ Reading and understanding the Book of Revelation requires:
 - Profound knowledge of the Old Testament.
 - The books of Exodus and Numbers, Ezekiel and Daniel are of particular importance in this regard. These books bear relation to oppression and deliverance of the people of God (Egypt and Babylon).
 - Knowledge of the Greek-Roman world of the first century.
 - Knowledge of figures of speech, because of all the metaphors and other figures of speech.
 - Knowledge of the structure of Revelation (see above).
 - (Elementary) knowledge of Hermeneutics.
- ❖ John received this Revelation from Jesus Christ and at the same time, this Revelation reveals the risen and exalted Christ, who holds the keys of (life and) death and Hades (Rev. 1:17). John understood the words he heard and the visions he saw, though sometimes they needed to be explained to him (Rev. 1:19-20).
- ❖ John wrote down what he heard and saw in this book and sent it to the seven churches in Asia Minor, an important province of the eastern part of the Roman Empire. In these seven messages to the churches of Asia, Jesus Christ addresses major aspects of church life. He praises and rebukes them and gives them promises of the life to come. Christians, members of these churches, understood these messages. Twice, people are mentioned by name and they were warned against a movement called the Nicolaitans (Rev. 2:6; 2:15), active among the churches. These Christians were far more familiar with the figures of speech used in the Revelation than we are nowadays.
 - Figures of speech are not always easily understood by 21st-century readers. Sometimes they are explained, more often not. Figures of speech allow for more than one explanation and application. That explains the multitude of commentaries and theories.
 - In the process of explaining and applying the prophecies of this book, the interpreter should ask himself two questions:
 - To which exegetical tradition do I belong? There is a plethora of traditions, especially in the Anglo-American World. To mention only three:
 - Amillennialism;
 - Postmillennialism;

- Premillennialism.

- Secondly, the interpreter should be aware of his own situation and of the local Christian community. What is my own political-religious situation and how does this situation affect my reading and understanding of the Book of Revelation?

❖ **SARDIS** was a city in Asia Minor located some 100 km inland from Smyrna and Ephesus, most famous in antiquity as the capital of the Lydian empire (ca. 680–ca. 547 BC), and as a leading city of the Roman province of Asia. Its only explicit reference in the Bible is in the book of Revelation (Rev 1:11; 3:1, 4). There must have been a large Jewish community. Striking confirmation of the size and influence of the Jewish community in the Roman period may be seen in the large synagogue excavated in the city, dating back to the early 3d century AD. Since synagogues are normally found on or close to the periphery of ancient cities, the location of the Sardis synagogue is unusual, and speaks eloquently of the continuing strength and wealth of the Jewish community.



The early Christian community is mentioned in Rev 1:11. A well-known bishop of Sardis in the 2nd century is Melito, who substantiates accounts of the persecution of Christians recorded in a letter from Antoninus Pius (Emperor; 138-161 AD) to the council of Asia in AD 161 (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, 4.13. 1–8). Melito was faced not only with a prosperous and large Jewish community in the city but also by other Christian sects and pagan survivals.⁴

Verse 2

- ❖ Wake = “**γρηγορέω**”: **2. to be in constant readiness, be on the alert.**⁵
- ❖ Strengthen = “**στηρίζω**”: **to cause to be inwardly firm or committed, confirm, establish, strengthen.**⁶

⁴ Summary of Pedley, J. G. (1992). Sardis (Place). In D. N. Freedman (Ed., Vol. 5, p. 982–984).

⁵ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000, p. 208).

⁶ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000, p. 945).

- ❖ Complete = “ πληρώ ”: 3. **to bring to completion that which was already begun, complete, finish.**⁷

Verse 4

- ❖ Soiled = “ μολύνω ”:
 - 1. **to cause something to become dirty or soiled, stain, soil, unclean, unwashed,** with the result of not being pure, **of one who comes without proper cleansing to a holy site** that is otherwise pure. Unsoiled garments as symbol of a spotless life (Rev 3:4).
 - 2. **to cause something to be ritually impure, defile.**⁸

Exposition

Verse 1

- ❖ “To the angel of the church in Sardis write”: The identity of the angel is unknown. It might be a heavenly being, but also a human messenger:
 - **“a human messenger serving as an envoy, an envoy, one who is sent.”**⁹
 - By humans or by God; prophets.
 - **“a transcendent power who carries out various missions or tasks, messenger, angel.”**¹⁰
 - By God.

The most obvious explanation is a messenger sent by John to the church of Laodicea, carrying not only this message but also a “copy” of the Book of Revelation in order to read it aloud in front of the congregation. So that the members of this church can “hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev. 3:22).
- ❖ **“These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars,”**
 - **“These are the words.”**
 - This is the solemn introduction of this prophetic message.
 - **“Of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.”** (See also Rev 1:4; 4:5.)
 - Bratcher and Hatton remark, “The phrase of God means that the seven spirits belong to God or else serve God. So this whole clause may also be expressed as ‘who rules over the seven spirits that serve God, and who holds the seven stars.’”¹¹

⁷ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000, p. 828).

⁸ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000, p. 657).

⁹ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000, p. 8).

¹⁰ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000, p. 8).

¹¹ Bratcher, R. G., & Hatton, H. (1993, p. 66).

- “In his right hand he held seven stars.” (Rev 1:16) “The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches” (Rev 1:20). For the explanation of the “angels”, see the previous comments. Christ is in control.
- “He(= Christ) had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth” (Rev 5:6).
 - Christ is King and Lord of all. He is the head of the church. His spirit is searching the hearts and minds of all believers.
- The number seven indicates the fullness of the Spirit. The relation of the Spirit and the Messiah is beautifully described by Isaiah (Isa 61:2).
“The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord—”

Verse 2-3

❖ **“I know your deeds.”**

- Christ knows all the deeds of the church and of its members. This should not surprise us because the church is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3:16) and the Holy Spirit knows what is in the minds of men. He dispenses his gifts (1 Cor 12: 7, 11). He is the Paraclete (Jn 14:15-17). And finally, all our deeds have been written in the books (Rev 20:11-15).
- Deeds are not single acts but reflect a Christian attitude and behaviour.

❖ **“You have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.”**

- **“A reputation of being alive.”** Other churches, perhaps even the society in general, held this church in high esteem. It is not explained why others make this judgment.
 - This prophetic message doesn’t many any resistance from other groups, the Jewish community, Christian heretical movements such as the Nicolaitans, the local government. This might be an indication of a respected community, which didn’t acknowledge Christ publicly.
- Bratcher and Hatton propose the following translation: **“I know that you seem to be faithful believers in me; but in reality you do not follow me anymore.”**¹²

Name = **“ὄνομα”** is the first main thread in this short prophetic messages. The Greek word is found at four places.

Rev 3:2: reputation;
Rev 3:4: people;
Rev 3:5: name (2).

The “name” (verse 4 and 5) represents the whole person. (2. ***a person***; Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000, p. 714).)

Besides “name” the following words are related:

Rev 3:1: alive <> dead;
Rev 3:2, 3: wake up <> about to die;
Rev 3:5: *blot out = the second death (Rev 21:8)* <> book of life.

This prophetic message to Sardis is a matter of life and death.

¹² Bratcher, R. G., & Hatton, H. (1993, p. 66).

- James 2:14-18 is good illustration. “What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, **faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.**”
 - “**As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,** in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient” (Eph 2:1, 2).
- Kiddie, quoted by Wilcock remarks: “When we remember what “complete” fulfilment of the Christian life meant to the Christians of Smyrna ... we shall better understand what John demanded of the church at Sardis’: secure, complacent, like the city she lived in, **untroubled by persecution of heresy, she ‘set herself the task of avoiding hardship, by pursuing a policy based on convenience and circumspection,** rather than whole-hearted zeal.”¹³
- “**But you are dead.**” Ephesians 2:1, 2 is instructive. “As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.”
- ❖ The words, “**wake up,**” “**what remains and is about to die,**” and “**not found complete**” make clear that it is not too late for repentance.
- ❖ “**Wake up!** – “Be on the alert.”
 - “Someone who is ‘dead’ in verse 1 cannot logically be told to *awake*, but this is part of the author’s style.”¹⁴
 - Ephesians 5:14-18 is an elaborated call to wake up:
 - “This is why it is said: ‘Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.’ Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.”
- ❖ “**Strengthen what remains and is about to die.**”
 - There is still hope left. “The verb ‘to strengthen’ means, in this context, to restore to strength, to renew, to invigorate, to put strength (vigor) back into.”¹⁵
 - “**Remains**” “And *what remains* refers to their Christian virtues or activities that had been neglected and were about to die, that is, about to disappear completely.”¹⁶
- ❖ “**for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God.**”
 - This does not mean, that their deeds need to be perfect. Their deeds were not complete according to the word of God, as is made clear in the following words.

¹³ Wilcock, M. (1986, p. 52).

¹⁴ Bratcher, R. G., & Hatton, H. (1993, p. 67).

¹⁵ Bratcher, R. G., & Hatton, H. (1993, p. 67)

¹⁶ Bratcher, R. G., & Hatton, H. (1993, p. 67).

- “In the sight of” = “ἐνώπιον”: 3. pertaining to exposure to value judgment, in the opinion/ judgment of.¹⁷
- ❖ **“Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent.”**
 - **“Remember”** is a continuous state of mind: **“Keep on remembering,”** “Keep on thinking about,” or “Never forget.”
 - **“Received and heard.”** These are not necessarily different actions. “Received” refers to the contents of the message (1 Cor 11:23). “Heard” refers to the attitude of the hearer. Both words refer to the past. The next pair of words call for action in the present.
 - **“What.”** The KJV translates **“How.”** This translation is preferred because “what” refers only to the contents. **“How”** refers not only to the contents but also to the reaction of the hearers. This reaction must have involved repentance and a new obedience.
 - **“Obey it, and repent.”** There are three imperatives, **“remember,” “repent,”** and **“do.”** Swete calls these the “three stages in the history of conversion.”¹⁸
- ❖ **“But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.”** (See Rev 16:15; Mt 24:42-44; 1 Tess 5:12; 2 Pet 3:10)
 - This is a conditional clause (“If”):
 - But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, **he would have kept watch** and would not have let his house be broken into” (Mt 24:43).
 - Jesus has told the parable of the ten virgins (Mt 25:1-13) to make the same point.
 - Bratcher and Hatton: **“This is a coming to punish them,** not the final coming. This coming will be unexpected, without any warning, as explained in the following *and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you.*”¹⁹

Verse 4-6

- ❖ **“Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes.”**
 - **“You have,”** (you = singular = the angel; Rev 3:1), means: you have a responsibility for this church, some of the members (“few people”) have not compromised their faith.
 - **“Clothes”** refers to the clothing of the **priests:**
 - “To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood,⁶ and has made us to be a **kingdom and priests** to serve his God and Father” (Rev 1:5, 6; see also 1 Pet 2:9, Ex 19:5, 6).
 - “Therefore, as **God’s chosen people, holy** and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience” (Col 3:12).
 - **“Clothes”** is also used as a metaphor for good deeds. (Rom 13:14, Gal 3:27).
 - **“Soiled.”** “Soiling seems to be a symbol for mingling with pagan life and thus defiling the purity of one’s relation to Christ.”²⁰

¹⁷ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000, p. 342).

¹⁸ Swete, H.B. (1977, p. 27).

¹⁹ Bratcher, R. G., & Hatton, H. (1993, p. 68).

²⁰ Johnson, A. F. (2006). *Revelation*. In T. Longman III & D. E. Garland (Red.) (Vol. 13, p. 628).

- “These are those who **did not defile themselves** with women, for they kept themselves pure. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They were purchased from among men and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb” (Rev 14:4).
- ❖ **“They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.”**
 - **“Walk with me”**:
 - “who holds the seven stars in his right hand **and walks among the seven golden lampstands** (Rev 2:1).
 - **“Dressed in white”** like the twenty-four elders (Rev 4:4), and the angels (Rev 15:6; Acts 1:10).
 - **“Worthy”** to serve God and Father as priests in his kingdom (Rev 1:5; see also Rev 7:9). They are already worthy!
- ❖ **“He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white.”**
 - **“Like them.”** Them are those who didn’t soil their clothes.
 - **“Overcomes.”** “Overcomes” is also used of Christ (Rev 5:5). The victorious believers, “and I saw what looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire and, standing beside the sea, those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and over the number of his name” (Rev 15:2). **“He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son”** (Rev 21:7).
 - “Overcoming refers to the victory of one’s whole life of faith,”²¹ and not to the victory at the end.
 - **“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he **who does the will of my Father** who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’”** (Mt 7:21-23).
 - **“Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God”** (1 Jn 5:5).
 - **“Dressed in white.”** They will be restored into the priestly office (Rev 7:9, 13-14).
- ❖ **“I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels.”**
 - **“Will never blot out.”** Opens this up the possibility that a name can be blotted out. In that case, a Christian can never be sure of his salvation. This is fortunately not the case. It is a promise formulated in negative terms and therefore an ultimate call to repentance:
 - Revelation 21:15: **“If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”** They will not enter the heavenly Jerusalem: “Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, **but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life”** (Rev 21:27).
 - Revelation 21:7, 8: **“He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.** But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”

²¹ Beale, G. K. (1999, p. 271).

- Is this an allusion to Exodus 32, where Moses is pleading on behalf of the people of Israel? “But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written.” The LORD replied to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book.” See also Psalm 69:28
 - The names have been “written in the book of life from the creation (Rev 17:8).
 - **“Acknowledge.”**
 - Matthew 10: 32: “Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.” (See also Lk 12:8.)
 - Bratcher and Hatton suggest an alternative translation: “The person who conquers the forces of evil will wear white clothes like these do. I will not erase that person’s name from the book in which the names of those who have true life are written down. As I stand before my Father and the beings (angels) who serve him, I will declare that I know this person.”²²
- ❖ **“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”**
 - Pay careful attention. Not only to this prophetic messages but to all messages.

Application

Verse 1

- ❖ Christ is the “ruler of the kings of the earth” (Rev 1:5). As the Son of God, he has received the headship over the church. He governs the church through his Spirit and by his faithful representatives of the churches.
 - The representatives of the churches are in his hands. This implies a very responsible position. They will be held responsible for the spiritual well-being of the church (Acts 20:28 and Heb 13:17).
- ❖ It is possible that a church has a very good reputation when it comes to activities, the performance of a preacher, but in reality, these activities and performance don’t meet up to requirements of the Gospel.

Verse 2-3

- ❖ **“Wake up”**: *“Spiritual sleepers have lost all perception, by their spiritual senses, of the threatening signs of the development of judgment unto its catastrophe.* As this applies to the judgment at the end of the world, so it also holds good in regard to all preliminary judgments upon whole congregations as well as upon individual souls.”²³ Barclay commented:
 - “(1) Watchfulness should be the constant attitude of the Christian life. ‘It is now the moment’, says Paul, ‘for you to wake from sleep’ (Romans 13:11). ‘Keep alert, stand firm in your faith’, he urges (1 Corinthians 16:13). It has been said that ‘eternal vigilance is the price of liberty’ and eternal watchfulness is the price of salvation.”
 - “(2) Christians must be on the watch against the cunning ways of the devil (1 Peter 5:8).” “Christians are under continual attack by the powers which seek to seduce them from

²² Bratcher, R. G., & Hatton, H. (1993, p. 70).

²³ Lange, J. P., Schaff, P., Moore, E., Craven, E. R., & Woods, J. H. (2008, p. 126).

their loyalty to Christ. Often these attacks are subtle. They must, therefore, always be on the look-out.”

- (3) Christians must be on the watch **against temptation**. ‘Stay awake and pray’, said Jesus, ‘that you may not come into the time of trial’ (Matthew 26:41). Temptation waits for our unguarded moments and then attacks. In the Christian life, there must be unceasing vigilance against it.”
 - (4) Repeatedly, the New Testament urges Christians to be alert and on the watch **for the coming of their Lord**. ‘Keep awake therefore,’ said Jesus, ‘for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.’ ‘And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake’ (Matthew 24:42; Mark 13:37). ‘Let us not fall asleep as others do,’ writes Paul to the Thessalonians, ‘but let us keep awake and be sober’ (1 Thessalonians 5:6). None of us knows the day and the hour when for us eternity will invade time. ‘The last day is a secret,’ says St Augustine, ‘that every day may be watched.’ We should live every day as if it were our last.”
 - (5) Christians must be on the watch **against false teaching**. In Paul’s last address to the elders of Ephesus, he warns them that savage wolves will invade the flock from outside, and from inside will arise those who will distort the truth. ‘Therefore,’ he says, ‘be alert’ (Acts 20:29–31).”²⁴
 - Beale wrote: “The imperative to ‘become one who is watchful’ shows that the readers have become lethargic about **the radical demands of their faith in the midst of a pagan culture**.”²⁵
- ❖ These words need attention:
- (the past)
 - **“Remember,**
 - (1.a) “therefore, what (*how*) you have received and”
 - (1.b) “heard;” (the gospel)
 - (the present)
 - (2.a) “obey it,”
 - (2.b) “and repent.”
 - (the future)
 - “But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.”

Verse 4-6

- ❖ The priestly office of the believer is an important theme (white clothes):
- “Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity” (Col 3:12-14). “All of you, clothe yourselves with humility” (1 Pet 5:5).
- ❖ **“They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.”** Pay attention to:
- to walk with Christ,

²⁴ Barclay, W. (2004, pp. 129-130).

²⁵ Beale, G. K. (1999, p. 273).

- to be dressed in white as a priest and as a victor.
- God will declare them worthy.
- ❖ **“To blot out”** is an ultimate call to repent for all those who have defiled their clothes. is not meant as a possibility with regard to all believers.

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