



THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

"Clothes Make The Man"

3:4-6

Revelation 3:4 You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.

Revelation 3:5 He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, 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.

Revelation 3:6 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Biblical Christianity can be understood in terms of being appropriately dressed. Before you are saved it's as if you are clothed with filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). When you get saved you are given a change of clothing that is appropriate to your new standing in Heaven.

There is a passage in the Old Testament book of Zechariah that does a nice job of depicting your spiritual change of clothes.

Zechariah 3:3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel.

Zechariah 3:4 Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, "Take away the filthy garments from him." And to him He said, "See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes."
Zechariah 3:5 And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head, and they put the clothes on him. And the Angel of the LORD stood by.

As high priest he represented the entire nation. They were **all** filthy. He also represents **all** who stand before God. You and I are **all** filthy. **No one** can stand before God of the universe and not be exposed as filthy.

Here is the point of the garments: Joshua could do nothing to *change* his garments, so he must somehow *exchange* his garments.

Joshua could not change his own clothes. He already had on the finest clothes a human being could wear into the presence of God. His clothes needed to be exchanged.

The **robes** that replace your **filthy garments** represent the righteousness of Jesus Christ being given to you. He takes your sin and gives you His righteousness.

Once you are given the robe of righteousness it's yours. You're headed to Heaven. But Jesus leaves you on earth! As you walk with the Lord on the earth along your way home you can soil your robe.

Jesus described something similar when he was washing the disciple's feet (John 13). He told them that they were **bathed** and therefore **completely clean**. He meant that they were saved. Why the foot washing? Because they were still in the world and on their way home to Heaven could pick-up dirt and filth.

We said last time that the problem in Sardis was that the majority of the believers were not filled with the Holy Spirit. He indwelt them; He had undoubtedly baptized them. But on a daily basis they were not obeying the command to go on being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus told us something else about the majority of the believers at Sardis. It's in verse four.

Revelation 3:4 You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.

While describing the small remnant who were filled with His Spirit, He mentioned that the vast majority had **defiled their garments**. They were saved but had soiled their robes and picked-up defilement on their way home to Heaven.

How do I know they were saved? Think about it: If you are unsaved your garments are already filthy rags. Only someone who is saved can be described as soiling an otherwise clean robe.

The church that had such a great name among men was largely **defiled**. We think immediately of various sins that would soil them. We should expand our understanding of what defiles us to include anything that is not appropriate to a Spirit filled life.

With this as a background let's take a look at the remnant Jesus was commending.

Revelation 3:4 You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.

The remnant, who were obeying the command to go on being filled with the Holy Spirit, were promised **they shall walk with Me in white for they are worthy**. I think it's a way of describing an intimate fellowship with Jesus. If your robe is covered with stains it hinders your walk with Jesus. He needs to first cleanse you from your defilement. He is faithful to do it, but you must ask Him. Too many believers are content to walk around in soiled garments.

They are worthy doesn't mean they were super-saints. **Worthy** can be translated *corresponding to* [another] *thing*; or *having the weight of another thing of like value*. It means they are Christ-like and it was precisely because they had no spot or stain to interfere with their fellowship.

Verse five looks to the future:

Revelation 3:5 He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, 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.

I read this as a general statement to anyone about Jesus' plans for His saints in the future. **He who overcomes** is a Christian. The normal, everyday Christian life can be a life of overcoming sin and self by the indwelling presence of God the Holy Spirit. In the end Jesus will present you to His Father **clothed in white garments**. In another passage you read,

Jude 1:24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present *you* faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

In yet another passage you read,

Ephesians 5:25 ... Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,
Ephesians 5:26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,
Ephesians 5:27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

When you arrive in Heaven you will be perfected. God will complete the work He has begun in you.

... 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.

Apparently there is a book in Heaven, **the Book of Life**, that your name must be in for Jesus to **confess** [your] **name before** [His] **Father and before His angels**. Some names can (and will) be **blotted out** of that book. What are we to make of this?

The **Book of Life** seems to be a record of every human being ever conceived. It shouldn't bother us that every single name of every single person is written there. In First Timothy 4:10 we read,

1 Timothy 4:10 ... we trust in the living God, who is *the* Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.

If a person dies as a believer his name is retained in the book of life. If he dies unsaved he is blotted out:

Psalms 69:28 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, And not be written with the righteous.

Revelation 13:18 and 21:27 mentions the **Lamb's Book of Life**. It could be one and the same book; or it might be a second volume.

The idea it might be a second volume seems substantiated by something we read in the book of Hebrews. Hebrews 12:23 refers to Christians as **the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven...** The word for registered, *apographo*, means *to enter into a register* or into the *record*. It seems to support the idea that once you are born-again your name is then registered in Heaven; it is entered into the record.

Can your name be blotted out of the **Lamb' Book of Life**? In Luke 10:20 Jesus said,

Luke 10:20 ... rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

According to Greek scholar Kenneth Wuest the sense of these words are that their names were *permanently* written somewhere in heaven. They are permanently written in the **Lamb's Book of Life** once you are saved.

When you are born your name is written in the **Book of Life**. When you are born-again your name is additionally registered in the **Lamb's Book of Life**.

- being changed to bring change -

If you die without ever being born-again, your name is blotted out of the **Book of Life** and never written in the **Lamb's Book of Life**.

Here is some Bible math. If you are born once, you will die twice. If you are born twice, you will die once.

1. You are born once physically. If you are never born a second time, never born spiritually, never born-again, you will die physically and after that you will die eternally by being cast alive into the Lake of Fire.
2. If you are born-again, you might die physically if the Rapture doesn't occur in your lifetime. But you are alive eternally.

Everyone whose name is found in both books will be **confessed** by Jesus. Jesus will introduce you to His Father! It's a romantic notion – like bringing your fiancée home to meet the folks for the first time. **His angels** reminds us Heaven is populated with glorious beings but that we are the apple of God's eye, the betrothed beloved of His only Son. The angels will rejoice for the sake of Jesus.

Revelation 3:6 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." '

These words, as always, are for *any* individual in *any* church in *any* century that hears them.

