

Becoming a Church that
Pleases Jesus
(Jesus' Report Card
of the Church)

Revelation 2-3

Introduction

Jesus has amazing plans and expectations for His church. The people of God have incredible potential made available by the death and resurrection of Jesus, the truth of God's Word, and the power of His Spirit.

He has designed us to advance His kingdom on the earth and has prophesied that the gates of hell will not be able to stop us! (Matthew 16:18-19)

We want to be this kind of church! We want to walk in all that Jesus has made available for us. We want to be a pleasure to our Lord and serve Him effectively.

Revelation 3:1-6

The Warning

“I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.” Revelation 3:1.b

- **Hypocrisy**. (Matthew 23:27) Jesus warned His disciples not to be religious hypocrites which are like white washed tombs; beautiful on the outside but full of death and decay on the inside.
- **Complacency**. (Romans 12:1-2) We are in this world but not of it. This is not our home; when we get too comfortable here, we lose our kingdom effectiveness.
- **Spiritual Laziness**. (Matthew 25:26) Knowing the truth of God and being too lazy to obey it brings spiritual decay and severe consequences.

The Remedy

1. Wake Up!

- ““I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. **Wake up!**” Revelation 3:1.b
- This phrase “wake up!” is translated from a Greek word that literally means, “stay awake, be vigilant, be watchful.” (Strong’s)
- It is as if Jesus is telling us to snap out of our day dream! To wake up and realize that time is short, and we have a God-given purpose on this earth. We will be held accountable for how we steward every moment, every gift, every person, and every dollar.
- This life is no longer about our comfort and pleasure; we are His servants; it’s about His glory and purposes!

2. Return to the Truth

- “Strengthen what remains and is about to die... Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard;” Revelation 3:2,3
- There is a great simplicity to following Jesus. It is setting our gaze on Jesus and walking in His foot steps. Sometimes man’s religion can overcomplicate the mission, to walk like Jesus did on the earth.
- Unlike our culture, there are no manipulation games, politics, or hidden agendas - only simple truths that we obey in order to please our Savior and serve Him effectively. Maybe we have become “dead” because we have forgotten the simplicity of God’s everlasting Word.

2. Return to the Truth

- So let us return to the basic truths that God has taught us in His Word. I believe God is far less interested in how much we can learn about Him and much more interested in how much we obey the truths He has already given us.
- “The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.” Psalm 119:7-8
- Let’s return to the life-giving truth of God’s Word. Let’s read it, memorize it, and receive the life it brings to us.

3. Obey the Truth

- “Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; **obey it**,” Revelation 3:3
- I believe that the Bible clearly and consistently teaches that God’s love language is OBEDIENCE. Scripture tells us that God desires obedience rather than words, intentions, sacrifices, traditions, and even worship services. (Isaiah 1:11-20)
- Jesus said, “If you love me, you will obey what I command.” (John 14:15) and “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?” (Luke 6:46). James 1:22 says, “Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”

3. Obey the Truth

- Obedience is not a confining, degrading concept; it is an amazing opportunity and a great adventure!
- The Bible teaches that obedience brings freedom, joy, peace, close fellowship with God, the blessings of God, and protection from the plans of the enemy. In addition, when we obey Jesus, we are completely fulfilled.
- Were you once alive, but now you're dead? Or less alive than you want to be? Has your love for God grown cold or your fellowship become distant? Then Jesus is inviting you to come back to the simplicity of reading the truth of His Word and enjoy the great benefits of heartfelt obedience.

4. Walk in Repentance

- “Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, **and repent.**” Revelation 3:3
- What is so wonderful about our Lord and Bridegroom is that He has given us the command to obey and all the benefits that come with it. In addition, when we fail in that obedience, He paid for our forgiveness and offers us the gracious gift of repentance.
- “Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.” Revelation 3:4. There were no perfect people in Sardis, but there were those who learned to “walk” with Jesus through repentance.

4. Walk in Repentance

- This is why repentance is such a beautiful gift. It doesn't require sinless perfection; but only the humility to agree with God on our failures, to receive His forgiveness, and to walk out the righteousness that He purchased for us.
- “They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.” The benefits of repentance are amazing! - Close fellowship with Jesus; being washed clean of our past; and enjoying freedom from guilt, shame and condemnation.
- Is the “Lover of your soul” calling you to repent today? Is he asking you to come back to the benefits of His love? Will you commit to a lifestyle of repentance?

The Promise

- In this passage, Jesus promised that if we will wake up; return to the truth; obey it; and repent when we don't - He will cause us to be overcomers in this world.
- As overcomers, we will enjoy:
 - ◆ daily fellowship with Him (v.4-5)
 - ◆ forgiveness and freedom from condemnation (v.5)
 - ◆ He will never blot out our name from the Book of Life (v.5)
 - ◆ And He will acknowledge our name before our Father on the day of accountability (v.5)