

Finishing Well

Lesson #47 Wake Up! Your Garments! Dec. 6, 2023

Rev. 3:1-5a 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 overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment;

Rev. 19:7-8 Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. ⁸ And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of saints.

Rev. 3:4a You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments;

Belief: I believe the Bible teaches there are 2 different garments for a justified believer.

Garment #1: Believers are given [imputed] the "Garment Of Salvation" at justification.

Rom. 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

We need Christ's righteousness imputed to us because we have no righteousness of our own. We are sinners by nature, and we cannot make ourselves righteous—we cannot place ourselves in right standing with God.

We need His holiness credited to our account before God.

II Cor. 5:21 For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Rom. 4:6-8 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

⁷ Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

⁸ Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

a. This external garment is without spot or wrinkle.

b. Believers cannot defile this garment of justification. It is HIS righteousness!

c. This garment provides us eternal life and entrance into heaven.

d. This garment gives us eternal security.

No justified believer can be ejected from Christ's righteousness.

Spurgeon: There, poor sinner, take my garment and put it on;

you shall stand before God as if you were Christ, and I will stand before God as if I had been the sinner; I will suffer in the sinner's stead, and you shall be rewarded for works that you did not do, but which I did for you.

Justification - Position	Sanctification - Progressive
Legal Standing	Internal Condition
Once for all time	Continuous throughout my life
Entirely God's Work	I cooperate with God
Perfect in this life	Not perfect in this life
The same in all believers	Greater in some than others

Garment #2 - Our Sanctification Garment > Obedience to His Call > Lifelong process

This garment speaks of internal sanctification of the believer.

The 2nd garment Christ requires for the Marriage festivities is the white, fine linen garment made up of the believer's "righteous works."

Rev. 19:7-8 Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." ⁸ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the Fine Linen Is The Righteous Acts Of The Saints.

These are Spirit-led deeds performed after our justification; works of godliness and deeds of righteousness that the Holy Spirit PRODUCES through us.

Phil. 1:11 May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation - the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ - for this will bring much glory and praise to God.

Kenton Beshore: "The Millennial Apocalypse"

"Christ must not only be on us as a robe, but He must be in us as a life."

Imputed and Imparted

The righteousness of Christ is applied to man in two different ways—imputed and imparted.

- The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed.
- The righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted.

Good News: A few in Sardis have not defiled their garments.

Note: Our 2nd garment can get defiled, stained, and blackened through our own choices.

Defiled = moluno = Strong's 3435 = blacken oneself, to pollute oneself, dirty one's clothing

Basic meaning > To color something by staining it; NOW it needs cleaning

It refers to an internal condition = unfaithfulness & disobedience

Note: We can defile our garment by not being faithful, by quenching the Holy Spirit and polluting our soul. We make choices that block God's Spirit & cause us to walk in darkness.

James 1:27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted [polluted; defiled] from the world.

Worthy: 2 Greek words

1. Strong's #2661 = kataxioo = To Be Counted Worthy; To Be Deemed Entirely Deserving
We are counted worthy because of what Christ has already done for us on the Cross.
He is the One who is really counted worthy. [used only 4x in Scripture]
2. Strong's #514 = axios = To Be Worthy Of On The Grounds Of Being Fit, Meet, Prepared, Suitable [41x in Scripture]

Rev. 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. [axios]

Note: Found worthy is linked with not defiling their garments

The white garment mentioned in Rev. 3:5 is related to the garment in verse 4.

It is given as a reward for a WORTHY WALK.

Rev. 3:5 He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment

Note: 1. The worthiness is linked to the fact these were believers who have not defiled [blackened] their garments. They are defined as being those who overcome.

Belief: It seems they are the ones who will wear these particular garments.

2. Walking with Him in white is a reward for righteous acts or deeds of the saints.

3. fits with Rev. 19:7-8 ⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." ⁸ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

4. Walking in white must refer to the white garment of fine linen.

5. The Bride Of Christ is to "clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean."

Consider: When we are born again as a justified believer, we are BETROTHED to Jesus Christ. He is our future bridegroom.

Our life is a "preparation time" before we are to be presented to Christ as a pure virgin.

Paul's Perspective Regarding The Race Of Faith & The Rewards

Note: Paul wrote 14 books of the Bible yet listen to his concern in: I Cor. 9:27 >

He was fearful of not winning the prize [Christ-likeness with its rewards and privileges]. Somehow, Paul was fearful of being a castaway!

Running For The Prize - Run With Eternity In View

I Cor. 9:24-27 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. ²⁵ And everyone who competes (agonizomai = striveth) *for the prize* is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for an imperishable crown*. ²⁶ Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who beats the air*. ²⁷ But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. [castaway=disapproved]

- Lest = Strong's #3381 = mepos - God forbid That I should
- Castaway = Strong's #96 = adokimos = Someone who is tested for proof, but who fails the test [is not able to withstand it] and is then rejected. Castaway is one who is not worthy [axios] of inheriting because he is not fit, prepared or ready.

II Tim. 2:5 And if someone likewise competes as an athlete,

he is not crowned as victor unless he competes according to the rules.

What was Paul so intent about keeping, while at the same time, he acknowledged it could be lost? Paul KNEW he could never lose his justification, but he was concerned about losing the prize of the reward of inheritance. (not being found fit or worthy - deemed disqualified)

I Cor. 3:14-15- If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.

If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

Loss = Forfeit one's inheritance or something that could have been in one's possession

NOTE: This is written to BELIEVERS! According to I Cor. 3, these people are saved in the end. These are believers who suffer loss. They become castaways not worthy of inheriting. Ruling and reigning in Christ's kingdom is not automatic. Not all believers will win the prize! It is possible to defile our garments, fail the test and not be found worthy> Disapproved!

Maybe he remembered Moses, who was not permitted to enter the Promised Land because of disobedience at the end of his life [Deut. 3:25-26]. He possibly was worried his own life's work could be burned in the end and he could suffer loss.

I Cor. 10:1-5 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; ³ And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

⁴ And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. ⁵ But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

Consider: Your race of faith will have been run in no certain manner. You are just beating the air with no fixed goal. You may be overthrown and disapproved for the prize.

- A good beginning does not guarantee a good ending.

I Cor. 10:11-13 Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

¹² Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

Gal. 5:7 You were running so well. Who prevented you from obeying the Truth?

Be Watchful Of: Wiles of the Devil - He is determined we should fail the test, become castaways and lose the prize of our high calling.

I Peter 5:8-9a Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him steadfast in the faith.

There are dangers to maturity as well as to immaturity, and one of them is overconfidence. When we think we are strong, we discover that we are weak.

Experience must always be balanced with caution, for we never come to the place in our Christian walk where we are free from temptation and potential failure.

¹³There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear [endure] it.

- God can enable us to overcome temptation.
- Bear, endure: carry-under [like an under-current of a river carrying someone away]
- to endure *because carried safely away from danger*

It is pathetic as a Christian to be vested with the fullness of the Godhead bodily and all the illimitable resources of heaven, to scratch out a mere existence with meager resources and to live a life with no purpose or direction because he will not partake of what God has already given through unbelief, ignorance or defiance.

- God has given a way of escape. Our birthright which includes all spiritual blessings and the gift of the Holy Spirit who empowers us to live an abundant life.
- When I reckon [count it true] that my old man died with Jesus on the cross, the Holy Spirit can manifest the life of Jesus Christ in me.

Gal. 5:16 Walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh! Promise!

Matt. 10:38 He who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.
axios = To Be Worthy Of On The Grounds Of Being Fit, Meet, Prepared

A.W. Tozer: Christ's journey to immortal triumph.

1. Remember the garden where He sweat blood.
2. Remember Pilate's Hall where they put on Him the purple robe and smote Him.
3. Remember His experience with His closest disciples as they all forsook Him and fled.
4. Remember the journey up the hill to Calvary.
5. Remember how they nailed Him to a cross, 6 awful hours, the hiding of the Father's face.
6. Remember the darkness and remember the surrender of His spirit in death.

This was the path Jesus took to immortal triumph and everlasting glory.

As He is, so are we in this world. There is a dark night of our soul.

II Cor. 11:24-28 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; ²⁶ in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; ²⁷ in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—

²⁸ besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. Few Christians are willing to go into this dark night. Therefore, few enter into the light. It is impossible for some to know the morning because they will not endure the night.

I Thess. 4:1 Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

I Thess. 2:12 that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

Eph. 4:1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called.

Belief: I believe this is referring to being prepared and qualified to rule and reign with Christ in His Kingdom and have a level of responsibility.

Rev. 5:10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth."

Filthy Garments:

1. Joshua, the High priest, was barred from ministering to the Lord because he had on "filthy garments." [Zech. 3:3-4]
2. The Old Testament stresses that in order for the priests to stand before the Lord, they had to have on "holy" garments. [Ex. 28:1, 36-38]
3. These garments meant the priest reflected God's holiness. Without this garment of holiness, the priest was forbidden to come into God's presence [Lev. 21:6-8]
4. Filthy garments were associated with defilement and revealed that the priest no longer reflected holiness. The garment revealed the inward condition of the heart.
5. At that point, they not only had to be ceremonially cleansed, but also morally cleansed. [Ex. 30:19-21]
6. In the same manner, we must be "partakers of Christ's holiness" in order to come into His presence and see Him.
7. The priests in filthy garments is a perfect picture of a "carnal believer" who has on "blackened" garments, but is nevertheless trying to stand before the Lord. [Lev. 16:23-24, 32]
8. Just as the priests could defile their garments, we too, can become defiled by unfaithfulness, disobedience and moral unfitness.

II Cor. 11:2 For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I MAY present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

Chaste: #53 - hagnos = This is the root from which hagnosmos [#38], the word SANCTIFIED, comes from. Holiness or *hagiasmos* in the Greek has been defined by Wescott as "the preparation for the presence of God."

II Cor. 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Paul saw the local church as a bride, engaged to be married to Jesus Christ [Eph. 5:22ff; Rom. 7:4). The church—and this means individual Christians—must keep herself pure as she prepares to meet her Beloved. The peril, then, is that of unfaithfulness to her fiancé.

The engaged woman owes her love and allegiance to but one—her betrothed. If she shares herself with any other man, she is guilty of unfaithfulness.

The word translated "simplicity" means "sincerity, singleness of devotion."

A divided heart leads to a defiled life and a destroyed relationship.

Notice the words MIGHT and MAY. Consider: Paul desired to present this church "as a chaste and holy virgin, without spot or wrinkle," but it appears to NOT be a given.

Consider: It appears to not be automatic. Something is required of believers. We are to be obedient to the call of sanctification. When we fully surrender to the Holy Spirit, He does the work in us to prepare us to be the chaste and holy virgin, without spot or wrinkle.

Ponder: Many believers are not obedient to the call to be sanctified!

Eph. 5:26-27 describes the way the bride is to be presented to Jesus Christ.

that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the Word,

"that He [the Lord] MIGHT present her [the church] to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish."

Note: She is to be sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by the Word.

Consider: The "holy ones without blemish" are justified believers who have chosen to keep themselves clean, prepared and ready by obedience to sanctification by the Holy Spirit.

They will be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, which are the righteous acts of the saints.

Rev. 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.

Rev. 3:5 He who OVERCOMES shall be clothed in white garments

Question: What must they overcome in Sardis? Their deadness [no spiritual growth; works are not complete]; Not Watching and thief comes; They have defiled garments. [I John 1:9]

Belief: Those who overcome deadness and the defiling of their garment of sanctification are those who will receive the promises to those who overcome.

Good News: Cancel The Funeral

Remedy: Rev. 3:1a These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God...

The seven-fold ministry of the Spirit, defined in Isaiah 11:1-2, emphasizes the fullness and completeness of the Holy Spirit's ministry in His power and operation.

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: ² And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;

Spirit of the Lord	Member of the Trinity
Spirit of Wisdom	Intelligence or right use of knowledge
Spirit of Understanding	Insight, perception, able to discern
Spirit of Counsel	Prudence or ability to give good advice
Spirit of Might	Force, power, strength (spiritual warfare)
Spirit of Knowledge	Personally experience or know God
Spirit of the Fear of the Lord	Profound respect or awe for God

Jesus Christ as head of the church brought HOPE in the gift of the Holy Spirit and the fullness of His power to bring LIFE.

He is ALL we need to succeed and triumph as Christians and as the church.

On Resurrection Ground

Phil. 3:10-11 That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection,
and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death;

¹¹ If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

➤ know = oida= know intimately.

Quote: Far above all the doing, it seems the knowing is where we need to focus.

Let the doing spring forth from real knowing.

Phil. 3:12a Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected;

1. There must be an awareness of the need to pursue the prize.

When Paul wrote "I have not already obtained and I am not already perfect," he had been a Christian for about 30 years. For three decades he had been intensely and faithfully pursuing the knowledge of Christ. He still wasn't there, but he was spiritually dissatisfied. It's like running after something that keeps moving further away from you. There is a continually increasing spiritual pursuit matched by a continually increasing dissatisfaction.

Pursuit then of knowing Christ begins with an honest assessment of my imperfection.

There should be in the life of every Christian a basic discontent.

Phil. 3:12b But I press on, that I may lay hold of that, Christ-likeness,

for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.

1. I must make the maximum effort to pursue the prize. God's purpose in saving me (to be conformed to the image of His Son) should now become my purpose and pursuit.

You might become fully conformed to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Phil. 3:13-14 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

1. Single-minded [Wise] in pursuing the prize. Focus my concentration.

2. Spiritually Motivated To Pursue The Prize.

"I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

- Greek kata = I bear down and I go after the goal.

Realize He who has called us to maturity will do the work in us and through us as we abide in Him.

He wrote: That I may win Christ. yet he already had Christ!

His longing: That I may be found in Him. yet he was already in Him!

His desire: That I may know Him. yet he already knew Him!

He testified: "I follow after; I press toward the mark. I have not obtained.

I am striving to lay hold of that for which Christ laid hold on me."

AW Tozer To have found God and still pursue Him is the soul's paradox of love, scorned indeed by the too easily satisfied religionist, but justified in happy experience by the children of the burning heart.

Paul agonized and strained every muscle of his being as he sought to win the prize of the high calling. He exhorted all of us to "lay aside every weight and RUN THE RACE." [Heb. 12:1] Paul's desire was that we win.

I Tim. 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

The end of the race will be victory or defeat; overcomer or overtaken. The goal of the race is that we might become "partakers of His holiness; conformed to the image of Jesus Christ" [Heb. 12:10].

Consider: We will find out at the Bema Seat if we are clothed with this "garment of linen."

- Have I been obedient to sanctification during this present life?
- Am I allowing the Holy Spirit to produce the fruit of the Spirit in me?
- What will be revealed in my life at the Judgment Seat of Christ?

"All that the saints have done for Christ and in His name during my sojourn on earth - all the sufferings, reproaches and insults I have endured; every cup of cold water given for His sake; all this will be remembered in that great day and be found 'unto praise, honor and glory.' The smallest act that has Christ for its motive is a stitch in my wedding garment when it is presented to Christ."

- All that is not done by the Holy Spirit working in and through me will be burned up.
- That which remains is gold, silver and precious jewels. Righteous acts

We are going to a wedding. Do you have any righteous acts?

Col. 1:10-12 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*,
being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;
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:
Meet = #2427 hikanoó = make sufficient; qualify; equips with adequate power to be fit

Acts 20:32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is
able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

Luke confirmed it was the Word that could bring you to spiritual maturity and thereby insure
your inheritance in the coming kingdom.