

Revelation 013 – Secure in Christ

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Revelation

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Well, good morning everybody. If we could take our Bibles and open them to the book of Revelation 3, looking this morning at only verses 5 and 6. You say, "You can't preach a sermon on two verses, can you?" Those of you that say that probably don't know we that well.

The title of our message this morning is "Secure in Christ." Secure in Christ. Just reminding you where we have been in our study of the book of Revelation, we laid the foundation of the book early on, moved through the prologue or introduction of the book, and then we saw the first major section of the book where John is told to write down the things that he has seen. He records a portrait of the glorified Christ there in chapter 1, then he moves into section 2, write down the things that are. The things that are are essentially seven letters to seven churches. They follow a pattern, there's the pattern, it's got about eight parts to it, and we're in the midst, a little over halfway through that first, that middle section of the book, the things that are. We've seen Christ's exhortation to Ephesus, the loveless church; to Smyrna, the persecuted church; to Pergamum, the compromised church; to Thyatira, the corrupt church; and last time we saw what Christ was beginning to say to Sardis, the dead church. We've seen the destination of this particular letter. It's a place called Sardis there in Asia Minor, modern-day Turkey. We've seen how Christ describes himself to that church, he is the one holding the seven spirits of God and having the seven stars. We have seen what Christ commends of that church, the only thing really commendable is their reputation which is a reputation for life, but that commendation quickly moves into a rebuke because their present practice was not consistent with their reputation, practically speaking they were, in fact, dead. He exhorts that particular church to wake up and strengthen the things that remain, and he says if you don't there will be a consequence, even the things that are mildly alive within that church will quickly die. And that's where we left off last time and we find ourselves this morning in verse 5 and verse 6 where Christ makes three promises to the overcomers.

Take a look, if you could, at Revelation 3:5. Jesus says,

5 He 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.

You'll notice this expression "He who overcomes." What we've been arguing for thus far is that "overcomer" is a synonym for a Christian. We're going to have a lot more to say about that in just a minute.

So Jesus is reminding them of their future, their future which is inevitable should motivate them in the present. A lot more on that to come. And he is announcing to these Christians within this church three things. 1. They're going to be clothed in white. 2. Their name is not going to be erased from the book of life. 3. They are going to be confessed before the Father and his angels. Let's focus on those three blessings this morning.

The first thing he says there in verse 5 is they will be clothed in white garments. White, as you know, in the book of Revelation and in the Bible represents purity. Isaiah 1:18 says, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow." Moral and perfect positional purity before God; being just as righteous as Jesus himself. How do you get that exactly? Well, that's one of the great questions plaguing the human race. The world of religion will tell you you get those things through good works and good deeds. You make yourself righteous. You clean yourself up and come to Jesus, so to speak. Self-righteousness is the clarion call of the religious world and yet when you study the Bible, you learn that self-righteousness won't get you anywhere with God. Isaiah 64:6 says, "For all of us have become like one who is unclean, all our righteous deeds," interesting expression there, righteous deeds, religious deeds, "are like a filthy garment." Romans 3:20 says, "because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight." Well, if self-righteousness is not going to seal the deal for any human being, how do you get this white raiment? It's not through self-righteousness, it's through transferred righteousness. Some have even gone so far as to call it an alien righteousness, meaning it's a righteousness that's not your own, it's come from somewhere else. Another fancy name for that is imputed righteousness, transferred righteousness.

There was a lesson that God taught Adam and Eve very early on in Genesis 3. After the fall of man, according to Genesis 3:7, "they sewed fig leaves together and made loin coverings." That's the first act of religion in the Bible, man trying to fix his problem, guilt before God, through his own efforts. Self-righteousness. And of course, it is somewhat interesting that when you get to the end of that chapter, Genesis 3:21 says, "The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them." You'll notice that they wanted to clothe themselves but God says, "No, I will clothe you." Through what? "Through garments of skin." Well, where did these garments of skin come from? Presumably God killed an animal right there on the spot and used the skin to clothe Adam and Eve. You say, "Well, what did the animal do wrong?" Nothing, that's the point. The animal is an innocent sacrifice, the kind of sacrifice that we just celebrated this morning at the Lord's Table. Through a sacrifice of an innocent substitute, Adam and Eve were clothed by God rather than Adam and Eve clothing themselves before God through their own religious works.

As best as I know how to articulate it, that's what Christianity is. In fact, if I only had one verse in the Bible and I could pick which one, I would pick Philippians 3:9 because Philippians 3:9 articulates in the clearest way I know of this great principle that I just talked about. Paul, by the way, in that chapter Paul has been busy explaining his own good works as an unbeliever, and there were plenty of them, but he had sort of a revolution in his thinking and he says this in verse 9 of chapter 3, "and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own." Let me rephrase that or say it again, "not having a righteousness of my own." Can I say it a third time? "Not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness," what does it say here, "which comes from God," alien righteousness accessed here, "on the basis of faith [alone]."

This is what Jesus is speaking of here when he says to the overcomers, the believers in Sardis, "You will be clothed in white garments." I don't know about you but I don't plan on standing before God one day giving him a list of my accomplishments. In fact, somebody online posted a sermon quoting a song, it's an older song, most Christians have probably never heard it or sung it, but the line goes like this,

"When the Judge shall at last call my name from the throne
And will say, 'Who will answer for this guilty soul?'
Thru the darkness I see, He will be waiting for me
And His sweet voice will say, 'I will answer for thee.'"

That just about sums it up, doesn't it?

What is self-righteousness going to get me in the end? It's not going to get me zip. It's not going to get me anything. I have to have someone else's righteousness transferred to me and consequently Christ articulates to these struggling Christians that's what they have. You need to live according to what you have. You don't live to get that, you live because you're that way.

But there's a second blessing and we're going to be spending most of our time on this second blessing also in verse 5, blessing #2, not only clothed in white but number 2, your name will not be erased from the book of life. Notice what verse 5 says, to him "who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life." You say, "Well, what exactly is the book of life?" We have a record of it in Revelation 20:12 and verse 15. It's a record of those who have trusted in Christ. They are put in a book and consequently verse 15 of Revelation 20 says, "if anyone's name was not found written in the book, he was thrown into the lake of fire." The book is a record of those who are exempted from the lake of fire because they have trusted in the one who absorbed the wrath of a holy God the Father in our place. It's the most important book you could ever have your name inscribed in, the book of life. And yet as comforting as this verse is, I believe this verse perhaps more than any other single verse in the whole Bible that I can think of, has caused more terror to Christians because most people read it this way, "To him who overcomes," that means I've got to do something, "To him who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the

book of life." Oh my goodness, what if I don't overcome? Doesn't that verse open up the possibility that Jesus could take out the Wite-Out and take my name in the book of life which was entered into that book when I received Christ as my Savior and I'm not overcoming in my daily life? I had a struggle last week. I had a failing. I had a fall, whatever the issue is. Maybe my name could be removed from the book of life.

The word "overcomer" is "nikao" where we get the word "Nike" as in the shoe company, "victor," and most people look at that verse and to them it means, "Gosh, if I'm not victorious in daily life, then the possibility is open that my name could be removed from the book of life," and they go through the Christian life with great question marks in their mind as to whether they're saved at all. And by the way, what does it really mean to overcome in daily life? I mean, what if I prayed four days instead of the fifth day? What if I resisted sin three days but I didn't do it the remaining days? What if I had a negative thought? What if I had some unforgiveness in my spirit and heart that I really didn't offer toward somebody? Nobody defines who the overcomers are so you're left with just trying to guess, there's no objective standard, and so all of us are thinking, "Well, maybe I'm not an overcomer. If I'm not an overcomer, that verse that seems to me opens the possibility that my name could be taken out of the book of life."

Now a lot of people say, "Well, come on, Andy, you don't really believe, do you, that a Christian could be overcome by sin?" If a Christian could not be overcome by sin and, by the way, we're not promoting that, we're just acknowledging its possibility, if a Christian could not be overcome by sin, then Romans 12:21 shouldn't even be in our Bible, should it, because what does Romans 12:21 say? "Do not be overcome," that's the same word "nikao," "by evil, but overcome evil with good." Now if it's impossible for a Christian to be overcome by sin, why did Paul tell Christians not to be overcome by sin? It's a commandment that's not needed. The reality of the situation and your Bible supports this, read the story of David sometime, Solomon, Samson, I mean, any number of people, Lot, any number of people, Saul, people that I'm convinced for a lot of reasons, I don't have time to go into it here, are in heaven but there are seasons in their lives where they weren't overcomers. If we're honest with ourselves, that can describe us, couldn't it? And people say, "Well, I guess I'm not an overcomer so if I'm not an overcomer, I guess there's the possibility, Revelation 3:5, that my name could be erased from the book of life." So they go literally to their graves with this ambiguity in their minds, question marks in their minds. What I'd like to communicate to you is this: when Jesus says, Revelation 3:5, "He who overcomes," what he is saying is this is a positional fact already made about the believer based on what Jesus Christ has already done for the believer, rather than what the believer does for himself. That's the right way to understand overcomer, nikao, which means "conqueror or victor."

We need to allow the book of Revelation to interpret itself. Revelation 3 comes before Revelation 5. Do you all agree with that? What do we discover in Revelation 5:5? You learn there's only one overcomer. Revelation 5:5 says, "and one of the elders said to me, 'Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, [he] has overcome,'" nikao, same verb, "so as to open," the scroll with seven seals, "the book and its seven seals." We'll be talking about that book as our series progresses. It's the title

deed to the earth. John starts to weep early on in that chapter because no one is worthy to open it and if no one is worthy to open it, the world just goes on and on in its current state of bondage to the devil. I would weep too if that was what I thought reality had come to, but the whole tenure of the chapter changes when you learn there is someone who can open the scroll. Well, who is that one who can open the scroll? It is the overcomer, nikao, Jesus Christ, and because he's the only one that's ever overcome, he alone can open the scroll. I mean, if we're all overcomers and gaining victory in daily life, then we all ought to be opening the scroll and that's not what that chapter says. It says only he and he alone could open the scroll.

John not only wrote the book of Revelation, he wrote four other books: the gospel of John, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John and in John's gospel he records what Christ says in the Upper Room to the disciples. John 16:33, "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace, but in the world you will have tribulation." Amen to that? "But take courage for I have overcome," nikao, "the world." By the way, nikao there is in the perfect tense meaning one-time action with ongoing results. The overcoming has already happened through what Jesus has done for us rather than what we do for ourselves, and that's why he tells his disciples to take courage, some versions say "take heart." I mean, why would I take courage in the fact that the whole thing rests on my shoulders? What's there to take heart in in that? And if I don't do X, Y and Z, maybe I'm gonna get erased, maybe I'm gonna be deleted, how would that be, what is there to take heart in in that? That would not be a note of encouragement, it would be a note of discouragement.

John also wrote 1 John 4:4 and what does he say? "You are from God, little children," speaking to Christians, "and have overcome," there's our word again, nikao, "you have overcome them," why? Here's the answer, "because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world." Notice the perfect tense again. One-time action, ongoing results. Why is it that I'm an overcomer? It's not based on my talent. It's not based on my abilities. It's not based on my holy life. It's because I am united by faith to the one who has already overcome. Every child of God is already an overcomer, it's a positional fact, because you are connected by way of faith to the one who has already overcome.

1 John 5:4-5, also written by John says, "whatever is born of God overcomes," there's our word "nikao" again, whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome," nikao again, "the world--our faith. Who is the one who overcomes," third use of nikao, our same verb from Revelation 3:5, "Who is the one who has overcome the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" I don't know what kind of week you had last week, I don't know what kind of year you've had, I don't know the ups and the downs in your life, I don't know the defeats and the discouragements, but I know this: if you have trusted in Christ by positional definition, you're already an overcomer. You say, "Well, I don't feel like it." Well, since when did feelings have to do with anything? I mean, when you get on an airline, pilot flying the plane, do you want that pilot to go by their feelings, his feelings, her feelings or what the numbers objectively say? Feelings have nothing to do with it. Mathematical facts have everything to do with it.

And what else does it say here? It looks like our screen went down so I'll just go ahead and do it the old fashioned way, read the verses to you. As a matter of fact, why don't you just go to Romans 8:37 until we get this up and running. See, look at that, there's pages turning. What a thought. I wonder if all this technological stuff has made us kind of spiritual dumb-dumbs?

Romans 8:37 says this, "But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us." Now you'll notice this word "we overwhelmingly conquer." That is a compound word meaning two words making up a single word, it is the word "hypernikao." It's certainly the word "nikao," that's the word we've been basing this study on, but what you'll find connected to it is the word "hypernikao." What does that mean? It means you're not just an overcomer in Jesus Christ, you're a super-overcomer. And by the way, the verb there is in the present tense meaning this is a continual aspect of our position, in other words, it never changes. Who are you in Christ Jesus? You are not just an overcomer because he overcame, you are actually a super-overcomer.

Let's go over to the book of Revelation 21, if we could do that. Take a look at verses 6 through 8. This is how the book of Revelation uses the expression nikao/overcomer. Revelation 21:6-8. Now verses 6 and 7 is describing one category of people, verse 8 is describing another category of people. Verses 6 and 7 is describing the believer who gets the water, verse 8 is describing the unbeliever who gets the fire. Two different people, and notice that the believer in comparison to the unbeliever is called an overcomer. Take a look, if you could, at Revelation 21 and notice, if you will, verses 6 and 7. Notice what it says, "Then He said to me, 'It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.'" Do you see the word "he who overcomes"? That's the word "nikao" again. Who is the overcomer? The overcomer is the one who is the Son of God or a son of God, I should say, a child of God. They're an inheritor. They will receive without cost from the water of life. It's very clear he's talking about all Christians. Then if you go down to verse 8 it says, "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." It's very clear here that verse 8 is an unbeliever, verses 6 and 7 is a believer, and what is the believer called here in the very same book that we're studying? The believer is called an overcomer.

Here's the reality of the situation: if you are a child of God, it doesn't matter what's going on in your personal life, you're already an overcomer. And you say, "Well, you know, sometimes I don't act like an overcomer." Well, welcome to the club. The goal of progressive sanctification is to catch up with our position, but that doesn't change the fact that your identity is that of an overcomer.

So having said all that, let's take a second stab at Revelation 3:5. What is Revelation 3:5 saying? Revelation 3:5 says, "To him who overcomes," now who's the overcomer? The believer. In fact, you might even put underneath the word "overcomer, believer," so you understand exactly who it is. "He 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."

Yes, sir? Okay, that would be good because I could still look at it up here. Very good. Thank you. Well, you guys can't see it but I can and that's what's important, right? Because I was going to make reference to this chart right here which you can't see.

On the left column is the incorrect view. Now I know you guys have imagination. The right column is the correct view. Ready for this? Incorrect view. Revelation 3:5 is an imperative verb meaning a command. People think it means you've got to overcome to keep your name in the book of life. That's the incorrect view. The correct view is Revelation 3:5 is not an imperative verb, it's an articular participle, meaning it's describing something.

Incorrect view, Revelation 3:5, "To him who overcomes," is a command. Correct view, Revelation 3:5 modifies "he," it's a description of the pronoun "he." Overcomer is describing he already.

Incorrect view, Revelation 3:5 is prescriptive, meaning it's a command. Correct view, Revelation 3:5 is not prescriptive but it's descriptive, it's describing a reality.

Incorrect view, Revelation 3:5 says the believer must overcome. Correct view says the believer is already an overcoming one. Do you see the difference? Well, you can't see the difference, can you hear the difference?

Incorrect view, what the believer ought to do. Correct view, who the believer already is.

Incorrect view, these are conditions. You don't meet the conditions, you don't get the benefits. Correct view, it's not a condition, it's a statement of fact.

Incorrect view, possible benefits. Correct view, inevitable benefits.

Incorrect view, motivation in the present through potential loss. You'd better keep moving, you'd better keep overcoming, you'd better keep empowering, you'd better keep subduing because if you don't do it, you don't get the benefit. What's the benefit? Keeping your name in the book of life. Correct view is it's motivation through what's inevitably yours. In other words, because of who you are, what he's simply saying is act according to your identity. You know, if you know you're a king, if you're know you're a prince, you know what you're going to do? You're gonna start acting like it. It's not a threat that your status is gonna be ripped out of your hands. What it is is a revelation of who you are which changes how we behave. Incorrect view, motivation in the present through potential loss. Correct view, motivation in the present through what's inevitably ours.

Incorrect view, keep performing to maintain your position. Correct view, let your practice catch up to your position.

Incorrect view, position is maintained through human works. Correct view, position is maintained through divine grace. No amount of backsliding, no amount of disobedience can cancel who you are in Christ Jesus so that really changes the meaning, doesn't it?

So what then is Revelation 3:5 saying? Let's go back to Revelation 3:5, here's what it's saying, "He who overcomes," who's the overcomer? All believers. "He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life." Now what does it mean, "I will not"? What is that saying? In Greek it's two negatives together. It's what you call an "ou me" construction. It is the strongest negation you could ever have in the Greek language with two negatives together. It's like when my daughter when she was seven asked for the keys to the car and I didn't just say, "No," I said, "No, no, no!" That's what the double negation is translated "I will not erase his name from the book of life." You could, it could read this way, "I will not, not ever, no, not ever erase his name from the book of life." Who gets that promise? The overcomer who is already a, what? A believer. Not because of their practice but who they're related to by way of faith, Jesus Christ the ultimate overcomer. That's what that verse is saying.

So rather than this being used as a verse for insecurity, which is how many people believe it reads, it's not saying that at all. It's probably one of the strongest verses you could have in the whole Bible not for insecurity but security if you understand it right. In fact, it may be just as strong as John 10:27-29 which says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one is able to snatch them out of My hand." When it says "never perish," that is your double negative construction. In fact, I don't know why English translations don't pick this up but what's thrown into the double negative is the word "aionia," which means "forever." By the way, that's the same word used to describe God himself. Romans 16:26, the eternal God, it's the word "aionia." So when it says they will never perish, what you have there in Greek is two negatives coupled with the word "forever." In other words, this cannot happen, absolutely cannot happen and that's a promise that's eternal.

Now that becomes one of the strongest verses that we have in the whole Bible on the eternal security of the Christian. I believe that's what Jesus is talking about in Revelation 3:5 when it talks about the overcomer. The overcomer will never, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever have their name erased from the book of life. And you say, "Well, you're creating a climate where people are just gonna sin up a storm. Don't you realize you've got to threaten them with hell every week to get them to live right?" And preachers will do this, they will dangle your salvation in front of you every single sermon. "You'd better live right this week because, gosh, your name is gonna get erased from the book of life." And so they teach a doctrine of insecurity. Do you know what? That really doesn't solve the problem of holy living either because do you know what happens to folks? They get saved on Sunday, they live like the devil Monday through Saturday with in the back of their mind what can they do the following Sunday. "I'll just get saved again." That's why in a lot of churches where they give altar calls, you see the exact same people getting saved every single week and you say, "Well, what's the matter with these people?" The problem with it is they're not under proper doctrine and understading so dangling

salvation and teaching insecurity over and over again doesn't help someone either live a holy life.

I'll tell you what does help, though, is understanding who you are, what you have, and what you possess. You start understanding the promises of God who promises that you will never, ever, ever be erased from the book of life, you know what you'll say? You'll say, "God has done so much for me," and look, it's up there working again. "God has done so much for me that what is reasonable is for me to simply yield to Him on a moment by moment basis." What else could I do? I mean, isn't it reasonable concerning what Christ has done for me, that I would offer him my body as a living sacrifice? I'm not doing it because I'm afraid of losing salvation. I'm not doing it because somehow I think Jesus is gonna take Wite-Out and push me out of the book of life. I'm doing it because I'm blown away at the promises of God.

You know, the story of the Bible, if you don't learn anything in this church but just this one thing it would be this, the story of the Bible is not what we do for God, it's what God has done for us and when the human mind starts to understand that, I don't know of anybody that will say, "Well, you know, I'm just gonna go out and live like the devil." Once we understand our position, you start to have a basic desire to live holy. You're not doing it out of fear, you're doing it out of worship which is a far more powerful motive than doing X, Y and Z to keeping yourself saved every single week. Revelation 3:5 is not talking about insecurity, it's talking about security when we understand that the believer, the overcomer is someone who has trusted in Jesus who is the overcomer and we're united to him by way of faith.

I don't know if you guys in the back have the ability to turn over to Philippians 4:2 and 3, one of the slides down there. If you don't, that's alright, the church survived for 2,000 years without Power Point. I think we'll survive for the next 15 minutes. Philippians 4:2 and 3, take a look at this. Paul says, "I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche," I urge you, "to live in harmony in the Lord." You've got two people in this church that are fighting with each other. So what does Paul say? "Well, y'all, maybe you aren't saved anymore." What he says is right down there in verse 3, Philippians 4:3, their names are in the, what? Book of life. He doesn't say, "Gosh, you guys are acting sinful so maybe your name is gonna be removed from the book of life." He says, "You're in the book of life, now start acting like what God has already decreed you to be." Do you see that? Carnality itself can't take you out of the book of life. That's why I've entitled this message "Security in Jesus Christ," secure in Christ.

You remember when Jesus sent out the 70 in Luke 10:17? "The seventy returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.'" Remember what Jesus said, Luke 10:20? "Do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven." "Lord, look at the spiritual gifts You've given me to help build Your church." Don't rejoice in that, rejoice that your name is in the most important book it could ever be in, the book of life. "Lord, I had one of the greatest years I've ever had in terms of finances and personal income and job growth." Don't rejoice in that, rejoice that your name is recorded in heaven. "Lord, I led 15 people to

Christ and I gave X dollars to that ministry and that ministry." Don't rejoice in that, rejoice that your name is recorded in heaven which is the most important book your name could ever be entered into. And once the name is entered into, Revelation 3:5, nothing can remove it if you understand who the overcomer is. You misunderstand who the overcomer is, what becomes a verse of blessing will become a curse. That's why it's so important to be in a doctrinally, biblically-based church that knows how to rightly divide God's word because if you're not in that kind of environment, you're in an environment where people can misrepresent all kinds of verses to teach all kinds of things that the verse is not saying.

This verse, Revelation 3:5, is not talking about insecurity, it's talking about security. You say, "Well, preacher, wait a minute now. Haven't you read Exodus 32:32?" What you're supposed to say, Exodus 32:32, what does it say? You might want to turn there which says, Moses is speaking, "But now, if You will, forgive their sin--and if not, please blot me out from Your book which You have written!" Isn't Moses saying there, "Lord, take me out of the book"? I mean, if our names are forever in the book of life, this seems to contradict that because Moses says, "Take me out, Lord." Or how about Psalm 69:28, David writes, "May they be blotted out of the book of life And may they not be recorded with the righteous." If we're in the book forever, why is David and Moses talking about folks being removed from the book? Doesn't Psalm 69:28 and Exodus 32:32 contradict your interpretation of Revelation 3:5? And here's my answer: it seemingly contradicts it unless you understand this very important fact, there are two books. Every time you see the word "book" in the Bible it's not talking about the same book and that's why I have my second chart. You see, the devil knew what he was doing with all this stuff.

Now rest easy, this chart is easier to understand than the other chart but it's a chart describing the two books, two sets of books. One is called the book of life, one is called the Lamb's book of life. Well, how do you get into Book A? You get into Book A through physical life. When does physical life start? Contrary to what the pro... There it is, praise the Lord. Contrary to what the pro-abortion movement tells you, life begins at, what? Conception. The moment there is conception in a human being, their name is put into Book A. Well, how do you get into Book B, spiritual life? You get into Book B, the Lamb's book of life, through regeneration. You believe in Christ, the Holy Spirit comes into you, spiritual life begins just like it began with physical life at the point of conception, at spiritual conception the Holy Spirit comes into you, you're a new creature in Christ Jesus, the theologians call this regeneration, and your name is written into Book B. Book A, physical life entered at physical conception. Book B, spiritual life entered into at the point of regeneration.

The first book, the book of physical life is primarily spoken of in the Old Testament. If you're in the Old Testament and you're reading about a book, it's probably Book A, in fact, it's that 100% of the time. If you're in the New Testament and you're reading about a book, it's talking about Book B, the Lamb's book of life. What Scriptures talk about the book of physical life? Exodus 32:32; Psalm 69:28. What Scriptures talk about the book of spiritual life? Luke 10:20; Revelation 3:5; Revelation 12:2; Revelation 20:15; Philippians 4:3. Well, if there's two books, that changes everything, doesn't it?

What is Moses saying there in Exodus 32:32? "But now, if You will, forgive their sin-- and if not, please blot me out from Your book which You have written!" What is Moses talking here? Is he talking about loss of salvation? No, he's talking about Book A. He's saying, "Lord, if You're gonna kill them," the rebellious Israelites, "then kill me too." That's what he's saying. Nothing here at all about a loss of salvation.

Well, how about Psalm 69:28? "May they be blotted out of the book of life And may they not be recorded with the righteous." This is David. This is an imprecatory Psalm where David is praying not for the loss of salvation of his enemies, he is saying, "Lord, kill them." You say, "Well, how can you be so sure of your interpretation?" I'm sure of my interpretation because I'm aware of the fact that the word "book" in the Bible doesn't mean the same thing everywhere it's used, and because nobody is upfront of the Christian public explaining these things to people, your average Christian is left to their own devices and they're looking at books, they're thinking they're the same book and they're developing a doctrine of insecurity and they're living their life in fear when God is saying that's not how you're to live, in fear.

You know, the example I like to use with all of this is the Golden Gate Bridge. I've used this example many times. The Golden Gate Bridge, as you know, is a great place to commit suicide because of its height, maybe I shouldn't say a great place to commit suicide. It's an effective place, don't make it sound like it's a vacation spot or something. It's an effective way to end your life because once you plummet and hit that water, it's like hitting concrete and you just die instantly. So they were constructing the Golden Gate Bridge there in northern California and you had workers working on the bridge and they were plummeting to their deaths and then somebody had a bright idea, "Why don't we put a safety net underneath the workers, so that way when they slip inadvertently while they're building, their life will be spared?" And they did very careful studies on this concerning the productivity of the workers before the net was in place and after the net was in place, and you know the results of the study just through common sense because the workers were secure and death wasn't an issue, they could focus on what they were doing and they were far more productive. As long as the worker was divided between work and security, their work was nullified. Do you see that? This is why the devil is working overtime to convince people and misrepresent verses to make it sound like maybe they're not saved because if the devil can sidetrack you into those kind of anxious thoughts, he's just dissipated the productive energies to do what God has actually called you to do. This is why, to me, this issue of eternal security is a big deal. This is why I'm against people taking verses out of context to teach something that the Bible is not teaching. This is why I'm in favor of slowing down and explaining these things because it has a ramification on daily life.

Revelation 3:5 far from teaching insecurity is teaching security if you understand that the overcomer is Jesus, he's already overcome, we're connected to him by way of faith. That makes me an overcomer whether I feel like it or not, which means that nothing, not even anything, absolutely nothing with 100% certainty can ever remove my name from the book of life.

I hope you leave today knowing that you're blessed. 1. You're clothed in white through imputed, alien, transferred righteousness. And 2, you have ultimate security. And there's a third thing you have which we're going to go over very fast also in verse 5, going back to Revelation 3:5. What does Jesus say? "I will confess his name," who's the "his"? It's the overcomer. Who is the overcomer? All Christians. "I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels." Do you mean to tell me that Jesus is gonna publicly stand up for me today, one day in front of the Father and the angels themselves and say, "That one belongs to Me"? That's what I'm saying. That's what Revelation 3:5 is saying. "That one belongs to Me." Why is that? "Because they are in Me by way of faith." Well, if I'm gonna be spoken for like that, then why am I so upset about people in this world rejecting me? I mean, why do I get so bent out of shape? If this person doesn't like me or that person doesn't like me, or this group over here won't accept me, or that group over there won't accept me, or this place of employment turned me down, why am I upset about that?

That's just minor stuff when you consider that the day is gonna come when Jesus himself will confess you not only in front of the Father, that would be enough, but in front of the angels too? How many angels are there? 10,000 x 10,000. They're innumerable. In fact, in the Bible that's why angels are analogized to stars. How many stars are there in this universe, in this galaxy? Well, with the invention of the Hubble Telescope, the galaxy is so broad that nobody even knows how many stars there are. They're incalculable.

So Jesus is gonna say in front of all of these angels, all of these stars and God the Father himself, "He or she is Mine." Wow. Clothed in white, name will never be erased from the book of life, confessed before the Father and his angels.

Very fast, verse 6, how does it end? The exhortation to listen, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." Are you listening to this? Are you hearing this? Or is this just another religious ritual that we go through this time of the week? Folks, this is transformative if you understand this. And not only that, he doesn't just say "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says," he says, "what the Spirit says to the," what? "Churches." Now is the noun "churches" at the end of verse 6 singular or plural? It's plural. This is not just something that Jesus aimed at Sardis, a church that's been dead and gone for the last 2,000 years. This is a message to the whole church, to the whole body of Christ regardless of what geographical locale they find themselves in and what time in history they're living in. This is to you. This is to me.

Three blessings: clothed in white; name is not erased from the book of life; and you're confessed before the Father in front of the angels. What did Jesus say? "Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven." Is your name recorded in heaven? How do you get your name recorded in heaven? It's very easy: you trust in the one who overcame in your place. That's the point of this. You trust in the one who did the work on our behalf. Jesus is the overcomer. Jesus did it all. How do you trust in the one who overcame on your behalf? You simply believe in what he's done. Believe is not just intellectual sense, it actually

means to trust. Another way of saying it is via faith, faith by itself. The Spirit of God convicts people of their need to trust in the overcomer Jesus Christ. That was my closing song over there, and so our exhortation to you is to do that.

God help us to leave this kind of message just with the flesh trying harder to do something it can't do anyway. May God spare us from that as we trust in Jesus Christ and him alone. You can do that right now where you're seated. It's a matter of privacy between you and the Lord where you trust in what Jesus has done. It's not a matter of walking an aisle, raising a hand, giving money. It's a matter of personal and private faith and so if it's something you need more explanation on, I'll be available after the service to talk.

Shall we pray?

Father, we're rich, we don't even realize it. We're so preoccupied with emergencies that we don't even stop to consider what we have. We thank You, Lord, today that we're clothed in white, we have eternal security and we're going to be confessed before the Father and the angels. Be with us, Father, as we continue to navigate our way under Your illuminating Spirit the book of Revelation as next week we start the church at Philadelphia. We'll be careful to give You all the praise and the glory. We ask these things in Jesus' name and God's people said, Amen.