

WHAT LIES BENEATH?

Sunday Sermon

Bro. Courtney D. Jeffrey

3/25/18

Introduction:

The grace that has been provided to the Believer is truly amazing. It grants the opportunity that God is not looking at us for who we used to be, but who we are in Christ. It allows God to not look upon the sins we are prone to commit, but look upon the perpetual sacrifice of His Son, Jesus. This grace empowers us through the leading of the Holy Spirit to be everything we can't be in and of ourselves and prevents the things we long to be from our flesh.

God's grace has transformed us all from the inside out.

Unfortunately, this is not always what is seen on the outside. Given the choice, we often elect to reside in our old nature and let the ugliness of sin be the view of us that is seen. When given opportunities to love the brethren, we elect rather to love ourselves. Provided the chance to show the supernatural, we reflect the natural.

At times on the outside we look like we are something different. People see our claims to being children of God and some believe it. They see things they we do, not necessarily knowing the motivation and think that it is real. We can fool men, but we cannot fool God.

The saints at the Church at Sardis struggled with this spiritual apathy. Others affirmed them as being spiritually alive, but the Lord confirmed them a spiritually dead. The confidence in the accolades of other men, left them in a place of spiritual neglect to the things of God. Beneath the surface of this outward veneer of spiritualism, lied the ugly reality of a rotting sin nature ready to bubble forth to the surface.

The question arises when examining the Church at Sardis: Are we ones abiding in the grace God has given us? Are we reflecting true life because of the indwelling of His Son? Are we projecting an image of His love for our brethren that draws men to Christ? Or are we just calling ourselves Christians and doing the things that we think comes along with it while neglecting the true relationship God has called us to?

Today we will examine the Christian Life and hopefully measure in our own lives if what lies beneath is the same as what is seen on the outside.

- I. **THE CASE OF THE SAINTS AT SARDIS (Rev. 3:1-2)**
 - A. Self-Evaluation

- 1) Living on Reputation of Spiritual Life
- 2) Living on the Belief of Completed Works (cf. Jude 1:11)

B. True Evaluation

- 1) Spiritually Dead (cf. Rom. 7:9)
- 2) Spiritually Apathetic (Unwatchful)
- 3) Spiritually Neglectful to Christian Life (Remaining things close to death)

II. THE EXTERIOR REPRESENTATION OF THE BELIEVER

A. Words Representing Outward Appearance of Man (cf. Phil. 2:6, 8)

- 1) Μορφή (Mor-phay)¹ – CDJ – the true exterior representation of a thing, which is able to be seen with the eye or mind’s eye. Unalterable by natural means.
 - a) The Saints at Sardis Possessed the Form of a Believer
 - b) The Believer Today Possesses the Form of a Christ
- 2) Σχημα (Scay-ma)² – the strictly external appearance of a thing to the one beholding it that is alterable by the one possessing it.
 - a) The Things Seen by the Other Believers Different from True Appearance
 - b) The Things Seen by Others Today Can Be Different from the True Appearance

B. The Outward Appearance of the Believer

- 1) The Believer can alter the outward appearance through action
- 2) The Believer can live as on who has not been changed because of the presence of the Sin Nature
- 3) The Believer can be deceived to think we are living as changed, but be living in the old nature
- 4) The Believer can possess the true form but not utilize the power behind it – 2 Tim. 3:5
- 5) The Believer can possess the true form but be a hypocrite – Rom. 2:20

III. THE INSIDE OUT REALITY OF THE BELIEVER

A. The Believer Was Transformed³ in Spiritual Appearance

- 1) Occurred at Salvation through Spirit Baptism – 1 Cor. 6:11
- 2) Occurred by the Renewing of the Mind – Rom. 12:2

B. The Believer Can Be Transformed in Spiritual Appearance

- 1) Dependent on Believers’ Volition (in time) – Rom. 12:2
- 2) Dependent on the Work of the Holy Spirit – 2 Cor. 3:18

C. The Believer Can Be True Representation for Saints

¹ Friberg – **18726** μορφή, ἡς, ἡ (1) *form, external appearance*; generally, as can be discerned through the natural senses (MK 16.12); (2) of the nature of something, used of Christ’s contrasting modes of being in his preexistent and human states *form, nature* (PH 2.6, 7)

² Friberg – **26097** σχῆμα, ατος, τό as what may be known from without about a person or thing; (1) of persons *outward appearance, form, bearing* (PH 2.7); (2) of a way of life (*distinctive*) *form, nature, present scheme of things* (1C 7.31)

³ Friberg – **18288** μεταμορφώω 1aor. pass. μετεμορφώθη; only passive in the NT; (1) of an outwardly perceptible change of form *be transfigured, be changed in appearance* (MT 17.2); (2) of an inward change of nature *be changed, be transformed* (RO 12.2)

- 1) The Thessalonian Saints were a model for the other Churches in Asia – 1 Thess. 1:7
- 2) The Apostles provided a model to the Saints – Phil. 3:17; 2 Thess. 3:9; 1 Tim. 4:12
- 3) The Believers are encouraged to be a model to the Saints – Tit. 2:7; 1 Pet. 5:3

CONCLUSION: