

This Is ~~Not~~ The End

Group Discussion Guide // Week 3

WARM-UP

1. Are you a person who takes time with big purchases to consider the data, or do you go with your gut? How does it typically work out for you?
 2. Whose opinion mattered most to you during your teenage years? Why was having a good reputation with that person (or those people) so important to you?
 3. What has interested you about the book of Revelation so far?
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TRUTH

Being a follower of Jesus during the time Revelation was written was not easy. It cost people their jobs, their friends, the money, and sometimes their lives. Yet people remained faithful in following Jesus. There was something about following Jesus that offered a reward greater than the cost to follow. In each of his letters to the churches, Jesus explains what makes following him worth the cost.

Sardis

Read Revelation 3:1-6

The disciples in Sardis were so preoccupied with how they looked to outsiders that they ignored their internal condition. This is a temptation that faces every follower of Jesus in every generation. But Jesus isn't interested in the appearance of having it all together. He's interested in the true condition of the hearts of his people. Jesus tells this church to deal with their sin. If they do, he promises that they'll walk with him. Walking with Jesus is so much more valuable than have a great reputation but a faith on the inside that's dead.

- ▶ Read Matthew 23:25-28. What were the Pharisees prone to hide with their "stellar reputations"?
- ▶ What do you think are some of the benefits of walking with Jesus through life?

Philadelphia

Read Revelation 3:7-13

The followers of Jesus in Philadelphia were targeted by the Jews in the city. They were likely thrown out of the synagogue and excluded by their friends and family. They continued to endure, and Jesus

commends them for their faith. He then promises to make them “pillars” in God’s temple. Put another way, even though they were excluded by others in the city of Philadelphia, in the city of God they would find a place of belonging that no one could take away.

- ▶ What impact do you think this promise had on the followers of Jesus in Philadelphia?
- ▶ What do you associate with the word “belong”?

Laodicea

Read Revelation 3:14-19

Rather than humbling themselves before God, these disciples let their wealth go to their heads. They wrongly believed that because they had prospered they didn’t need anything. As a result their faith was lukewarm. But God in his grace points out their error. Because he loves them, he doesn’t want their faith to be lukewarm.

GRACE

Read Revelation 3:20-22

At the center of all of these promises is Jesus himself. Jesus promises that the believers at Sardis will walk with him. He promises a place in his city to the disciples in Philadelphia. To the Laodiceans he promises to share his throne. Jesus is our great reward. When we get him we get everything we want and need. In light of the extraordinary gift of Jesus, the cost of following him is small.

CHANGE

1. What makes these promises from Jesus (walking with him, a place in his city, sharing his throne) so valuable in your opinion?
2. What does it look like for you in this time of life to live out a passionate rather than a lukewarm faith?

Pray for a revelation of the amazing rewards Jesus offers to those who conquer.