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Scripture

Revelation 3: 1-6

[1] "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars:

"I know your works; you have a name of being alive, but you are dead. [2] Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is on the point of death, for I have not found your works perfect in the sight of my God. [3] Remember then what you received and heard; obey it, and repent. If you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. [4] Yet you have still a few persons in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes; they will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. [5] If you conquer, you will be clothed like them in white robes, and I will not blot your name out of the book of life; I will confess your name before my Father and before his angels. [6] Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches."

Devotional

Every year during Advent, I find myself listening to the same song at least once: "Rebel Jesus," performed by the Chieftains and Jackson Browne. It's certainly a unique Christmas song. Rather than celebrating Christ's glorious destiny and humble birth, it is all about His message, particularly His concern for the least of us. It's an important reminder for me, just like this passage, that as much as I might want to "take Advent off," using it as a time for rest, reconnecting, and maybe a dash of introspection and prayer, preparing the way for Christ involves much more. It means opening my eyes and heart to the suffering and lonely and extending Christ's message of healing to them in turn. It's not easy, especially when the world seems so dark, as it has this year, but it's in the darkest times that Christ calls us to be light.

Prayer

Christ our Savior and Guide, wash us clean this Advent, that our lives may be light in the cold, dark places of our world. Lead us, we pray, in your name. Amen.