

Week Three: *Survival in a Call-Out Culture*
Revelation 3:1-6

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. This week, we'll continue focusing on what it's like to live in a call-out culture. We'll also meditate on how Jesus would have us thrive individually and as a community. To start this off, we need to dive back into Revelation 3:1-6. What sticks out to you about this passage?
2. Does anything in this passage surprise you?
3. Why is Jesus "calling out" the church in Sardis?
4. What does Jesus promise to "the one who conquers"? Do you believe this applies to you?
5. What is your understanding of the term "reputation"? In our culture today, what things is our "reputation" based off of?
6. Often people have two views of themselves. One is their personal view of who they are. The second view, on the other hand, is a person's perception of how others see them. This could be described as their "reputation." With the growth of social media, this concept has heightened. For example, a person may see himself or herself as boring or "ordinary," yet their Instagram or Facebook account may highlight only the greatest of adventures they experience. Because of this, he or she knows that their followers probably see them as exciting and different. Have you experienced a difference between your own views of yourself and how others view you?
7. How has the difference between your reputation and your own self-view affected your life?
8. There is a third view of ourselves that we can and *should* always remember. This is not our view of ourselves, and it is not the world's view of us. Instead, it's the way we're viewed by our Heavenly Father. Because of what Christ has done, we are holy and righteous in the eyes of our Father. Spend the rest of your FIFTEEN in prayer, thanking God for what he's done and how he sees us.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

9. Today we're going to talk about our "call-out" culture. Expert Pamela Paresky has written an article in which she talks about our society's way of judging others and exploiting their mistakes. She says, "In a call-out culture, witch hunts are back." We are eager to label others as either good or evil. What is wrong with this cultural pattern?
10. Where do you see this "call-out" culture the most in our society?

11. How have you experienced the effects of this “call-out” culture in your own life or seen it in the lives of others?
12. Read Luke 6:37-42. We know that all people have sinned and fall short of God’s standards (Romans 3:23). At the same time, Jesus warns us about the danger of trying to sit on the judgement throne. What is that danger?
13. How does the call-out culture contradict how God has handled our shortcomings?
14. End your FIFTEEN in prayer by thanking God for his grace that covers our imperfections. Ask him to help you treat others in the same way, through the Holy Spirit.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

15. Today we’re going to focus on the difference between truth and accusations. To start off, read Revelation 3:1-6 again.
16. As we talked about previously, living in a call-out culture means that we are quick to exploit the missteps of others. Is calling out others always a bad thing?
17. What do you believe is the difference between speaking truth and accusing others?
18. In Revelation 3:1-6, how does Jesus call out the church in Sardis? Is he speaking truth or accusing?
19. The truth is, Jesus does not sacrifice any truth with the church in Sardis. He cares too much about them to turn a blind eye and let the people drift away from his heart. However, he does *not* leave them to dwell on their mistakes. He continues by imploring them to turn back to him. He promises that they will inherit eternal life. Have you experienced Jesus’ call to turn and follow him? Reflect on this.
20. If Jesus speaks truth, who is the one who accuses?
21. Satan’s name literally translates to “the accuser.” While the Holy Spirit convicts, the devil accuses. Instead of making you want to turn to God and be restored, Satan tears you down with accusations of doubt, worthlessness, and a hopeless condition. What are some lies in your life that the devil has told you about yourself or your sin?
22. Read James 4:7-8. How can we respond to the devil’s accusations?
23. Sometimes, the issue with being judged or “called out” in society is that the devil uses those accusations to make us

believe lies about ourselves. Remember that when we resist the devil's schemes and invite Jesus into the situation, the devil must leave. Spend the rest of your FIFTEEN in prayer, asking God to help you and your loved ones recognize the accusations the devil wants to plant in our minds. Ask God to overturn those lies and remind us of who we really are in him.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

24. As we talked about in Day One, our reputation weighs heavily on us. The church in Sardis likely felt that pressure. As people, why do we put so much weight on how we are perceived by others?

25. Read 1 Peter 2:12 and Ecclesiastes 7:1. Is there a balance to how much weight we put on our reputation? Should we not care at all?

26. Read Genesis 3:8-13. Once Adam and Eve realize their sin, they are afraid God will know what they've done. What do they do in response to this fear?

27. When we fear judgment and rejection, we hide. It's the natural response. What parts of your life have you tried to hide from God or others for fear of rejection or judgment?

28. All throughout the Bible, it's made apparent that *all* have sinned and fallen short. How does this change your feelings about rejection and the pressure to appear perfect?

29. Read Revelation 3:3-6 again. Just like us, the people in Sardis who "have not soiled their clothes" are not perfect. They too have sinned and fallen short. Why, then, does Jesus call them worthy?

30. Have you released the pressure to appear perfect, and given it to God?

31. How can you help others do the same?

32. Finish out your FIFTEEN by asking God to help you release the pressure to be perfect. Reflect on the fact that he sent his Son to pay the ultimate price for our imperfections. Thank God for this sacrifice, which clothes us in perfect righteousness.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

33. We have effectively "called out" the issues that come with living in a call-out culture. After taking some time to reflect and spend time in God's Word, what is a biblical way to address the shortcomings of others?

34. Unfortunately, our world is broken. We cannot expect people who do not follow Jesus to reflect his heart in the way they treat others. Read Ephesians 4:32. How can we respond when others are unfairly judging or exploiting us?

35. Have you let the fear of being judged keep you from living boldly and confidently for Jesus?

36. Reflect on Revelation 3:5. When you are in Christ, this is how the one true God sees you. How does this change your fear of judgment from others?

37. Can you help friends or family engage in a “call-out” culture in a loving, encouraging way? What might you say to them?

38. Finish our your FIFTEEN by asking God to forgive you for the times that you have not reflected his heart in the way you’ve judged others and engaged in this call-out culture. Ask him for the power to show honesty *and* grace, and to speak the truth in love. Pray that he will show you others who need guidance in this area as well. Thank God for all he’s given you and for renewing your mind so that you can show his heart to everyone he’s put in your life.