Unvanquishable

Overcoming as Men of Faith

Unvanquishable Reputation

Revelation 3:1-6

Men's Breakfast

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Opening Comments

- Today we continue the series: **UNVANQUISHABLE: Overcoming as Men of Faith**
- This series is for men!
- Let's open with a word of prayer. **Pray.**
- Our definition for unvanquishable is.

Unvanquishable means unable to be defeated, conquered, or overcome, describing something with an invincible, unbeatable, or unconquerable quality, like a strong spirit or an unstoppable army. It's an adjective used for people, forces, or concepts that are incredibly resilient and cannot be subdued.

- It is my belief that every man can be unvanquishable.
- Turn to **Revelation 3.**
- Two months ago, I shared a message titled: Unvanquishable Character.
- Character describes who we are, whether people are watching or not.
- This morning, we are going to look at the importance of our reputation.

Reputation is the overall estimation, opinion, or judgment held by the public or a community about a person, organization, or thing based on their past actions, character, and behaviors.

- Your reputation is who you are to those observing your life.
- It matters what other people think about your life.
- Your reputation is a key that either unlocks opportunity or blocks opportunity.
- It either opens doors or closes doors.
- Character and reputation are closely linked but not the same.
- It is a problem when our character and reputation do not line up.
- Jesus is going to tell the church of Sardis that this is the problem they have.
- **Revelation 3:1**
- Jesus begins by telling them that He knows what is going on in the church.
- That is true of each of our lives.

- Jesus knows everything there is to know about us.
- He always knows what we are doing, why we are doing it, and what the results are going to be.
- Jesus knows you!
- That should fill you with awe and wonder.
- No one will ever know you as well as Jesus does, and no will love you more that Jesus does, even knowing you as well as He does.
- Jesus tells the pastor of the church of Sardis "…you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead."
- This church had a reputation of being spiritually alive, but Jesus says they are spiritually dead.
- They were doing things that the world around them interpreted as good spiritual things.
- This should remind us that just because a person or church looks spiritual, doesn't mean that it is.
- What makes someone or a church spiritual is the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.
- There are lots of churches and so-called "Christians" who are acting like believers but lack the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and are not walking in faith and obedience to the Word of God.
- Paul described people in the end days and then said this. **2 Timothy 3:5**

5 …having a form of godliness but denying its power.

- It is one of the signs of the end times.
- Jesus tells them to get their spiritual act together.
- **Revelation 3:2-3**
- This church was made up of a lot of people who were believers in name only.
- They had made a confession of faith, but there was no transformational work of the Holy Spirit going on.
- His exhortation to them was to hold fast and repent.
- They had to hold fast to the truth that they claimed they believed but weren't living.
- And they had to repent for not living for Christ as they should be.
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- If you look at them from the outside you would admire them and commend them as a good, thriving church.
- Jesus doesn't focus on the externals – He sees the heart.
- God told the prophet Samuel to anoint one of Jesse's sons to be the Second king of Israel. **1 Samuel 16:6-7**

6 So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, "Surely the LORD's anointed *is* before Him!" 7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For *the LORD does* not *see* as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

- The church in Sardis looked like a good church, but God could see something the rest of the world couldn't.
- Something is wrong in Sardis - 'but you are dead' – obviously, not physically dead. **Skip Heitzig**

This church was a morgue with a steeple.

- Jesus said this another way to the Pharisees, the religious people of His time. **Matthew 23:27-28**

27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men's* bones and all uncleanness. 28 Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness."

- They are acting like they loved and worshipped God, but it was all about the show, there was no life to their worship.
- In the church today we see this in dead orthodoxy or traditionalism, where worship and works are controlled by denominational mandates or by the traditions of the prior generations.
- The other end of the spectrum is dead liberalism, liberal theology – people worshipping God as they believe is right.
- In both cases the Holy Spirit is omitted, ignored, and resisted.
- Spiritual life requires the active working of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian and the church.
- The church in Sardis had received and heard what they needed to be a true living church; they just weren't doing it.
- But not everyone in the church was like that.
- **Revelation 3:4**
- 'not defiled their garments' with dead religion or liberal theology.
- The white is a symbol of purity and holiness.

- Jesus says those who have kept themselves pure in this dead church are worthy to walk with Him.
- Then Jesus makes a promise to those who overcome in the dead church.
- **Revelation 3:5**
- To be clothed in white is to have a reputation that is true and pure.
- Most in the church in Sardis had a reputation but it was neither true nor pure.
- I started off by saying that our reputation either unlocks opportunities or it closes the door to them.
- As we go through life, if we are walking with Jesus in faith and obedience, He will lead us to doors of opportunity. **2 Corinthians 2:12**

12 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to *preach* Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord…

- Well, why is that important to us. **John 10:10**

10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

- The devil will use anything he can to prevent us from living the abundant life, including your reputation with those around you.
- The unvanquishable man has a reputation that causes people to be open to God's will.
- Not everyone, of course.
- Some are opposed to God no matter how closely you walk with God.
- Remember, many were opposed to Jesus when He walked with God perfectly.
- Another promise is that Jesus will not blot out your name from the Book of Life.
- There is an ominous sound to that, for good reason.
- The Book of Life is very important.
- The Book of Life is what will be used to determine whether you get into heaven or not. **Philippians 4:3**

3 And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names *are* in the Book of Life.

- Everyone destined for heaven has their name in the Book of Life.
- Jesus in our text that someone's name can be blotted out of that book.

- That doesn't mean you can lose your salvation.
- It seems to me that everyone God creates has their name written in this book, but at some point, based on their rejection of God and His will and Word, their name is erased.
- That has eternal consequences. **Revelation 17:8**

8 The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

- If someone's name is not found in the Book of Life, they will share the same fate as the Antichrist, to be cast alive into the Lake of Fire.
- If you are not sure if your name is in the Book of life, repent, then receive Christ as your Savior.
- Instead of blotting your name out of the Book of Life, Jesus will confess your name before God and the angels.
- Imagine that, walking into the throne room of God and having Jesus announce your name; this one is mine.
- Jesus closes this letter just as He does all seven in this section.
- **Revelation 3:6**
- One of the things that will make a man unvanquishable is a willingness to hear God speak to him.
- But not just willing to hear, willing to hear with an intention to obey what we hear.
- Every man has a reputation.
- An unvanquishable man has a reputation that points people to Jesus.
- An unvanquishable reputation is not something that just happens; it is built with every thought, choice, and deed.
- An unvanquishable reputation takes a lifetime to build but can be destroyed with one sinful act.
- We must care about our reputation.
- It is a tool God can use to get His will done on the earth.
- We must tend to our reputation.
- Our reputation is built moment-by-moment, day-by-day, with everything we think, believe, and do.

- This means being deliberate and not allowing the world, or life in general, to determine where we are going. **2 Corinthians 10:4-5**

4 For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ…

- Don't let life tell you where you are going, follow Jesus as He leads you by the Holy Spirit.
- Finally, we must protect our reputation.
- By this I mean be sensitive to things that might endanger your reputation.
- As a pastor, one of the things I do to protect my reputation is how I relate to women.
- Paul was speaking about rebuking people but did it using a principle that applied much more broadly. **1 Timothy 5:1-2**

1 Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort *him* as a father, younger men as brothers, 2 older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.

- I don't have friendships with women apart from my wife.
- I do everything I can to maintain an environment of purity when it comes to women. **1 Thessalonians 5:22**

22 Abstain from every form of evil.

- If something looks like it could be harmful to your reputation, stay away from it.
- A man with a Christ-like reputation can be a powerful tool in the hand of Almighty God.
- It also makes the abundant life Jesus promised possible.
- I am convinced that every man indwelt by the Holy Spirit can be unvanquishable.
- Gentlemen, be unvanquishable.
- **<u>Prayer</u>**