A Few Worthy Members of a Dead Church
Revelation 3:4

Introduction:
A. Sardis was a dead church (v. 1).
   1. Was alive in name only (v. 1).
   2. Works were not perfect before God (v. 2).
   3. Needed to repent (v. 3).
   4. Threatened with judgment (v. 3).
B. Yet, “even in Sardis,” there were a few worthy members (v. 4).
   1. Undefiled.
   2. Promised reward.
C. This circumstance raises some important questions:
   1. How could there be faithful Christians in the midst of a dead church?
   2. How does one’s relationship to others in the church effect one’s relationship to God?

Discussion:
I. One’s Relationship to God Is Personal.
   A. Each member of a congregation is responsible for himself. (Matt. 25:14,15; Gal. 6:4,5).
      1. Work together as a body, but each responsible for his share. (Cf. Eph. 4:16)
      2. Sing together, but each responsible for his own (1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19).
      3. Commune together, but each responsible for his own. (1 Cor. 11:28, 29).
      4. Give together, but each responsible for his own. (1 Cor. 16:1,2; 2 Cor. 9:7).
   B. Each member of a congregation will be judged for himself. (Rom. 14:12; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:13).
      1. Will not be saved as a group.
      2. Will not be judged as a group.

II. One’s Relationship to God Does Not Necessarily Depend on Purity of the Rest of the Church.
   A. If one does not participate in their errors. (cf. 1 Tim. 5:22).
      1. In congregational activities, then all are affected (cf. Corrupt worship, work, or organization)
      2. In personal matters, then all may not be affected.
   B. If one does not aid (endorse, condone, defend, excuse) their errors. (2 Tim. 4:2-4; 2 John 9-11).
   C. If one does not withhold his opposition to their errors. (Acts 20:26,27,31).

III. One’s Relationship to God Does Not Always Demand Leaving a Generally Corrupt Church.
   A. One might remain and strengthen the church — as long as he keeps himself pure.
      1. Patiently correcting the opposition (2 Tim. 2:24-26).
      2. Patiently teaching them as long as they will endure it. (2 Tim. 4:1-5)
   B. One would need to “pull out” if:
      1. He cannot fulfill his personal duty in congregational activities. (Cf. Music, treasury).
      2. He cannot be heard in his efforts to correct errors — they will not endure sound doctrine.
      3. He cannot resist the pressure to conform or compromise (cf. 1 Cor. 10:12).
      4. He cannot avoid being a stumbling block to others. (Luke 17:1 cf ASV).
   C. One would need to go to another congregation where he could be pure - but it would not be perfect!

Conclusion:
A. You must answer for yourself.
B. You must be one of the undefiled — few or many.
C. You must not allow others to defile you.