

SINKING IN SATAN'S CITY

Revelation 2:12–17

Avid hikers are used to receiving warnings before setting off on their favourite trails—“beware loose stones,” “watch for bears,” “look out for falling trees.” However, in 2021, apparently there’s a new hazard that demands caution: The selfie. Says one New York news outlet, “what many people don't think about is that every year dozens of people across the country are injured or killed by taking a selfie and not watching their footing. Many park officials have put up signs and barriers to keep hikers safe on popular trails, but many people ignore them and get as close as possible to the edges of cliffs and waterfalls to get the perfect photo.”¹ Wanting to capture the moment, danger and warnings are ignored to potentially harmful and fatal ends. Like these determined shutterbugs, the church of Jesus Christ can become distracted well—whether by *hardship* or *success*—to the point of ignoring warning signs, sacrificing footing, and risking harm to ourselves, one another, and the mission we’ve been entrusted with.

An AREA of SUCCESS

vv. 13, 17

A FLAW to ADDRESS

- The flaw: *Syncretism*

vv. 14–15

- The fix: *Repentance*

vv. 12, 16

Purge or be Purged!

¹ <https://spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/central-ny/weather/2021/06/25/the-risk-of-getting-the-perfect-selfie-when-hiking>