

Series "Jesus Unveiled"
"The Suffering Church"
Revelation 2:8-11
Part-5

James 1:2-4

"Scripture Links Persecution And Spiritual Strength."

Of The 7 Churches, Only 2 Churches Jesus Did Not Need to Correct or Reprove: Smyrna and Philadelphia.

Revelation – "to unveil; to uncover."

Key Verse Of Revelation: Revelation 1:19

Thought Of Our Passage: Don't Be Fearful, But Be Faithful. Don't Look At The Suffering, But Beyond To The All-Controlling God.

1. Verse 8 – The Author

2. Verse 9 – The Approval

3. Verses 10-11 – The Admonition

1. Verse 8 – The Author:

Revelation 2:8

"And to" – John just finished his letter to The Church of Ephesus, Revelation 2:1-7.

"the angel of the church" – The word "angel" – "messenger; minister". It is the pastor, Revelation 1:20.

(Map) "Smyrna" – literally, "bitter"; translated as "Myrrh" – aromatic gum that came from a thorny bush which is bitter but produced an aromatic perfume. City named for a perfume, "Smyrna".

Smyrna The City – 35 miles North of Ephesus, Population – 100,000, 1st Century ~ Today called "Izmir", population 2.8 million.

Smyrna was considered a great city of Asia.

Proud Patriotic City – had been involved in several civil wars, and each time, the residents sided with Rome.

Smyrna Was One Of The First Cities To Introduce The Worship Of Rome: Spirit of Rome, to gratitude for Rome, to peace of Rome, and finally to the god of Rome.

Citizens would receive a certificate indicating that they were accepted.

Smyrna had a large population of Jews – They were exempt from Caesar worship. The Jews were informants against the Christians.

Smyrna Represents The Period Of The Persecuted Church: 100-313 AD; In Church History – 5-7,000,000 Died.

The Church of Smyrna was persecuted because – They refused to call Caesar “Lord”; Would not worship Caesar.

Jesus Reveals Himself To The Church Of Smyrna – “The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this:”

Jesus The Eternal One – “The first and the last” – Revelation 1:17 – “I am the First and the Last” – Title for God, Isaiah 44:6; 48:12; 41:4; Jesus, equal nature of the Father.

“Was Dead” – “who became dead”

“Has come to life” – “who lives”; Resurrected Lord.

Jesus is revealed as the resurrected One: comes as the eternal one with no beginning and no end, the one who faced death and is alive.

2. Verse 9 – The Approval:

Revelation 2:9

“I know” – 7X, To all 7 Churches. Jesus is walking in the midst of the churches.

(NLT) Psalm 139:1-6

Jesus Reveals 3 Things He knew About The Church Of Smyrna:

- 1. “Your Tribulation”** – Literally, “pressure, serious trouble, burden that crushes.”

1 Corinthians 10:13

Escape – nautical term; “used of sailors that would lighten their ship in the midst of a storm by throwing overboard weighty cargo.”

John 16:33

Jesus Christ enables us to cope with life, to meet the pressures of life. Ezekiel 2:1-2

2. **“Your Poverty”** – Literally, “possessing absolutely nothing, nothing at all.” Hebrews 10:34

Matthew 6:19-21

“But you are rich” – This is a sharp contrast to the words spoken to the

Church of Laodicea, Revelation 3:17.

2 Corinthians 6:10

2 Corinthians 8:9

“But you are rich” – Ephesians 3:8

3. **“Blasphemy”** – “slander, evil speaking” – Devil – The false accuser of the brethren.

1 Peter 4:14

“by those who say they are Jews and are not,” – Romans 2:28-29

“but the Synagogue of Satan.” – Revelation 3:9

John 8:44

Persecution has always purified the church; Godliness calls for persecution – 2 Timothy 3:12

Matthew 5:10-12

Philippians 1:29

1 Peter 2:23

3. Verses 10-11 – The Admonition:

Revelation 2:10

Don't Fear Suffering: "Do not fear" – "stop being afraid"; "what you are about to suffer" – Psalm 56:3.

Matthew 24:6 – "see that you are not frightened."

"the devil (responsible) is about to cast some of you into prison"

Job 1:8

1 Peter 1:7

"you will have tribulation 10 days" – a Greek expression for "short time, limited or allotted time."

Be Faithful: "Be faithful until death"

"I will give you the crown of life" – (stephanos) Not merit – we don't merit grace, The Crown is a gift. Same as the tree of life, Revelation 2:7, Revelation 2:11.

"He who Overcomes" – Every True Christian is an overcomer,
1 John 5:4-5.

"will not be hurt by the Second Death" – Rev. 20:11-15 – Lake of fire –
Second Death.

Application:

1. The Purest Christian Graces Are Those Forged In The Furnace Of Adversity. Persecution And Trials Are Certain And An Essential Part Of The Christian Life.
2. False Christians Do Not Stay To Face Persecution, Because False Believers Do Not Want To Endure The Pain.
3. Trials And Persecution Strengthen And Refine Genuine Saving Faith, But Uncover And Destroy False Faith.

Seven Churches of Revelation

— Chapters 2-3 —

- ① Ephesus
- ② Smyrna
- ③ Pergamos
- ④ Thyatira
- ⑤ Sardis
- ⑥ Philadelphia
- ⑦ Laodicea

Island of Patmos: where John received the vision

