

The Church at Smyrna

Revelation 2:8-11

Introduction:

Smyrna 35 miles north of Ephesus / Now Izmir, Turkey

One of the most beautiful cities in all of Greece

Along the shore of the Aegean Sea / Destroyed in 700 BC and resurrected in 300 BC

100,000 residence / The Birthplace of Homer

Center of Caesar worship / Kaiser Kurios = Caesar is Lord

20,000 seat Amphitheater / Temple of Jupiter / Shrines to Apollo

Became the center of trial for those refusing to bow to Caesar

Smyrna means Myrrh which was the number 1 export in the Roman empire

Matthew 2:11 Gold Frankincense and myrrh (Smyrna)

Mark 15:23 Wine mingled with gall (Smyrna)

John 19:39 Brought a mixture of Myrrh (Smyrna) to the tomb

Being the city of myrrh and being the city destroyed and raised again, God is symbolically addressing these people

Smyrna and Philadelphia are the only churches that are not corrected in this list

Verse 8 The Words between a Messiah and His Messenger

1. To the pastor
2. Polycarp
3. I am the first and the last, the one that was dead and is alive.

Verse 9-10a The Warning to a Suffering Church Family

1. I know your pressure (Tribulation) = to squeeze and crush like a grape
2. I know your poverty
3. I know you will be in prison by the devil's hand
4. I know your persecution by impostors
5. I see the phonies from Satan
6. Do not be afraid
7. You are rich
8. You shall have tribulation 10 days
9. We know historically there were 10 emperors and 10 waves of persecution in Rome

Verse 10b-11 The Way to Endure to the End

1. Be thou faithful until death (Psalm 23)
2. I will give thee a crown (James 1:12)
3. He that overcomes will not experience the second death
4. 2 birthdays, 1 death / 1 birthday, 2 deaths
5. Jesus understands (Isaiah 53)
6. The Gentle Savage Still Seeking the End of the Spear
7. The 5 missionaries and the song from heaven
8. Pleasant View Central Baptist Church in Philippines

Conclusion:

1. When pressure comes
2. When persecution comes
3. When prison comes
4. When death comes
5. Know Christ has overcome and we are called to endure all things.

Challenge:

1. Be faithful in all things
2. Be fervent in your prayer for the persecuted Smyrna churches of the world.