



Sermon Series: Revelation - Jesus Revealed
Sermon Title: Smyrna... Remain Faithful; Keep Going!!!
Scripture: Revelation 2:8-11
Pastor Chris Fritz
Sunday, July 30, 2023

INTRODUCTION

*“...it is my eager expectation and hope that I will NOT be at all ashamed,
but that with full courage now as always CHRIST will be honored in my body,
whether BY LIFE or BY DEATH. For to me to live IS CHRIST, and to die IS GAIN.”
(Philippians 1:20-21)*

Background #1: Smyrna was a very large city (with possibly 200,000 people living there).

Background #2: Smyrna was famous because it is reported to be the birthplace of Homer.

Background #3: Smyrna has a long and interesting history. It was founded in about 1,000 B.C., it was destroyed in 600 B.C., but was then rebuilt by one of Alexander the Great's generals.

Background #4: Smyrna gets its name from one of its chief exports, myrrh.

Background #5: Within Smyrna there was a sizable Jewish population.

Background #6: Smyrna was an important city in establishing, furthering, and promoting the idolatrous, Roman, imperial cult.

Background #7: In the midst of such hostility, idolatry, and “in-your-face” aggression, Christ's Church IS victorious; true, saving faith does NOT fail.

I. DEITY... CLARITY... STABILITY IN ADVERSITY... VICTORY...

Revelation 2:8 -

DIVINITY - As God, Creator, and Conqueror of death, Jesus guarantees victory for His people!

Isaiah 44:6

Revelation 2:9 -

CLARITY - Though believers may look to be poor and beaten down, we are in fact rich!

Note: In verse 9, when Jesus uses the word “your”, it is a singular “your” referring not to the church in general but to each, individual believer.

Matthew 5:11-12; 2 Corinthians 4:17; John 8:42-44a

Revelation 2:10a -

STABILITY IN ADVERSITY - Have no fear because Jesus is testing and refining our faith.

Luke 22:31-32; Psalm 56:11; Romans 8:18; Daniel 1:12-15; Romans 5:3-5

Revelation 2:10c-11 -

VICTORY - Those who die without Christ will rise to die again, but those who conquer (those who are faithful to Jesus) will have and experience fullness of life and joy forever.

Revelation 20:14-15

Questions for Further Study, Reflection, and Application...

1. What are some of the unique and interesting features about the city of Smyrna? How do those things impact our understanding of Jesus' letter to the church there?
2. How does Jesus “introduce” Himself in verse 8? Why is this significant?
3. According to verse 9, what were the physical, external circumstances that these believers were facing? What was/is their true spiritual standing/condition?
4. What was Jesus doing in the midst of their poverty and persecution? Why is this a good thing?
5. How does this letter shape the way you think about either physical or verbal persecution?
6. What promises and/or commands do we find in this letter? How can they encourage us today?