

SEVEN

CHURCHES IN REVELATION

Revealing Jesus

Revelation 2:8-11



Revelation 2:

8 ¶ "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: 9 'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 'Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.'

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



A Word from Jesus...

- He LOVES His church!
 - He walks among us, holding us...
 - He KNOWS, SEES and ADVISES...
 - All for our BEST INTEREST!!!
- No Church is beyond His sight or comfort
 - No situation, circumstance, challenge
 - God has a WORD for every need!

A Church in Persecution

- Smyrna – 40 miles North of Ephesus
 - Commercial center, many pagan temples
 - Emperor worship – temple to Tiberius
 - Name means “bitter”; myrrh bushes – perfume, relieves pain
 - Heavy persecution of Christians by Jews
- Is persecution real for the church of Jesus? YES!!!
 - It was real for Jesus, Peter, Paul... every apostle! **Domitian...**

Who am I to you?

- Seeing Jesus...
 - Especially in persecution/tribulation!
 - HE IS the First and The Last – what was and what is!
 - “who became dead” – for a weekend!
 - “has come to life” – never again to die!
 - Can God keep you in **these** situations?
 - **YES!!!**

Three Areas of Concern:

1. Tribulation: *thlipsis* – pressing, distressed
 - All experience this! Jesus, Peter, Paul, John...
 - 2 Timothy 3:12 And indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.
2. Poverty: destitute of riches, wealth
 - **“Caesar is lord” or lose it all!** And yet you are RICH!
3. Blasphemy: slander, evil speech
 - Call “atheists” because they did not believe in Roman gods

Christ's revelation

- Stay focused! Be faithful even to death!
 - Many martyrs have needed this encouragement
- **Crown of Life!** Real riches and honor
- This is what the SPIRIT is saying to the churches...
- Overcomers are not touched by the 2nd death...