

## V. Christ's Consequence (2:10c-11)

- A. A Victor's Crown
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- B. They will not be hurt at all by the second death.
  - i. Revelation 20:14
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - ii. Revelation 21:1-7, 8

### LIVE THE STORY

*The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- Why might the prophetic message to the church in Smyrna not be the same message the Spirit would say to us today?
- Why would the title's (credentials) which Christ introduces this message with be meaningful to the church at Smyrna particularly?
- What were the believers in Smyrna commended for?
- What kind of suffering were the Smyrnaean believers experiencing and why might they have been experiencing this suffering?
- How might this prophetic message help us understand the health of the church today? In the West? In the majority world, the global south and east?
- Since Christ had no criticism for them, what were these believers given instead of a corrective? What was it?
- What were the promised rewards (consequence) given to the church at Smyrna? How might these be meaningful to them? To us?
- What message might the Spirit be speaking to us today from this text? What was identified in your own heart from it?

## Revelation: Worship and Witness in a Winner-takes-all World *Smyrna: True Faithfulness Brings True Riches*

Jerry Cisar — October 2, 2022

Text: Revelation 2:8-11

### Introduction

#### I. Christ's Credentials (2:8)

- A. "Thus says Him Who is the First and the Last..."
  - i. Fawning for Caesar's favor is pointless; Christ is the first!
  - ii. This designation of Christ as the First and the Last appears 3x in Revelation (1:17; 2:8; 22:13).
  - iii. This title has a clear allusion to Isaiah.
    - a) Isaiah 41:4
    - b) Isaiah 44:6
    - c) Isaiah 48:10-14
  - iv. Christ is communicating two key things:
    - a) That Christ is God; He is YHWH.
    - b) That Christ is sovereign Lord. Christ, not Caesar. Christ, not the city officials.
- B. "Who died and came to life again"
  - i. "Been there; done that!"
  - ii. And he is alive again.

## II. Christ's Commendation (2:9)

### A. Poverty

- i. Christ doesn't view things as the world views them.
  - James 2:5
- ii. The poverty was the direct consequence of their faith.

*The Smyrnaeans refused to compromise their faith for economic gain.*

- iii. That the Smyranean church is the only church to which poverty is specifically mentioned, means that it was likely "*unusual, noteworthy, and probably severe*" (Weima).
- iv. It should not be missed that there are two churches which have *no criticism* or *condemnation* from Christ and one church that has *no commendation*, or praise from Christ.
  - a) Christ says to the two which have no condemnation:
    - "I know your afflictions and your poverty...." (2:9)
    - "I know that you have little strength...." (3:8)
  - b) To Laodicea which has no *commendation* or *praise*: "You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked." (3:17)
- v. How would this impact how they heard the rest of the vision?
  - a) How would Laodicea read Rev. 18?
  - b) How would Smyrna read Rev. 18?

### B. The slander of those who say they are Jews...

- i. Jealousy among the Jews (Acts 18)
- ii. "Those who say they are Jews but are not!" (John 8:31ff)
- iii. Satan means accuser.

## III. Christ's Criticism

### A. There is none.

## IV. Christ's Corrective (2:10ab)

- A. In place of corrective, we have an encouragement to continue in their faithfulness.
- B. The most natural thing, when one faces suffering, affliction, and death, is to be overcome by fear.
- C. Christ is truly the one in charge of history, not Rome.
  - i. The devil will put some of you into prison...
    - a) See Rev. 12 on the devil also called Satan.
    - b) The saints overcome the dragon "by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death." (12:11)
  - ii. The purpose of the imprisonment: "to test you..."
  - iii. The length of the imprisonment. ten days.
    - a) It is a relatively short, though thorough, testing.
    - b) This 10 day testing is taken right from Daniel 1:12-15.