

THE CHURCH OF SMYRNA

REVELATION 2:8-11

Text:

Introduction:

The city of Smyrna was about 35 miles from Ephesus. It was a city of about 100,000 people in John's day. It was called the crown city because it was surrounded by hills that resembled a crown. It possessed a safe harbor where ships from all over the world came to buy and sell goods.

Several things made this special in its day.

- Production of myrrh.

The substance came from a shrub like tree. When the leaves were crushed a very fragrant odor came from them. Myrrh was used as a fragrance by the living and an embalming agent for the dead.

Myrrh was mentioned in association with the life and ministry of the Lord.

Matthew 2:11 (KJV)

¹¹ And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

Mark 15:23 (KJV)

²³ And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received *it* not.

John 19:39 (KJV)

³⁹ And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound *weight*.

The word myrrh means bitter and it came to be associated with suffering and death.

- Planned City
- Free City
- A beautiful, wealthy pagan city

1. A CRUSHED CHURCH

Revelation 2:9-10 (KJV)

⁹ I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and *I know* the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but *are* the synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

A. Faced Persecution (tribulation)

B. Faced Poverty – the word means absolute destitution

1. They were denied jobs because of their relationship with Jesus Christ.

C. Faced Prison (vs 10) Jesus told them that there was more trouble ahead.

Despite all the tribulation Smyrna was a:

2. A CONSISTENT CHURCH (VS 9A)

Revelation 2:9 (KJV)

⁹I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and *I know* the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but *are* the synagogue of Satan.

A. They had a positive testimony.

The Lord didn't have a rebuke for this church like He did with many of the others.

B. They had a powerful testimony

In spite of all the wickedness going on around them, and in spite of all the tribulation that they were put through, they remained faithful.

3. A COMFORTED CHURCH

A. The interest of Heaven – “I know thy works”

B. The involvement of Heaven

Jesus comes to them as “The first and the Last, He that was dead and is alive.” He is reminding them He knows what they are facing because He has faced tribulation and suffering as well.

C. The invest in Heaven

What they lacked in the world God would make up for them in Heaven

4. A CAUTIONED CHURCH

Revelation 2:10 (KJV)

¹⁰ Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

A. Often when persecution or poverty comes there is a tendency to change and compromise.

B. What are we to do? We are to remain faithful unto death.