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The Persecuted Church **Revelation 2:8-11**

I. The Setting (v. 8)

- A. The _____ (Acts 19:10)
- B. The _____ (Matt. 2:11; Mk. 15:23; Jn. 19:39; 2 Cor 2:15-16)
- C. The characteristic of _____ emphasized (Rev. 1:20; Isa. 44:6; 48:12; 1 Cor. 15:55-57)

II. The Sin / Suffering (v. 9a, c, d; 10b)

- A. _____ persecution (v. 9a) [Ex. 20:3]
- B. _____ persecution (v. 9a) [Jms. 2:5]
- C. _____ persecution (v. 9c) [Rom. 2:28-29; 9:6]
- D. _____ persecution (v. 9d) [Jn. 8:44]
- E. _____ persecution (v. 10b) [Job 1:8; 2:4-8; Lk. 22:31-32; Acts 9:16; Matt. 5:10-12; 2 Cor. 12:9-10]

III. The Strengths (v. 9b)

- A. No specific _____ addressed (Job 1:1)
- B. Suffering led to spiritual _____ (Matt. 5:3)

IV. The Solution (v. 10a, c)

- A. _____ not the woes of the world (v. 10a)
[1 Pet. 1:6-7; Matt. 10:28; Josh. 1:9]
- B. Be _____ until death (b. 10c) [Matt. 10:22]

V. The Summation (v. 11)

- A. The final counsel (v. 11a) [Jms. 1:22]
- B. The faithful overcomer (v. 11b) [1 Jn. 5:4-5]
- C. The forever promise (v. 11c) [Rev. 20:14; 21:8]

TAKE HOME

- How do you think you would respond with intense suffering?
- Do you understand how tribulation can lead to spiritual richness?
- How can your faith in Christ conquer your fears in this world?

STUDY QUESTIONS

James 1:22 says, *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”* These questions are designed to help you apply today’s message to your life. We encourage you to thoughtfully answer these questions and discuss your answers with others. For more information about joining a small group that uses these questions as the basis for discussion, prayer, and accountability, please visit our website at placritachurch.com.

1. Read Revelation 2:8-11. What is the basic outline as given in the sermon? Do you see the repetition of each letter to each church? What does that tell us?

2. Read Revelation 2:8. What were some of the particulars we learned about the setting of Smyrna? (Matt. 2:11; Mk. 15:23; Jn. 19:39; 2 Cor. 2:15-16) What are some similarities to Ephesus? Differences?

3. How does the characteristic of Christ emphasized at the end of verse 8 specifically encourage the church of Smyrna? How does it encourage you today? (Rev. 1:20; Isa 44:6; 48:12; 1 Cor. 15:55-57)

4. Read Revelation 2:9. Talk about which kind of persecution would be the toughest for you? Have you ever experienced any of these types of persecution? Explain. (Lk. 22:31-32; Acts 9:16; Matt. 5:10-12; 2 Cor. 12:9-10)

5. Are there any sins addressed by Christ to the church of Smyrna? What do you think about this? What are their strengths? Is suffering a strength or a weakness? Discuss. (Job 1:1; Matt. 5:3)

6. Read Revelation 2:10. What is the solution for the church of Smyrna? What are the two directives given in this verse? How can these two directives still challenge and encourage us today? (1 Pet. 1:6-7; Matt. 10:28; Josh. 1:9)

7. Read Revelation 2:11. How does this final verse to Smyrna give them hope? How does it give you hope today? Discuss practical lessons learned from this study of the church of Smyrna. (Jms. 1:22; 1 Jn. 5:4-5; Rev. 20:14; 21:8)

“Leave me as I am; for He that giveth me strength to endure the fire, will also enable me, without your securing me by nails, to remain without moving in the pile.”

- Polycarp (early church father and disciple of John)