



Three challenges from today's message...

First, be faithful in the small fires.

You may never face a prison in Smyrna, but you will face incense moments this week. A conversation at work where staying silent about Jesus costs you nothing and speaking costs you something. A temptation to fudge the numbers, or scroll what you should not scroll, or shade the truth.

Faithfulness unto death is built out of faithfulness in small moments. If you want a faith that holds up in a storm, stop practicing compromise in the calm.

Second, pray for the persecuted church.

Pick up the practice this week of praying for believers in the hardest places on earth. Organizations like Open Doors and Voice of the Martyrs will put real names and real stories in front of you. These are not faraway strangers. They are the Smyrna of our day, and the book of Hebrews says we should remember those in prison as if we were chained with them.

Third, do a poverty and riches check.

Write down two columns this week. On one side, list what the world says you are lacking. On the other side, list what God says you possess in Christ. Every spiritual blessing, every promise, the indwelling Spirit, an eternal inheritance, a crown that does not fade. Then decide which column you are going to live out of. The flashlight that works in an outage is the one you charged before the storm. So this week, before the storm comes, charge your faith. Get in the Word. Get on your knees. Get your house in order, spiritually, so that when pressure comes, and it will, you are not scrambling for batteries.