

WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH: SMYRNA

- The 7 Churches
Of Revelation
- March 6, 2024

WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH: SMYRNA

- **SMYRNA: The Suffering & Persecuted Church**
- “When the going gets tough, the tough get going”
- When conditions become difficult, strong people take action.

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- **Revelation 2:8–11 (NIV)** — 8 “To the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again. 9 I know your afflictions and your poverty—yet you are rich! I know about the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor’s crown. 11 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.

OUTLINE : SMYRNA

1. The City & Church Of Smyrna
2. Christ: The Creator Of The Letter—2:8
3. The Circumstances & Conditions—2:9, 10

The Church At Smyrna Suffered From Three Sources Of Pain.

- A. I Know Your Tribulation
- B. I Know Your Poverty
- C. I Know The Blasphemy

4. The Coming Crown—2:10
5. The Confirmation To Overcomers—2:11
6. When The Going Gets Tough --How Do We Overcome?

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1. The City & Church Of Smyrna

- The Greek Word For Smyrna Means "Suffering" And It Comes From The Word Myrrh.
- In Order For Myrrh To Give Out Its Full Fragrance And Perfume, It Had To Be Crushed And Beaten.
- This Is Exactly What Was Done To The Church At Smyrna. It Was Crushed, Beaten, And Persecuted.

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- Smyrna Was First In Beauty, But Also Considered First In Caesar Worship.
- A Form Of Religious Observance Known Today As “The Imperial Cult”
- The Emperor Became The Embodiment Of Rome And Worship Began To Be Directed Toward Him.

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- Once A Year Every Roman Citizen Had To Burn A Pinch Of Incense On The Altar Of Caesar.
- They Had To Say, "Caesar Is Lord" And Then They Could Depart To Worship Any God They Wished To Worship.
- This Is Exactly What The Christian Believer Would Not Do
- They Would Not Call The Emperor Lord... They Would Not Bow Or Burn Incense To Him And This Is Where The Going Got Rough

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2. Christ: The Creator Of The Letter—2:8

- **Revelation 2:8 (NIV)** — 8 “To the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again.
- **Isaiah 44:6 (NIV)** 6 "This is what the LORD says-- Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God.
- **Isaiah 48:12 (NIV)** 12 "Listen to me, O Jacob, Israel, whom I have called: I am he; I am the first and I am the last.

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3. The Circumstances & Conditions—2:9, 10

Revelation 2:9–10 (NIV) — 9 I know your afflictions and your poverty—yet you are rich! I know about the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown.

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The Church At Smyrna Suffered From Three Sources Of Pain.

Revelation 2:9 (NIV) — 9 I know your afflictions and your poverty —yet you are rich! I know about the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

- **A. I Know Your Tribulation –Afflictions (PRESSURE)**
- **B. I Know Your Poverty – (DESTITUTION)**
- **C. I Know The Blasphemy (SLANDER)**

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4. The Coming Crown—2:10

Revelation 2:10 (NIV) — 10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown.

STEPHANOS= The Crown Or Wreath Of Victory Given To The Winner At The Athletic Games. As Christians, We Are In A Race For Christ.

It Is God's Desire For Us To Finish Our Race And Be Victorious In Living Our Lives For Him.

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5. The Confirmation To Overcomers—2:11

Revelation 2:11 (NIV) — 11 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.

Revelation 20:6 (NIV) 6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

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6. When The Going Gets Tough --How Do We Overcome?

When The Going Gets Tough We Adjust Our Attitudes To Persecution

- **We Are Called To Endure In The Face Of Persecution**
- To Live Holy And Forgiving Lives
- To Rejoice in suffering
- To Rely on the promise of God's grace to endure
- To Trust in the promise of God's presence
- To Pray always
- To take heart in the example of Jesus Christ in facing persecution