

Smyrna the Suffering Church

Revelation 2: 8-11

Smyrna the Suffering Church

- We are now studying the 2nd letter given to the 7 churches (Rev 2: 8-11)
 - There are two letters which contain no correction
 - The first is Smyrna the suffering/persecuted church
 - The second is the evangelical church. Philadelphia
- I am always intrigued by the intricacies of God's Word.....
 - It is not coincidental that the root for Smyrna is...
 - Myrrh.....Remember at the birth of Jesus....
 - The wise men brought, gold, frankincense and myrrh

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- Mark 15: 23.... They tried to give Him wine mixed with myrrh; but He did not take it.
 - Here myrrh was used to alleviate pain
 - Jesus refused and instead chose to drink of the full cup of God's wrath for everyone who comes to Him in faith
- John 19: 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*. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.
 - Here myrrh was used as a spice used for burial

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- Smyrna was the center of emperor worship
 - Every year each person would have to offer a pinch of incense to a bust of Caesar.....
 - Those who refused suffered the consequences
 - The twelfth martyr Smyrna was Polycarp (AD 156)
 - He said before being burned alive..."Eighty-six years have I served Christ and He has never done me wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who has saved me?"
 - It is believed that the people who carried the wood for the fire were so-called Jews in that city (Vs 9)

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- These things give us insight into this church
- Here is the message to this church
 - ‘The first and the last, who was dead and has come to life says this...’
 - First and foremost, we see....
 - Col 1: 15-20....God Himself speaking to this church...
 - Secondly, we see the God-man.....
 - John 1: 14-18
 - “He has explained Him”
 - Who but God can explain God?

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- Vs 9..."I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich)"
 - What a rebuke to many of our modern churches
 - God wants to be healthy and wealthy
 - This is the exact opposite of the Laodicean church
 - Rev 3: 17.... "Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked"
- Are of the synagogue of Satan
 - Gal 1: 8..."But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

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- How does this verse apply to you and me today?
 - 1 Peter 5: 8.... “Be sober-minded and alert. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”
 - Eph 6: 11-12...Put on the full armor of God, so that you can make your stand against the devil’s schemes.
/ For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this world’s darkness, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

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- I John 4: 1...Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God. For many false prophets have gone out into the world.
- If there is a time for the church to stand up for the Gospel...that time is now!!!
 - This church in Smyrna stood against all odds
 - This what they heard from their Savior
 - Vs 10...."Do not fear" (Rev 1: 17)
 - You may be tested but it is only for a short time

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- Vs 10....”Be faithful until death”
 - He did not say “be successful until death”
 - Luke 16: 10...He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much.
 - There is one thing hard times will do for the church.
 - It will weed out those who are merely hearers and not doers (James 1: 22-25)
 - “The law of liberty?”
 - Rev 2: 11.... He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.

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- Vs 11....The second death
 - Rev 21: 8
- So, what is the Spirit saying to the Osseo Community Church today?
 - We live in a time of wars and rumors of war
 - We live in a time of financial uncertainty
- Here is what the Spirit is saying to us!!!
 - Col 3: 1-2...Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.