

Keeping Faith Under Pressure

Revelation 2:8-11

The Bottom Line: Under the pressure of a society warring against us, we have two choices – compromise or commitment.

Introduction:

On Saturday, February 23rd, A.D. 155, Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna, was burned alive for faithfulness to Jesus.

Throughout this series where we are studying the Seven Churches of Revelation, each church is being addressed according to one thing: Faithfulness to Jesus.

The church at Smyrna was facing hard times, and Jesus is prepared to tell them

Faithfulness leads to fruitfulness.

Truth:

how it will only get worse. Still, Jesus sees them in their troubles and promises a reward for their fidelity. Look with me at Revelation 2:8-11.						
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Application & Conclusion:

Just like Polycarp, Jesus calls the believers in Smyrna to press on in faithfulness, even if it costs them their life. Why in the world would they do that? Because the One who died and came to life not only *experienced* the worst that life can do, but He also *conquered* the worst that life can do.

They do not fear the one who kills the body (rf. Matthew 10:28). Instead, they believe that the same Spirit that brought Jesus back to life lives in them as well (rf. Romans 8:11). They believe that the one who conquered death and the grave will also bring them up from their graves and place on their heads the crown of life.

Hear what the Spirit says to the churches: Stay the course with Jesus and He will reward you, not with judgement, but eternal life.

Reflection Questions:

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2. What does this teach me about me?

3. How do I apply this to my life?