

# Short New Testament Letters from God: Smyrna, Faithful No Matter What

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February 26, 2023

-A.M. SERMON NOTES-

“Short New Testament Letters from God:

‘Smyrna, Faithful No Matter What’”

(Revelation 2:8-11)

## INTRODUCTION

Our 2023 Bible studies are from “Short New Testament Letters.” Every Sunday we study and apply God’s Word. Revelation 2-3 contain letters from Jesus to seven first century churches. Study His timeless encouragement, instruction and warnings. The church at Smyrna was ‘Faithful No Matter What’:

I. Approval (Revelation 2:8-11) A. Christ’s credentials (2:8-9a) 1. He is the First & the Last 2. He died & came back to life 3. He knows B. Church’s condition (v. 9) 1. A church of stress & pressure 2. A church of deep poverty 3. A church of unfair abuse II. Advice (Revelation 2:9) A. (v. 10a): Be brave B. (v. 10b): Be faithful III. Application (Revelation 2:8-11) C. Commit your burden to the Lord with the support of others (Mt. 10:29-31) A. Ask for help in prayer together (Phil. 4:6-8) S. Search the Scriptures with your church (2 Tim. 3:16; Ps. 119:28; Lk. 4:16) T. Trust Him individually and together, for He does care for you! (Mt. 9:36; 14:14)

## CONCLUSION

The local church is God’s plan for changing the world, one life at a time! Jesus’ seven letters to the churches of Revelation 2-3 prove that a healthy local church is the hope of the world! Christ loved the

Church, and gave Himself up for Her (Eph. 5:25)! His plan is to reach and redeem the world with the message of the Cross through the local church! May His messages to the seven churches inspire each one of us, our entire congregation, to be 'Faithful No Matter What'!

### Applying Today's Sermon to Your Life

1. Our 2023 Bible studies focus on Short New Testament Letters from God (Galatians-Philemon, James, 1/2 Peter, 1/2/3 John, Jude, and Jesus' letters in Revelation 2-3). Our Verse-of-the-Week today is Revelation 2:10, "Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life." The general pattern in Jesus' seven letters is commendation, concern and correction. What would He commend here? What concern would He hold? What correction would He share? Will you (we) receive it?
2. Read all seven of Jesus' letters to the churches in Revelation 2-3 again. Note one item from each church that reminds you of your church, explain why, and discuss it and pray about it with a friend:
  - A. Ephesus, The Loveless Church:
  - B. Smyrna, The Persecuted Church:
  - C. Pergamos, The Compromising Church:
  - D. Thyatira, The Corrupt Church:
  - E. Sardis, The Dead Church:
  - F. Philadelphia, The Faithful Church:
  - G. Laodicea, The Lukewarm Church:
3. Which of these seven letters in Revelation 2-3 is your favorite? Why? Which is your least favorite? Explain.
4. Chuck Swindoll suggests Jesus' messages to these seven

churches are:

- A. Remember your first love!
- B. Stay faithful!
- C. Return to the truth!
- D. Keep pure!
- E. Wake up!
- F. Hold fast what you have!
- G. Trust in God's riches, not your own!

The condition of the church in Smyrna was terrible but Christ had the power and

compassion to meet all their needs, just like today! The Christians in Smyrna

were 'Faithful No Matter What'!. Does that describe your church? Does it

describe you? Why, or why not? Discuss and pray over this with others.

5. I'd grade my faithfulness to my church with an: A B C D F (circle one).
6. How do Christ's credentials, listed in Rev. 2:8-9, enable you to be 'Faithful No Matter What'? When you focus on Christ's credentials, what happens to your faith?
7. Imagine living today without faith, without knowing Jesus, without knowing how to pray, and without a supportive church family. Now think about your neighbors,

your coworkers, your relatives, your classmates, your friends,  
and people in your

circle of acquaintance. Who needs your faith, your Jesus, your  
prayers, your

church family? Will you ask Jesus to make His appeal to them  
through you?

8. I will put today's Bible study into action now by: