

Revelation 2:8-11

The Suffering Church

Introduction:

The so called “health and wealth gospel” and the power of positive thinking taught by various television evangelists give the impression that the Christian life is a bed of ease. God according to them desires us all to prosper and live healthy invigorating lives. God is the good Santa Clause in the sky who keeps us from pain, suffering and tribulation. There is only one thing wrong with this particular philosophy, it’s a big lie. Luke tells us in Acts 14:22, “Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.”

I. Facing Tribulation – v.8-10a

- A. Smyrna a city that died and came alive again – v.8 cf. 1:18**
 - 1. Resurrection the vocabulary of John – (John 5:29; 11:25-26)
- B. Antichrist – “against” and “in place of” Christ – Turn To: Rev. 13:1-4**
 - 1. The master of deception but his doom is sure – Rev. 19;20
- C. The individual believer “I know your tribulation and poverty”**
 - 1. Oppression by government – Matt. 5:11-12
 - 2. Poor monetarily but rich spiritually – Jam. 2:5
 - 3. The Jewish Synagogue – v.9; 12:10
 - 4. A synagogue of Satan
 - 5. Jesus accused of casting out demons by the power of Satan – Matt. 12:22-32
 - 6. True Jews – Rom. 2:28,29
- D. The worship hall of Satan – 2:9; 3:9**

II. Reward For Being Faithful – v.10-11

- A. How can Christians be comforted in the midst of tribulation?**
 - 1. Don’t Fear men – Heb. 13:1-5
 - 2. Fear God – 1:17; Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:5; Turn To: Isaiah 8:13-15
 - 3. Remember not Satan but God has the last word – “ten days”
 - 4. Maintain faithfulness – v.10 “faithful witness,” “witness” meaning “martyr” 1:5; 3:14; 19:11; Jam. 1:12
 - 5. The Holy Spirit comforts us – v.11, victory over Satan – 20:6,14; 21:8

Conclusion:

- 1. *If you are an unbeliever whether you know it or not you are following Satan. He holds you captive under his domain. Your only hope is to believe in Jesus as Savior and Lord in order to be set free from the tyranny of Satan – John 6:37*
- 2. *Dear Christian, you have escaped the second death because of what Christ has done you, laying down His life for the forgiveness of sins. Take comfort despite the tribulation, Jesus has overcome the world and Satan, be of good cheer! – John 16:33; I John 4:4; 5:4*