

ENDURING FAITH

Letter to the Church at Smyrna (Revelation 2:8-11)

Key Verse:

Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. (Revelation 2:10)

I. Christ's Commendation of the Church

I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and *I know* the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but *are* the synagogue of Satan. (Revelation 2:9)

A. You have faithfully endured tribulation.

- The Biblical response to suffering is to “glory” in tribulations (Rom. 5:3-5)!
- We endure by giving thanks to God right in the midst of a trial (James 2:2-4).

B. You are spiritually rich.

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Why “Glory” in Tribulation?

1. Tribulation will not separate us from the love of Christ (Rom. 8:35, 38).
2. Tribulation builds confidence in God’s goodness and faithfulness (Rom. 5:3-5).
3. God comforts us in our tribulation (2Cor. 1:4).
4. We are enriched with a deeper, fuller capacity to comfort others (2Cor. 1:4).
5. Tribulation purges dross from our lives, making us into gold that will endure the fire of the Judgment Seat (Job 23:10; 1Cor. 3:11-15).
6. Our “light affliction” works for us a “far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2Cor. 4:17).

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II. Christ's Encouragement to the Church

A. He reassures them of His divine presence

- His *Eternality*: “*The First and the Last*”
- His *Present Care*: “*Which was dead, and is alive*”

B. He revitalizes their faith.

- Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: (Revelation 2:10)
- God's *Promise*: God knows the future and He controls the future (Rom. 8:28)
 - Our *Response*: “I will not fear” (Heb. 13:5-6).

III. Christs' Promised Reward to Overcomers

A. I will give you a crown of life.

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.
(Revelation 2:10)

Five Crowns in the Bible:

1. **Crown of rejoicing**—Given to fruitful soulwinners (1Thess. 2:19)
2. **Crown of glory**—Given to faithful undershepherds (1Peter 5:4)
3. **Crown of righteousness**—Given to watchful servants (2Tim. 4:8)
4. **Incorruptible crown**—Given to self-controlled, Spirit-filled believers (1Cor. 9:25)
5. **Crown of life** — Given to believers who endure temptation, accepting trials with joy (James 1:12)

B. You will not be hurt of the second death.

He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire: Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.
(Matthew 3:11–12)

Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. (1 Corinthians 3:11–15)

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