



SMYRNA FAMILY CHURCH

***We are now going to be seeing Jesus introducing us
to the Church in Smyrna***

***Jesus likes what he sees as a church in the midst of
a "City Hostile to the Christians"***

***When you see a church, you see people from the city
making room for Christ in their life.***

***We must see the city to give us a peek into what the
church had to contend with to be a light in a place
of darkness!***

City of Smyrna...

The city of Smyrna....rival of Ephesus

- ***Of all the cities in Asia, Smyrna was the loveliest.***
 - ✓ ***"The ornament of Asia"***
 - ✓ ***"The crown of Asia"***
 - ✓ ***"Flower of Asia"***
- ***The West wind off the sea constantly blew through
the city.***
- ***Great Trading City***
- ***Had the Safest of all harbors and the most
convenient.***
- ***200 years before Christ...an actual road was
paved with gold was built in Smyrna. The road
ran from one Pagan Temple to another around the
City.***
- ***City "who died and came to life."***
 - ✓ ***City first built in 1000 B.C.; 600 B.C. was destroyed in
battle.***
 - ✓ ***400 years later rebuilt.***
- ***Free City ...Had its own government***
- ***Great in trade, beauty, politics and religion
(pagan).***

- **Men made the city great...**
 - ✓ **Stadium for annual games**
 - ✓ **Public Library**
 - ✓ **Music Theatre**
 - ✓ **Magnificent Architecture**
 - ✓ **Host of temples in honor to Zeus, Appollo, Nemesis, Aphrodite, Aselpios.**
 - ✓ **Jews were numerous and influential. There was a time recorded that showed that they got together and contributed 10,000 denarii for beautification of the city. Note: This equates to a days pay for ordinary labor [each person]...about \$1,000,000 [together].**
 - ✓ **The city was loyal to Rome.**
- **The city was very hostile to the Christian Church.**

This was where Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, was burned alive in the middle of the stadium. However, legend has it that the flames did not kill him...the executioner killed him by stabbing him to death.
- **Men were exalted in Smyrna...great tributes to their loyalty to the city was expressed and made known.**
 - ✓ **They exalted men of wealth...men that gave of their wealth to the city.**
 - ✓ **They gave special tribute as well as privileges to their families and there was a sense of pride and prestige...just to walk down the streets of the city...they swept the “trash”, the beggars off their streets...they were not welcome.**

Yet the stench that went through the city reminds us of arrogant pride...it was like something died...It had no love for people...no love for the true God!

Smyrna...The Church, Revelation 2:8-11, “To the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again. ⁹ I know your afflictions and your poverty—yet you are rich! I know about the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor’s crown (crown of life). ¹¹ Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.”

First...Christ Identifies Himself...

Gives Him the Authority to Make the Claim and Statements Concerning the Church.

He is:

- *The First and the Last*

This clearly is a promise from the Old Testament

Isaiah 44:6

Isaiah 48:12

2 Meanings:

1. To the Christians, “It’s a promise!”

2. To the Heathen in Smyrna, “You have beautiful buildings and temples, but Jesus Christ will be triumphant over you.”

✓ *Remember, Jesus is “the author and finisher of our faith.”*

- *The One Who Was dead and Is Alive*

Two (2) Meanings:

1. The Risen Christ has experienced the worst that life could do to Him.

Signifies to the Christian “You can make it: agony, pain and death...Jesus experienced it all.”

2. The Risen Christ has conquered the worst that life can do.

Which means victorious living for the Christian.

Jesus has the right to demand loyalty...but, seeks your loyalty voluntarily. No force...He simply wants and desires your allegiance.

Church at Smyrna Was Under Trial----

- *Affliction—Gr. Thlipsis...meaning “crushed beneath a weight.”*

Signifying pressure on the church

- *Poor---Poverty and Christianity were closely associated*

2 Things:

1. Most Belonged to the lower class society

2. Heathen spoiled their goods

Wrecked their homes, took everything.

- *Imprisonment---Forecast imprisonment for 10 days*

Not literally...an expression meaning “a short time” but would soon come to an end.

It was a warning and a promise.

TO BE A CHRISTIAN WAS AGAINST THE LAW....

Guess what?? This is happening today. There are countries where it is against the law to be a Christian...just as it was 2000 years ago when the church was under severe persecution.

Cause of the trouble at Smyrna—

Instigators of persecution were the Jews.

Jews stirred up the authorities against the Christian preachers.

It happened at Antioch (Acts 13:50), Iconium (Acts 14:2, 5),

Lystra (Acts 14:19), and Thessalonica (Acts 17:5).

Ancient writings state that heathen women were attracted to Jewish religion. The reason: Preaching of One God...and a life of purity was desired by Roman/foreign women who had enough of the sadistic services of the heathenistic gods. When the Jews won the wives, the wives would influence their husbands who were governors, magistrates, and move them to persecute the Christians.

Jesus called them a “Synagogue of Satan.”

“Terrible thing when religion becomes the means of evil things.”

The charge to the Church members at Smyrna...was to be faithful to the end...even to death!

The Promised Reward to the Overcomer...

Two rewards are mentioned:

1. Crown of Life (New Testament)

James 1:12

Crown of Glory (1 Peter 5:4)

****Crown (Stephanos)...Joy and victory; diadema...Royal crown***

The crown mentioned here is the “stephanos” (Joy and victory) crown.

This crown will be received:

- Crown of victory in the contest of life***
- Crown for faithfully serving Christ***
- Crown with the knowledge of sitting as a guest at the banquet of God***
- Crown of being near God because of one’s faithfulness***
- Crown with the Joy of being like God, 1 John 3:2***

By overcoming, trade the crown of thorns for the Crown of life.

2. Not Experience the 2nd Death

(2nd death—Revelation 20:6, 14; 21:8)

This is not just the final outcome for the physical, but the final death of the spiritual (spiritual death)...

When God says, “Depart from me for I never knew you!”

Promise—We shall wear a crown if we persevere and be faithful to the end.