

Revelation 2:8-11
SMYRNA

Sovereign Lord (8)

He has been given all authority (Rev. 1:8, 17-18; 22:13)

In heaven and on earth (Mt. 28:18) Over the church, my life, even life and death.

He has conquered death (John 10:17-18)

He is the author of life (Acts 3:15) He gives life (John 5:21)

Slandered people (9)

Suffering in poverty – yet rich (II Corinthians 8:9) ***Better to suffer now (see Psalm 73)***

Our sufferings are not worth comparing to our future glory (Romans 8:18)

Slandered by the synagogue of Satan – religious persecution is always the most severe

Having material blessing and power are not what counts (see Matthew 23)

Suffering people (10)

Satan holds no power over us – do not fear (Col. 2:15 / Heb. 2:14-15 / I John 4:4)

We are eternally God's – nothing can separate us from Him (Romans 8:38-39)

Suffering is temporary – 10 days (Psalm 30:5 / II Corinthians 4:17 / I Peter 1:6)

God has a purpose for our suffering – but His plan for us is joy (Psalm 16:11)

Steadfast people (10)

Faithful unto death – looking for something better (Hebrews 11:13-16, 25-26)

We are aliens – our hope is in our future with Him (II Corinthians 4:16-18)

Fixing our hope on His resurrection (I Corinthians 15:58)

We serve a risen Lord! Therefore, all that is done for Him will last (Heb. 6:10-12)

Spirit's reward (10-11)

Sufferers Crown – the Crown of Life (James 1:12)

The crown for those who persevere through suffering.

Saved from the second death (Rev. 20:14-15; 21:8)

Those whose name is written in the Lamb's book of life.

Discussion questions for Revelation 2:8-11 – SMYRNA

What is the significance of Christ's description of Himself (vs. 8) to suffering Christians?

(Philippians 1:6/Matthew 28:20/Hebrews 13:5-6 / Hebrews 2:18; 4:14-16)

First & Last – He is with us from the beginning to the end – He will see us through to the end.

He died and rose again – He understands our suffering and can help us through.

How is it possible to be rich while living in extreme poverty? (II Corinthians 8:1-5)

If we are rich toward God and give ourselves first to Him, we have everything we need.

When God is our source, we can give even out of our poverty. (Philippians 4:19)

When God is our hope – the world has nothing to entice us with, it cannot compare

Why is religious persecution often the most severe? (Acts 9:1-6/I Timothy 1:12-14/I Thess. 2:13-16)

Those who are persecuting believe they are doing it for God. To challenge what they believe is to disrupt everything in their lives – so they become increasingly unwilling to listen to reason (Is. 1:18)

Be thankful for God's mercy in opening our eyes. And be thankful that we have no need to persecute anyone in order to persuade them toward the truth. God's truth stands!

People often respond to suffering by becoming either bitter or better. What attitude and/or focus can help us to do the latter? (Romans 8:28 / James 1:2-4 / I Peter 1:6-9)

Knowing that God can use everything that happens in my life for good – molding me to be like Him.

Knowing that developing perseverance through trials is necessary for me to mature in Christ.

Knowing that the testing of my faith refines my faith like gold and increases my longing for Jesus.

Why is the understanding of death, particularly the 2nd death, important to truly understand the gospel?

(Hebrews 9:27/Ephesians 2:1-2/Romans 6:23/Revelation 20:15)

Death is not termination but separation.

We will all one day be separated from our bodies and at that point we will face judgment.

Because of our sin, we are spiritually dead until we receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

If we are spiritually dead (the wages of sin) when we physically die, we will face eternal death (the 2nd death) because our names are not found in the Lamb's book of life

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Revelation 1:8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Revelation 1:17-18 “When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as though dead. Then He placed His right hand on me and said: ‘Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.’”

Revelation 22:13 “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.”

John 10:17-18 “The reason My Father loves Me is that I lay down My life – only to take it up again. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from My Father.”

II Corinthians 8:9 “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.”

Colossians 2:15 “And having disarmed the powers and authorities, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.”

Hebrews 2:14-15 “Since the children have flesh and blood, He too shared in their humanity so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil – and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.”

I John 4:4 “You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.”

Psalms 30:5 “For His anger lasts only a moment, but His favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.”

II Corinthians 4:17 “For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.”

I Peter 1:6 “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.”

Hebrews 11:13-16 “All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country – a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.”

Hebrews 11:25-26 “He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.”

I Corinthians 15:58 “Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

James 1:12 “Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him.”

Revelation 20:14-15 “Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

Revelation 21:8 “But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars – their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”