

Sermon Discussion

25 April 2021

Read Revelation 2:8:11

Dig Deeper

Smyrna was a seaport on the Aegean Sea about 40 miles north of Ephesus. Late in the first century it was a large, wealthy city with a population of about 100,000. It still exists today as **Izmir (Turkey)** with a population of about 4.4 million.

Smyrna had died as a city on several occasions because of invasions and earthquakes, but it had risen again to new life because the residents had rebuilt it. In Smyrna, many residents worshipped a goddess named Cybele whom they regarded as the personification of the yearly rejuvenation of nature. Her devotees claimed that she arose from the dead every spring.

The “**crown of life**” is probably the fullness of eternal life as a reward. This appears to be a victor’s crown (Greek *stephanos*) given for enduring the trials and tests of life even to the point of death without denying Christ. It is not the gift of eternal life but the fullness of that life.

1. When was a time that you felt burdened by difficulties? How did you persevere in the midst of that situation?
2. Looking at v. 9, how would you describe the current situation of the church in Smyrna? Looking at v. 10, how would you describe the future situation of the church in Smyrna?
3. Jesus’ description of Himself in v. 8 echoes Revelation 1:17-18. What do you think the significance of this description is given Smyrna’s history and the current situation facing the believers in Smyrna?
4. What is the promise that Jesus makes to the church in Smyrna in v. 11? The “second death” was a phrase that refers to the final judgment and destiny of humanity (see Revelation 20:6, 14; 21:8).

Application & Prayer

- What is one thing you have learned in this study? How will you put that into practice in your life this week? Write some of these things down. If you are in a small group, discuss this together.
- Spend some time in prayer. Reflect on why you may have suffered for your faith? If you do not feel you have suffered, meditate on why you have avoided suffering for your faith.
- Meditate on this: *“Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”* Revelation 2:10-11