



Session 6 | Revelation 2:8-17 - Verses 8-11 are also included in session 5

## THE CHURCH AT SMYRNA | REV 2:8-11

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### THE DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST | V. 8

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- The word *smyrna* means *myrrh*. The same Greek word is used in Matthew 2:11, Mark 15:23, and John 19:39.
- Christ is presented as “first and last”
  - *Protos* and *eschatos*
  - This is a phrase used of God the Son. See note on Rev. 1:17.
- Christ is the one who “became dead” (literal translation) and lived.
  - John 10:18 sheds light on the middle voice of the word.
  - Middle voice is something done to oneself, translated in the active, not passive.

### THE MESSAGE TO THE MESSENGER | VV. 9-10

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- “I know...”
  - Works, tribulation, and poverty (v. 9)
    - Note: Works is not included in modern translations
    - Tribulation and poverty are both strong selections of words
      - Not afflictions but tribulations
      - Not going without but being a beggar
  - The blasphemy of those who claim to be Jews but are not.
    - The blasphemy itself: they claim to be Jews
      - The truth: they are not Jews at all
      - Biblically, to be Jewish, one must be a descendent of Jacob
    - This Scripture is notoriously interpreted *theologically* rather than *grammatically*.
      - Furthermore, the theology is wrong! It is the theology of *suppressionism* (replacement theology).
      - Consistency demands that Revelation 2:2 be interpreted the same ways as Revelation 2:9, yet very few commentators are consistent.
- The commendation:
  - Do not fear the things which you will suffer (v. 10)
  - Be faithful unto death, and receive a crown of life (v. 11)

### THE MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH | VV. 10-11

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- The devil will cast some of you into prison (v. 10)

- You will be tried
- You will have tribulation 10 days.
  - While we are prone to take this figuratively, there is no place in the book of Revelation where a time period is given in figurative manner.
- The overcomer will not be hurt by the second death.
  - The first death may overtake the overcomer, but the second death will have no power.

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## THE CHURCH AT PERGAMOS | REV. 2:12-17

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### THE DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST | V. 12

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- Pergamum = *per* (through) *gamos* (marriage)
- Christ presents Himself as Warrior, with the sharp, two-edged sword used in battle (Rev. 19:15)

### THE MESSAGE TO THE MESSENGER | VV. 13-16

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- “You dwell where Satan’s throne is” (v. 13). This is simple acknowledgment, subtle commendation, or strong condemnation.
- The fact that the Pastor “works and dwells” (KJV only) where Satan’s throne is likely seen as an acknowledgment of the difficult circumstances of Pergamos.
- We do not have definitive interpretation for the identity of “Satan’s throne,” but it is certainly not literal.
- The Pastor is clearly commended for “holding fast my name” (v. 13). This is the same word for hold used in v. 1, it is the strongest word for hold available. This Pastor is commended for his grip on the name of Jesus.
- Even in the days of the Martyrdom of Antipas, the Pastor did not let go of the name of Jesus.
  - Nothing further is known of Antipas beyond the information given here. Tradition says that he was burned alive under the reign of Domitian.
  - The words of praise for Antipas are beyond compare—note Revelation 1:5.
- There was a clear condemnation also: he allowed false teaching to remain in the church.
  - In English it is hard to tell if this is a condemnation of v. 14 is against people who do three things or if it is all connected. In Greek, it is a single unit, Balaam having taught Balak to entice Israel to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit immorality. See Numbers 25:2 and 31:16.
  - Unlike the Ephesian pastor, the Pergamos pastor allowed the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

### THE MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH | V. 17

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- Hidden manna: Possibly a reference to the manna of the Ark of the Covenant, hidden since the days of the Babylonian captivity.
- A white stone: Interpretations of this white stone are so numerous as to make this beyond interpretation, other than to know that it appears to be a blessing. Since Scripture does not define it, and since there is no clear extra-Biblical definition, it is best left without interpretation.
- A new name: There is a mystery yet to be revealed in the new name. See Rev. 19:12