

CHURCH AT SMYRNA

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CITY OF SMYRNA

- A. Known as "The Glory of Asia".
 - 1. A city of 250,000 people.
 - 2. A Beautiful City.
- B. WAS A GREAT TRADE CITY.
 - 1. Stood on a deep gulf and was about 40 miles North of Ephesus.
 - 2. Had a magnificent harbor. (Could be sealed off).
 - 3. Served the valley of the river of Hermus.
- C. OUTSTANDINGLY BEAUTIFUL CITY.
 - 1. Was a model for all a town should be.
 - 2. Great straight, spacious streets ran the length of the city.
 - 3. Filled with great temples...Such as Temple of Zeus, Aphrodite, etc.
 - 4. Also one of the largest public theaters in Asia Minor.
- D. POLITICALLY IT WAS AN IMPORTANT CITY.
 - 1. It was a free city.
 - 2. As a wealthy beautiful pagan city, it looked with contempt on the poor and humble Christians.
 - 3. To Smyrna earthly honors were the "first and the last," not God.
- E. IT WAS ONE OF THE GREAT CENTERS OF CAESAR WORSHIP.
 - 1. WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO WORSHIP OF "Dea Roma" or the goddess Rome.
 - 2. The transition of this to Rome and then to Caesar was very easy.
 - 3. Then Caesar worship became compulsory.
 - 4. A certificate was required which stated that every Roman citizen had burned a pinch of incense on the altar to the godhead of Caesar.
- F. ANOTHER GREAT AND every present threat to the Christians of Smyrna was a very large Jewish population.
 - 1. As you know from the rest of N.T. in many instances it was the Jews who led the attack upon the church.
 - 2. They informed on Christians, and continually brought charges against them

INTRODUCTION

- A. "WHO WAS DEAD, AND LIVED AGAIN."
 - 1. THIS DESCRIPTION OF Christ the revealer of the letter.
 - 2. Became dead....
 - a. Died on Cross.
 - b. Became dead so we wouldn't have to fear death.
 - 3. Completed with blessing at end of letter.
- B. WHY THIS INTRODUCTION:
 - 1. Because of the nature of the letter.
 - 2. This in it's self a blessing and comfort to the church.
 - 3. He had over come death...Thus they would be able.

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4. Noteworthy that this is one of only two that received praise and no censure. Not that they were perfect....but their dependence was on Christ.

I Know Thy Tribulation

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- A. Tribulation carries the general idea of affliction or distress. Greek = thilipsis...literally meaning “pressing, pressing together.”
1. Doubtless had suffered persecution.
 2. True of almost all of the churches.
 3. Must have been particular here to rate mention.
- B. GOD IS AWARE OF OUR DISTRESS.
1. God heard Murmuring of children in Egypt.
 2. God can be touched by our infirmities.
 3. The fact that God KNOWS....
 4. Jesus said “**I Know**” in that He likewise had suffered.
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THY POVERTY

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- B. Many Christians lost job because of Christ. (Poverty here means extreme...destitute.). (**Esther 3:1-13; esp. vs. 13**).
1. Just because they were Christian.
 2. Forced to worship idol particular to their work.
- C. HOMES TAKEN AWAY....Robbery...No protection for Christians.
1. No dishonor to be poor.
 2. Sometimes a blessing.
- D. HISTORY RECORDS THE EXISTENCE OF CHURCH AT SMYRNA longer than almost any....POLYCARP....
- E. “BUT THY ART RICH.”
1. Though poor in material goods rich in spirit.
 2. Tells us where to put our treasure.
 3. Seek first....will be added to you...
 4. How great to be so Rich.
- F. **WOULD WE BE WILLING TO GIVE UP MATERIAL WEALTH TO BE SO RICH?**
1. What if it cost you your job. (Had to lie or steal).
 2. What would you give up to be rich???
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Blasphemy Of The Jews

- A. God knows the action of the wicked...."Vengeance is mine...."
 - B. "SAY THEY ARE JEWS...(See John 8:33ff)
 - 1. Israel...House or people of God.
 - 2. Just to claim they are doesn't make it so.
 - 3. Many Christian in same boat today.
 - C. BUT ARE A SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN.
 - 1. Shows how wicked...
 - 2. People of Satan.
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FEAR NOT

- B. ABOUT TO SUFFER.
 - 1. Cast some into prison.
 - 2. What kind of prisons....what went with it.
 - C. BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH....
 - 1. Note: "Thou" yet writing to Christians. Church.
 - 2. UNTO....does not mean just through your existence....BUT
 - 3. Even to point of death....EVEN IF MUST DIE!
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CONCLUSION

- A. Jesus's opening statement....Dead.....Alive.
 - B. "He that over cometh shall not be hurt of the second death."
 - C. Jesus overcameWE CAN ALSO!
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