



OVERCOMERS

OVERCOMERS - PART 11

Hopefully you have received insight from looking at the resource in relation to the church at Ephesus. In this teaching we will look at the message that Jesus sent to His people at Smyrna.

Revelation 2:8-11 "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: 'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until 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. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.'

The first thing to recognise is that this church had nothing to repent of, unlike the Ephesian church and four other churches which we will get to. Jesus acknowledges the tribulation that they have faced and are facing, and the opposition they are being confronted with by those who profess to be Jews who are not.

Jesus encourages this church as they are about to face imprisonment and because they will be tested. Notice He doesn't say I will come and rescue you out of the tribulation and imprisonment, but encourages the church to be faithful until death.

The prosperity gospel which is preached is a false gospel, even though it may have elements of truth within it. The prosperity gospel doesn't have within its teaching the suffering for Christ, or having fellowship with His suffering as Paul preached.

The promise of Christ to the church who is faithful until death is twofold. Firstly, this church is given the 'crown of life', which is the same crown James speaks of in James 1:12 and Paul testifies to in 2 Timothy 4:8. What is fascinating from James 1:12 is that it is those who love God who receive this crown of life and the thing which the Ephesian church is rebuked for is leaving their first love.

Secondly this church who overcomes were promised that they would not be hurt by the second death. We know from Revelation 20:14 that the second death is the lake of fire. Those who overcome won't be anywhere near this reality of being thrown into the lake of fire as death and Hades will be.

As we can see from these passages of truth, Jesus doesn't promise us that we will not die physically in living for Him. What He promises us is that if we are physically killed, we are still alive in Him and that He has overcome the power and sting of death.



OVERCOMERS

It's this revelation we all need as His people so we live faithful obedient lives unto Him, no matter what the cost.

QUESTIONS

1. Why does Jesus allow the church at Smyrna to go through times of tribulation and opposition when they had done nothing wrong (they had nothing to repent of)?
2. What is the purpose of us suffering for Christ or having fellowship (oneness) with His suffering?
3. Are you facing tribulation or opposition in your life? What is He revealing to you about who He is in this tribulation or opposition?
4. What is the 'crown of life' and why does Jesus promise it to those who remain faithful until death?
5. How will a revelation of His promise, that those who are faithful until death will not be hurt by the second death, enable us to live a faithful and obedient life unto Him no matter the cost?

ACTION POINT: As you pray for one another during the week, ask the Holy Spirit to give you a word of encouragement that you can share with someone this week.