

SUFFERING SMYRNA

Revelation 2:8-11

David Rountree

1. A wonderful message of comfort for suffering saints.
2. Polycarp was the Bishop of Smyrna and burned at the stake in AD 155.
3. How do we suffer for Christ's sake in America?
4. Since we are of Christ we must suffer (John 16:33; Phil. 1:29; 2 Tim. 3:12).

We Are Not Hidden (v. 8-9)

1. Christ knows our afflictions of **pain**. How does this help?
2. God's world of order is never out of order. Jesus is overseer in charge from beginning to the end; he says he is "the First and the Last" (v. 8).
3. Christ knows our afflictions of **poverty** (v. 9b).
 - **Heb.10:34**, Christian property was plundered yet rich in the glorious fruit of God's grace (cf. Matt. 6:20; 19:21; Luke 12:21).
 - **2 Cor.8:9**, poverty in Christ is short-lived.
4. Christ knows our afflictions of **profanity** (v. 9c).
 - Who are these Jews Christ is referring to? (John 8:37-47)
 - Who are some people today that call themselves Christians but are rather instruments of the devil?
 - The Jews who rejected Christ have been declared "the synagogue of Satan" (v.9; John8:44) and are no longer his people. The people of God are those of faith in Christ (Gal.3:7, 26-29).

We Are Not Hopeless (v. 10)

1. "Do not fear" (v.10; Matt.10:28).
2. What suffering is not our fault? Why do we need to remember this?
3. The phrase "ten days" means "a full period of time" yet a definite period of time. "Ten days" could have been the term limit for Roman prisoners.

We Can Be Honored (v. 10, 11)

1. To receive a "crown of life" (v.10) is an honor (1Cor.9:24-25).
2. No words of rebuke for sinful practices. A pure church? God honors purity (cf. Matt. 5:3,8).
3. We will not be hurt by the second death (v.11; 20:14).
4. If we will not suffer for Christ, we will not live with Christ.