**Faithful Until Death**

*Revelation 2:10*

**Introduction**

1. The revelation of Christ given through the inspired apostle John contained in its beginning commendation, warning, and exhortation to seven churches in Asia (cf. 2:1-3:22).
2. The church in Smyrna was one of two (Philadelphia – Kept His word even in persecution) that was not reproved (only encouraged) for doing wrong.
* Ephesus (Left first love); Pergamos (Put up with false doctrine); Thyatira (Permitting unrighteous behavior/teaching); Sardis (dead – works incomplete); Laodicea (Lukewarm).
1. Christ gives an exhortation in **Revelation 2:10** that we must all take to heart.
* Common phrase at the end of each letter to each church – *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches”* (2:11).
	+ In other words, these letters were not only for those churches, but inspired instruction for everyone.
1. Faith throughout life is necessary.
2. We can fall from grace!
* Some use Revelation 2:10 to discuss the importance of remaining faithful for your entire life, until it ends (this is legitimate, but not what Rev. 2:10 is discussing).
* **Hebrews 12:15** – We can fall from grace. (Esau sold his birthright. Paralleled with us selling ours.)
* **Jude 5** – The Israelites were saved, but there were some who didn’t believe and were destroyed.
* **Matthew 7:21-23** – These were individuals who were once obedient and then stopped being obedient.
	+ Does **(v. 21)** – presently doing.
	+ Done **(v. 22)** – done in the past.
	+ Practice **(v. 23)** – presently doing.
1. Our responsibility is to continue in righteousness.
* **2 Peter 1:10-11** – We must continue in growth in order to make our call and election sure. (Implied is the concept of it not being sure, or Peter wouldn’t have written this.)
* **Ephesians 4:17-24** – There is a transformation, or renewing of the mind, that must continually take place.
	+ This transformation is of a new man that walks in good works – **Colossians 3:12-17**

*This is all true and must be emphasized. However, Revelation 2:10 discusses something a little different 🡪*

1. The quality of faith that upholds under the threat of death is necessary. (Rev. 2:10 discusses more of a quality of faith that can endure much affliction than a quantity of faith with regard to the full extent of our lives as vapors.)
2. **Revelation 2:8-11**
* Revelation 2:10 is concerning possible martyrdom. Christians were to be persecuted and Jesus’ instruction was to remain faithful no matter what.
	+ *“If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small”* (Proverbs 24:10).
	+ **(v. 9)** – They were participating in works of righteousness, the work of the Lord.
		- This caused persecution – tribulation and poverty.
		- There were blasphemers who claimed to be the people of God (Jews) but were in fact serving Satan. (Similar to what Jesus endured).
	+ **(v. 10)** – Their tribulation is inflicted by Satan, but allowed by God as a test.
		- *“Count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience”* (James 1:2-3).
		- 10 days = full amount of time. (Complete test of faith).
		- Until death – until; up to; as far as. (The death considered in the context is not natural, but inflicted.)
1. Faith as far as death is rewarded.
* (**v. 8)** – Christ is the assurance. He was dead, but was made alive.
	+ **1 Peter 3:18** – His physical death was a segue into life and comfort in Paradise *(“Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise”* Luke 23:43 – To the thief on the cross.)
	+ **1 Peter 4:1-2, 6** – We must have the same mindset as Christ. Remaining faithful under persecution, living for the will of God.
		- Those who were persecuted before and died (by any means) may have had tribulation in flesh but are now living in the spirit!
	+ **(v. 11)** – Dying for the cause of Christ as a faithful Christian overcomes and escapes the second death.
		- **Revelation 20:11-15** – we are judged according to our works. If we fold under adversity we will not escape the 2nd death.
* **(v. 9, 10)** – You are rich. Why? Because of your good works, and the crown of life that is promised to those who are obedient.
	+ **Matthew 6:19-21** – When we remain faithful during adversity we are storing treasure in heaven.
	+ **2 Timothy 4:6-8** – The crown of righteousness was awaiting Paul.
		- His death was the kind of death Jesus was discussing in Revelation 2:10.
		- Drink offering alluding to his imminent death. His blood was going to be spilled. (Can mean life as an offering to God in service, but context suggests his death “departure is at hand.”)
		- The crown also awaits us if we remain faithful.
	+ **Hebrews 11:32-40** – We must have a faith like those in the hall of faith. They remained faithful in the harshest of times because they looked for the promise of God.

**Conclusion**

1. While we do not experience much persecution at the moment, there is a possibility for an immense amount in the future.
2. How will we respond? Will remain faithful to the extent of dying for Christ? Or will be fold under adversity?