Crossroads International Church (Letters from Christ Series) Dr. Rick Griffith

10 November 2013 Message 2 of 7

NIV 40 Minutes

**Suffering Yet Steadfast**

Title

***Revelation 2:8-11 (Smyrna)***

**Topic:** Suffering

**Subject:** How does Jesus want you to respond to suffering?

**Complement:** Replace fear with faithfulness during suffering since Jesus knows exactly how you feel

**Purpose:** The listeners will replace fear with faithfulness during suffering

**Reading:** 1 Peter 3:4

**Songs:** “Through It All” (congregation) & “Trust His Heart” (my solo)

# Introduction

### Interest: Some believers are suffering greatly today.

#### Today is the annual commemorating of the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church. We remember our suffering brothers and sisters around the world with over one half million congregations today and last Sunday.

IDOP

#### Pakistan’s All Saints bombing on 22 Sept 2013 shows the hatred against Christians today.

All Saints (13 slides)

### Need: Every believer suffers to some extent.

Hits?

#### In what area are you “taking hits” for being a Christian?

##### You workplace passes you up for promotion.

##### Your motives are misunderstood.

##### You are lumped with fanatics.

##### Your faith is ridiculed in your family.

##### Do you suffer in some other area?

#### How do you feel as you see persecution close in on you today?

Subject

### Subject: How does Jesus want you to respond to suffering?

### Background: Each of the seven Asian churches had a special message from Christ, including Smyrna.

Rev 2-3

(12 slides)

### Preview: Christ’s letter to Smyrna provides three exhortations to handle persecution.

Preview

### Text: Revelation 2:8-11 has only four verses, but they will help us suffer properly.

(The first way Jesus wants us to respond to suffering is to...)

# I. Recognize that Christ understands your suffering (2:8-9).

MP

[Know that Jesus has “been there, done that.”]

## Destination: Smyrna (2:8a)

Map

## Description of Christ: He is the one who is “the first and the last, the one who was dead, but came to life” (2:8b-c)

Christ

### How does Christ being “the first and the last” relate to Smyrna (8b)? Perhaps the idea is that Jesus, being omniscient, knows every persecuted person from the beginning of time until the last person is persecuted in the future.

### How does Jesus being “dead [but] come to life” relate to Smyrna’s Christians (8c)?

#### The church was facing persecution that would lead some of them to death.

#### Jesus wanted them to know that he could relate.

## Commendation: “I know your distress and poverty (but you are rich) and the slander against you by self-called Jews who really are not, but are a synagogue of Satan” (2:9)

• Commend

### How does “but you are rich” relate?

### In what sense were they rich?

#### Often the materially rich are spiritually poor—like the Laodicean church we will see in chapter 3.

#### But the materially poor are also often spiritually rich—they see God’s good hand in their lives and draw upon his resources.

## Rebuke (absent):

• Rebuke

## Thank Christ that he understands your own area of suffering.

Thank

### Is pain good? Most of us don’t think so, but one boy feels no pain.

Pain

#### Little Isaac Brown is five years old. Like other kids his age, he's learning to read and write his ABCs and to calculate simple addition and subtraction. But there is one thing Isaac is learning that rare few other children will ever have to learn. Isaac is learning about pain.

• Isaac

#### "We're doing the best we can to just teach him; he knows blood is bad," said his mother. "We taught him even when he was little to say 'ow.' You don't have to tell normal kids to say 'ow.'"

#### Isaac was born with an extremely rare genetic insensitivity to pain. Like a modern day leper, Isaac doesn't know when he's touching a hot stove, when he's stepped on broken glass, or when he's broken a bone. For example, he broke his pelvis and felt no pain at all.

• Baby

#### Because he doesn't feel injuries, Isaac's parents, Carrie and Randy Brown, are teaching him how to identify them to stay healthy.

• Leg

#### "The toddler years were an absolute nightmare," said Isaac's mother, Carrie Brown. "He would just drop to the ground and smack his face on the table. He thought the fall was fun."

Family

#### Isaac has dunked his hand in hot coffee without flinching. He once placed his palm on a working oven burner without shedding a tear.

#### His parents are believers. His mother noted, "When he was diagnosed, [doctors said] there's nothing we can do for Isaac, not yet anyway," [his mother] Carrie recalled. "But the fact that they can take his mutated gene and cause people with chronic pain to feel less pain. The thought of that is unreal…. God gave us Isaac, maybe for this very purpose."

### Pain and suffering can achieve good results.

• Quote

#### “Suffering can be expected for the ungodly, but why should the godly suffer? The Scriptures give a number of reasons. Suffering may be:

BKC

##### disciplinary (1 Cor. 11:30-32; Heb. 12:3-13),

##### preventive (as Paul’s thorn in the flesh, 2 Cor. 12:7),

##### the learning of obedience (as Christ’s suffering, Heb. 5:8; cf. Rom. 5:3-5), or

##### the providing of a better testimony for Christ (as in Acts 9:16)” (BKC).

#### Can you identify with any of these reasons?

### Christ feels your pain.

Christ feels

MPI

(So you should recognize that Christ understands your suffering. The second way Jesus wants us to respond to suffering is to...)

# II. Don’t fear suffering for Christ (2:10a).

MP

[Be ready to a pay a price for your love for Jesus.]

## Exhortation 1: Do not fear.

Exhortation

1

### “Do not fear what you are about to suffer” (2:10a)

### Who fears most? Persecutors or the persecuted? Peter says that fear belongs to the persecutors, not the persecuted.

1 Pet 3:4

### Paul also noted in 1 Corinthians 13 that we should not even fear to give our body to be burned, for what counts most is love!

1 Cor 13:3

## Are you afraid to suffer for Christ?

Responses 6 slides

### Responses to All Saints bombing have been mixed [explain]. Our elders decided that an appropriate response on our part is to provide $3000 to six families. It supports each family $200 a month for three months to help get them back on their feet financially.

### Will you confess your fear of suffering right now?

Confess

MPI&II  
2 slides

(So to handle suffering, we need to know that Christ understands, enabling us to live without fear. The third way Jesus wants us to respond to suffering is to...)

# III. Be faithful during suffering (2:10b-11).

MP

[Commit now not to waver or give up your faith due to persecution.]

## Warning:

• Warning

### “The devil will throw some of you into prison to test you… for ten days” (2:10b)

Prison

### Some interpret this number as allegorical, but I suspect they saw it as real!

## Exhortation 2: Be faithful until death.

Exhortation 2

### “Be faithful until death” (2:10c)

Lion 2:10a

### Some had already suffered Nero’s persecutions 30 years earlier.

### Others like Perpetua would suffer over a century later.

Perpetua

### How long will you be faithful to Christ?

## Promise: Remain faithful unto death for the crown of life since all believers are conquerors who will not be harmed by the second death (2:10d-11)

Promise

## What does being faithful look like in your situation (ENDA)?

ENDA

(8 slides)

### Supporters have convinced people that homosexuality is not only OK, but it MUST be supported as it is as unchangeable as one’s race, gender, or national origin.

### I am not a prophet of the days to come, but I suspect that part of the persecution ahead for us all relates to our faithfulness to the Lord Jesus Christ and biblical morality. Are you ready?

(So how does Jesus want us to respond to suffering?)

# Conclusion

### Replace fear with faithfulness during suffering since Jesus knows exactly how you feel (MI).

MI

### How are you suffering now? Do these three things:

Application

#### Recognize that Jesus understands your situation.

#### Don’t fear suffering for Christ in this area.

#### Be faithful to him despite the outcome.

# Preliminary Questions

**Verses Questions**

# Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?

### The previous letter written to Ephesus noted the good deeds of the believers.

### However, it also pointed out that their initial love for Christ had waned some 40 years later. How many of us are also 40 years old in Christ? I trusted Christ 42 years ago and fewer things about the Bible and the Christian life are new to me—but has my love for Christ also grown cold?

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

### Suffering can tempt us to feel alone and vulnerable and forgotten.

### But Jesus wants us to know that he does not forget the suffering church.

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

#### The city of Smyrna (present-day Izmir) was “a large and wealthy city 35 miles north of Ephesus. Like Ephesus, it was a seaport. In contrast to Ephesus, which today is a deserted ruin, Smyrna is still a large seaport with a present population of about 200,000” (Walvoord, BKC).

#### “The name of the city, Smyrna, means ‘myrrh,’ an ordinary perfume. It was also used in the anointing oil of the tabernacle, and in embalming dead bodies (cf. Ex. 30:23; Ps. 45:8; Song 3:6; Matt. 2:11; Mark 15:23; John 19:39). While the Christians of the church at Smyrna were experiencing the bitterness of suffering, their faithful testimony was like myrrh or sweet perfume to God” (BKC).

# Questions

### Did the church at Smyrna have its own angel (8)?

### If so, why would the church’s angel need a letter written to him? Couldn’t he just get the message orally from Christ?

### What does it mean for Christ to be “the first and the last”?

### How does Christ being “the first and the last” relate specifically to Smyrna (8b)?

### How does Jesus being “dead [but] come to life” relate to Smyrna’s Christians (8c)?

#### The church was facing persecution that would lead some of them to death.

#### Jesus wanted them to know that he could relate.

### Why does Jesus say, “I know about your suffering…” (9)? Wouldn’t that be obvious to them?

#### The verb for “I know” here is not the normal verb meaning to be informed about?

#### The word here (οἶδά) means that Jesus knew how much they had already suffered—and he wanted them to know that this had not gone unnoticed.

### How were they poor (9)? Why?

#### BKC points out their “extreme poverty (πτωχείαν in contrast with πενία, the ordinary word for ‘poverty’)” to show they were not simply a little poor.

#### Persecution often leads to poverty. Why? Those not being persecuted don’t want to do business with the persecuted ones. Their land, livelihood, and possessions are taken from them.

### How does “but you are rich” relate? In what sense were they rich?

#### Often the materially rich are spiritually poor—like the Laodicean church we will see in chapter 3.

#### But the materially poor are also often spiritually rich—they see God’s good hand in their lives and draw upon his resources.

#### Who were these “Jews” in Satan’s synagogue (9b)?

#### “They were being persecuted not only by pagan Gentiles but also by hostile Jews and by Satan himself. Apparently the local Jewish synagogue was called the synagogue of Satan (cf. Rev. 3:9). (Satan is mentioned in four of the seven letters: 2:9, 13, 24; 3:9.) In the history of the church the most severe persecution has come from religionists” (BKC).

### Do we have a historical record of this 10-day period of suffering for Smyrna believers (10a)?

#### “Some have taken these words “for 10 days” as a symbolic representation of the entire persecution of the church; others think it refers to 10 persecutions under Roman rulers. The most probable meaning is that it anticipated a limited period of time for suffering (cf. Walvoord, *Revelation*, pp. 61-2). Scott finds precedence in Scripture that 10 days means a limited period of time (Walter Scott, *Exposition of the Revelation of Jesus Christ*, p. 69). He cites Genesis 24:55; Nehemiah 5:18; Jeremiah 42:7; Daniel 1:12; Acts 25:6. Alford holds the same position, citing Numbers 11:19; 14:22; 1 Samuel 1:8; Job 19:3 *(The Greek Testament*, 4:567)” (BKC).

### Why must some Christians suffer (10)?

#### “The problem of human suffering, even for a limited time, has always perplexed faithful Christians. Suffering can be expected for the ungodly, but why should the godly suffer? The Scriptures give a number of reasons. Suffering may be (1) disciplinary (1 Cor. 11:30-32; Heb. 12:3-13), (2) preventive (as Paul’s thorn in the flesh, 2 Cor. 12:7), (3) the learning of obedience (as Christ’s suffering, Heb. 5:8; cf. Rom. 5:3-5), or (4) the providing of a better testimony for Christ (as in Acts 9:16)” (BKC).

### Is the crown of life really conditional for those martyred (10b)?

#### “Apparently up to this time none had died, but this could be expected. Later Polycarp, having become the bishop of the church in Smyrna, was martyred, and undoubtedly others were also killed (cf. Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *A Commentary Critical, Experimental and Practical on the Old and New Testaments*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1945. 6:662). “The crown of life” is one of several crowns promised to Christians (cf. 1 Cor. 9:25; 1 Thes. 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:6-8; 1 Peter 5:4; Rev. 4:4). The crown of life is also mentioned in James 1:12. Believers are encouraged to be faithful by contemplating what awaits them after death, namely, eternal life” (BKC).

### Are all believers “victorious” and therefore escape the second death (11b)?

#### “As in all the letters, an exhortation is given to the individuals who will listen. The promise is given to overcomers, referring in general to all believers, assuring them that they **will not be hurt at all by the second death** (cf. Rev. 20:15)” (BKC).

#### “The reassuring word of Christ to Smyrna is the word to all suffering and persecuted Christians. As stated in Hebrews 12:11, “No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it” (BKC).

# Tentative Subject/Complement Statements

Text

# Possible Illustrations

### On 22 September 2013 two suicide bombers killed 89 believers in the service of the All Saints Church in Peshawar, Pakistan.

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2013/09/22/225056984/deadly-bombings-hit-christian-church-in-pakistan> below

# Suicide Attack Strikes Church In Pakistan; Dozens Dead

by

September 22, 201310:29 AM



People gather outside All Saints Church in Peshawar, Pakistan, Sunday, after a suicide bombing attack killed scores of people earlier in the day, officials said.

Mohammad Sajjad/AP

Two suicide bombers struck the All Saints Church following a service in Peshawar, Pakistan, Sunday, killing more than 70 people and wounding more than 120, according to and other news outlets. The victims are believed to include many children.

The church's bishop, Rev. Humphrey S. Peters, issued a statement in which he condemned the violence and expressed his condolences to those affected by the attack, which officials say is one of the deadliest ever conducted against Pakistan's Christian minority.

"A wing of the Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility for the bombing," the AP reports, "saying it would continue to target non-Muslims until the United States stopped drone attacks in the country's remote tribal region."



A man helps an injured woman on her arrival at the hospital after two suicide bomb attacks on All Saints Church in Peshawar on Sunday.

A. Majeed/AFP/Getty Images

The All Saints describes the violence, saying, "As the Sunday Service ended and the people came out of the Church, two suicide bombers entered the church compound from the main gate and blew themselves up in the midst of the people."

The site added, "According to those we have spoken to, among the dead were a number of Sunday School children and Choir members of the Church who were all in the Church compound at the moment of the blasts."

Dating from the 1880s, All Saints Church is famed for its architecture that echoes elements of a Saracenic Muslim mosque. Sunday's deadly attack sparked protests in other Pakistani cities, with demonstrators calling for violence against Christians to cease.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

From: Naeem John <naeem.john40@gmail.com>

Subject: Peshawar Blast Victims!!

Date: 28 October, 2013 3:13:05 am GMT+8

Dear Praying Friends,

Much and Love and greetings! Trust that you all had a great weekend. I preached this morning at my home church, Emmanuel. My sermon on 1 Pet 4:12-19 was mainly inspired by a phone call I received on Thursday, 24 Oct. Maira Samar, 8 years old, my former colleague and old friend Dilawar Samar's daughter, died exactly one month and two days after she was fatally injured in the blast on 22 Sept at All Saints Church, Peshawar. Thus making the number of martyrs eighty nine (89) to be exact. More sorrow, and more reasons for the miseries of Peshawar Church blast victims to continue. It doesn't just end here. There's more to be shared about the suffering of these victims.

Yesterday I received a four page detailed list from the Peshawar Diocese Disaster management department of the number of families affected, men and women who have been widowed, children who have been orphaned and of bread winners who have either died or are critically injured. Some of the injured bread winners won't recover for three to four months according to the doctors. Three weeks ago I visited the victims of the blast with a team from my church. We met Rukhsana Naveed, one of the thirteen widows, she is young and had been married for barely a year, pregnant with her first child. But her husband, Naveed Shirazi won't be around to see their first child when he/she is born. We also met Shalom, 18 years old, one of the thirty six orphans. Shalom has lost both his parents and his only sister in the blast. A total of fifty two families have either lost their bread winners or the bread winners are critically injured. These fifty two families need our love, care and support. **Will you be "an answer to their prayers?"**

We are looking at a possibility of supporting/helping these fifty two families whose bread winners are either dead or injured for at least next three months with their monthly expenses, such as grocery, utility bills, house rent, school fees etc. Ideally, we would like to provide at least USD 200 to each family for the next three months. But the amount could be more or less depending on your response. Please do consider this prayerfully and respond as the Spirit leads you. Your support will be an encouragement to these victims. Again, ideally we would like to start supporting these families from next month. The funds can be transferred to the following account:

Title of account: Naeem John

Account number: 01170260901

Account Type: Current

Bank: Standard Chartered Bank Ltd. Pakistan

Address: 55 Haider Road,

Saddar, Rawalpindi 46000.

Branch Code: 032

Swift Transfer Code: SCBLPKKX

 Physical address

Naeem John

Apt # 3, Fazal Plaza,

Tulsa Road, Lalazar,

Rawalpindi 46000. Pakistan

Ph # 92-322-4253976

NIC #  34101-3502135-7

Blessings

Naeem & Ruby John             PS. attached is the list for your reference.

PAIN purpose of is good

[The Boy Who Feels No Pain](http://illustrationexchange.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=181c69bf3d2275e6dc9157a34&id=c367ec8eec&e=aa849ca33b)

Contributor: [I](http://illustrationexchange.us2.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=181c69bf3d2275e6dc9157a34&id=6433922197&e=aa849ca33b)[llustration Exchange](http://illustrationexchange.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=181c69bf3d2275e6dc9157a34&id=f0ee3b47fc&e=aa849ca33b)

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Little Isaac Brown is five years old. Like other kids his age, he's learning to read and write his ABCs and to calculate simple addition and subtraction. But there is one thing Isaac is learning that rare few other children will ever have to learn. Isaac is learning about pain.

"We're doing the best we can to just teach him; he knows blood is bad," said Brown. "We taught him even when he was little to say 'ow.' You don't have to tell normal kids to say 'ow.'"

Isaac was born with an extremely rare genetic insensitivity to pain. Like a modern day leper, Isaac doesn't know when he's touching a hot stove, when he's stepped on broken glass, or when he's broken a bone.

Because he doesn't feel injuries, Isaac's parents, Carrie and Randy Brown, are teaching him how to identify them to stay healthy.

"The toddler years were an absolute nightmare," said Isaac's mother, Carrie Brown. "He would just drop to the ground and smack his face on the table. He thought the fall was fun."

Isaac has dunked his hand in hot coffee without flinching. He once placed his palm on a working oven burner without shedding a tear.

After breaking a cup one time, Isaac banged on his mother's door to get her attention with the broken glass. When Brown opened the door, she found Isaac grasping the sharp edge of the glass. He didn't understand that the broken glass was damaging his hand with each strike.

While the rest of the world celebrates having even one day without pain--physical, emotional, spiritual--Isaac would be grateful to experience even a little.

**Application**:

Most of us have no problem identifying pain. In fact, through life experience, we've learned to anticipate it. We can see it coming a mile away. We say "ouch" before we've suffered a thing. Unlike little Isaac, we are masters of anticipating and quickly addressing our pain.

On the flip side, we seem to have an innate insensitivity to blessing. It just doesn't automatically, instinctively register in our hearts and minds the way it should, the way pain does. That's because we are born with a genetic disorder, a defect passed down to us from Adam, a nature which leaves us insensitive to blessing. As a result, we operate oblivious to the infinite graces that make every moment of our lives possible.

To achieve spiritual health, we must learn to better identify the goodness of God in our lives. To that end, we have set aside a special day of remembrance and thanksgiving just to help us refocus and recognize blessings we might otherwise overlook.

Just as little Isaac's parents are having to teach him to recognize pain, God has to teach us to recognize the blessings that are in our lives.

"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

Illustration Exchange 7 Nov 2013

# Possible Applications

### Let’s make sure we support our brothers and sisters undergoing suffering.

**Suffering Yet Steadfast**

***Revelation 2:8-11 (Smyrna)***

**Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)**

# *Exegetical Idea*: The way Jesus responded to the believers in Smyrna was to commend them for enduring suffering with its poverty and to exhort them to fearless and faithful suffering.

## (2:8-11) Christ commends the believers in Smyrna for their suffering and poverty from satanic attack and exhorts them to fearless and faithful suffering (Suffering Yet Steadfast Church: AD 100-313 when Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire)

### Destination: Smyrna (2:8a)

### Description of Christ: He is the one who is the first and the last, the one who was dead, but came to life (2:8b)

### Commendation: I know your distress and poverty (but you are rich) and the slander against you by self-called Jews who really are not, but are a synagogue of Satan (2:9)

### Rebuke (absent)

### Exhortation: Do not fear what you are about to suffer (2:10a)

### Warning: The devil will throw some of you into prison to test you… for ten days (2:10b)

### Promise: Remain faithful unto death for the crown of life since all believers are conquerors who will not be harmed by the second death (2:10c-11)

**Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)**

The listeners will replace fear with faithfulness during suffering.

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)

# Introduction

### Interest: Some believers are suffering greatly today (e.g., Pakistan’s All Saints bombing).

### Need:

#### In what area are you “taking hits” for being a Christian?

#### How do you feel as you see persecution close in on you today?

### Subject: How does Jesus want you to respond to suffering?

### Background: Each of the seven Asian churches had a special message from Christ, including Smyrna.

### Preview: Christ’s letter to Smyrna provides three exhortations to handle persecution.

### Text: Revelation 2:8-11 has only four verses, but they will help us suffer properly.

(The first way Jesus wants us to respond to suffering is to...)

# I. Recognize that Christ understands your suffering (2:8-9).

[Restate MP here.]

## Destination: Smyrna (2:8a)

## Description of Christ: He is the one who is “the first and the last, the one who was dead, but came to life” (2:8b)

## Commendation: “I know your distress and poverty (but you are rich) and the slander against you by self-called Jews who really are not, but are a synagogue of Satan” (2:9)

## Rebuke (absent)

## Thank Christ that he understands your own area of suffering (ILL: boy who feels no pain).

(The second way Jesus wants us to respond to suffering is to...)

# II. Don’t fear suffering for Christ (2:10a).

## Exhortation 1: “Do not fear what you are about to suffer” (2:10a)

## Are you afraid to suffer for Christ? Will you confess this now? (ILL: Responses to All Saints bombing)

(The third way Jesus wants us to respond to suffering is to...)

# III. Be faithful during suffering (2:10b-11).

## Exhortation 2: “Be faithful until death” (2:10b)

## Warning: “The devil will throw some of you into prison to test you… for ten days” (2:10c)

## Promise: Remain faithful unto death for the crown of life since all believers are conquerors who will not be harmed by the second death (2:10d-11)

## What does being faithful look like in your situation (ENDA)?

(So how does Jesus want us to respond to suffering?)

# Conclusion

### Replace fear with faithfulness during suffering since Jesus knows exactly how you feel (MI).

### How are you suffering now? Do these three things:

#### Recognize that Jesus understands your situation.

#### Don’t fear suffering for Christ in this area.

#### Be faithful to him despite the outcome.

****

**Rick Griffith**

10 November 2013

Message 2 of 7

**Suffering Yet Steadfast**

***Revelation 2:8-11 Letter to Smyrna***

# Introduction

### Some believers are suffering greatly today.

### In what area are you “taking hits” for being a Christian?

### How does Jesus want you to respond to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

# I. Recognize that Christ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ your suffering (2:8-9).

## Destination: Smyrna (2:8a)

## Description of Christ: He is the one who is “the first and the last, the one who was dead, but came to life” (2:8b)

## Commendation: “I know your distress and poverty (but you are rich) and the slander against you by self-called Jews who really are not, but are a synagogue of Satan” (2:9).

## Rebuke (absent)

## Thank Christ that he understands your own area of suffering.

# II. Don’t \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ suffering for Christ (2:10a).

## Exhortation 1: “Do not fear what you are about to suffer” (2:10a)

## Are you afraid to suffer for Christ? Will you confess this now?

# III. Be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ during suffering (2:10b-11).

## Exhortation 2: “Be faithful until death” (2:10b)

## Warning: “The devil will throw some of you into prison to test you… for ten days” (2:10c)

## Promise: Remain faithful unto death for the crown of life since all believers are conquerors who will not be harmed by the second death (2:10d-11)

## What does being faithful look like in your situation?

# Conclusion

### Replace \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ during suffering since Jesus knows exactly how you feel (Main Idea).

### How are you suffering now? Do these three things:

#### Recognize that Jesus understands your situation.

#### Don’t fear suffering for Christ in this area.

#### Be faithful to him despite the outcome.

**Home Group Questions:**

1. Read Revelation 2:8-11 aloud. Contrast what Jesus says with how most people respond to being treated unjustly.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Normal Reactions** | **Christ’s Commands** |
| Jesus is weak because he died | He is the victor over death (2:8b) |
| Sadness due to poverty | You are rich! (2:9) |
| Jews are not that bad (2:9b) | This is a satanic synagogue (2:9b) |
| Run and hide in fear (2:10a) | Don’t be afraid (2:10a) |
| Why must I suffer for ten days? | Your suffering will end after ten days (2:10b) |
| Give up your faith (2:10b) | “Remain faithful even when facing death” |

1. What examples of righteous suffering for Christ have most impressed you?

Adoniram Judson lost two wives and kids but refused to quit despite these trials

Philip? Stains and sons burned in van in India (Diane Stains remained & forgave)

Early missionaries to Japan and Korea suffered, followed by nationals

The average European missionary to Africa lived 18 months & packed in a coffin

1. How have you suffered in the past for being a Christian? How about now? What should you do in this situation?

I go more through the inconvenience of not owning a home, time demands, etc.