

Today we continue in our Verse by Verse series on the Book of Revelation

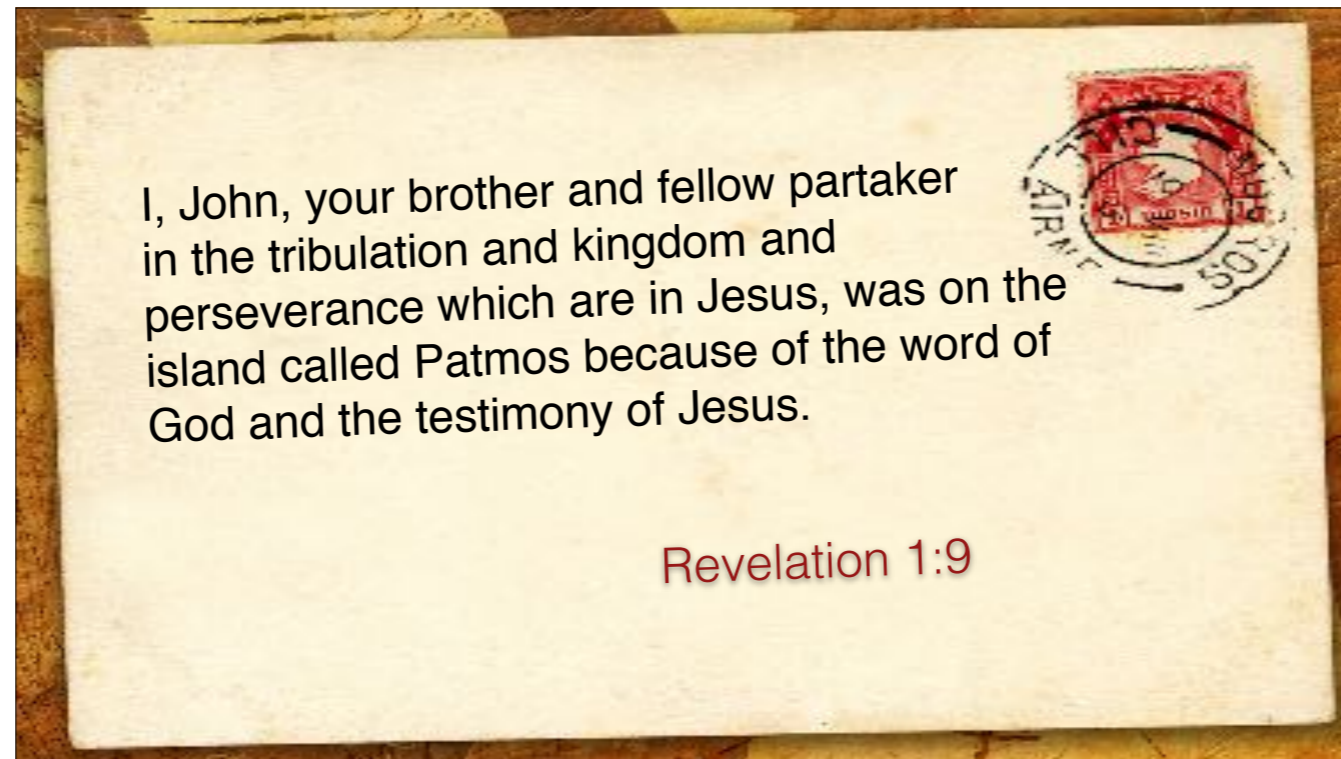
In our first week we looked at Chapter 1

As John was praying on the Sabbath day in The Spirit  
and he has this vision of the Glorified Christ.

most people believe it was around 95 AD when John wrote the book of Revelation

IT WAS A TIME WHEN THE CHURCH WAS GOING THROUGH A LOT OF PERSECUTION

As a matter of fact John mentions in chapter one



REVELATION 1:9 JOHN OPENS BY SAYING

I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

now most of US BELIEVE WE ARE SOON ENTERING THE TRIBULATION PERIOD  
WRITTEN ABOUT IN DANIEL AND REVELATION

BUT NOTICE HERE IN THE FIRST CHAPTER  
JOHN SAYS I AM A FELLOW PARKER IN THE TRIBULATION

OBVIOUSLY HE WASN'T TALKING ABOUT THE FINAL 7 YEARS OF HISTORY

BUT IT BRINGS UP AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT THAT I HOPE WILL CAUSE A LIGHT TO GO OFF IN YOUR MIND AS WE STUDY THE BOOK OF REVELATION AND THAT IS THIS

# Tribulation vs The Wrath of God

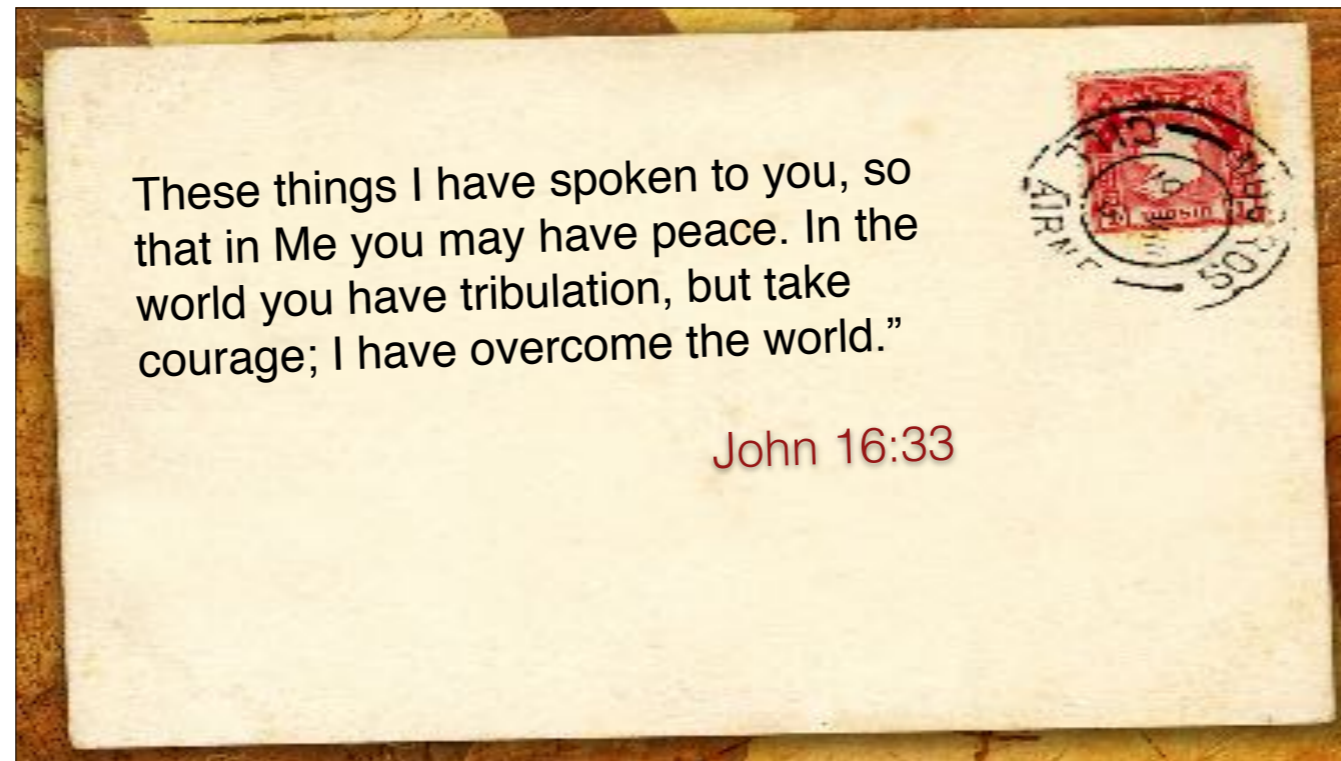
THERE IS A DIFFERENCE IN TRIBULATION AND THE WRATH OF GOD  
THEY ARE TWO SEPARATE THINGS.

Most people lump them together and believe that The 7 Year Tribulation  
is the Wrath of God

But the Wrath of God happens at the end of the 7 Year Tribulation

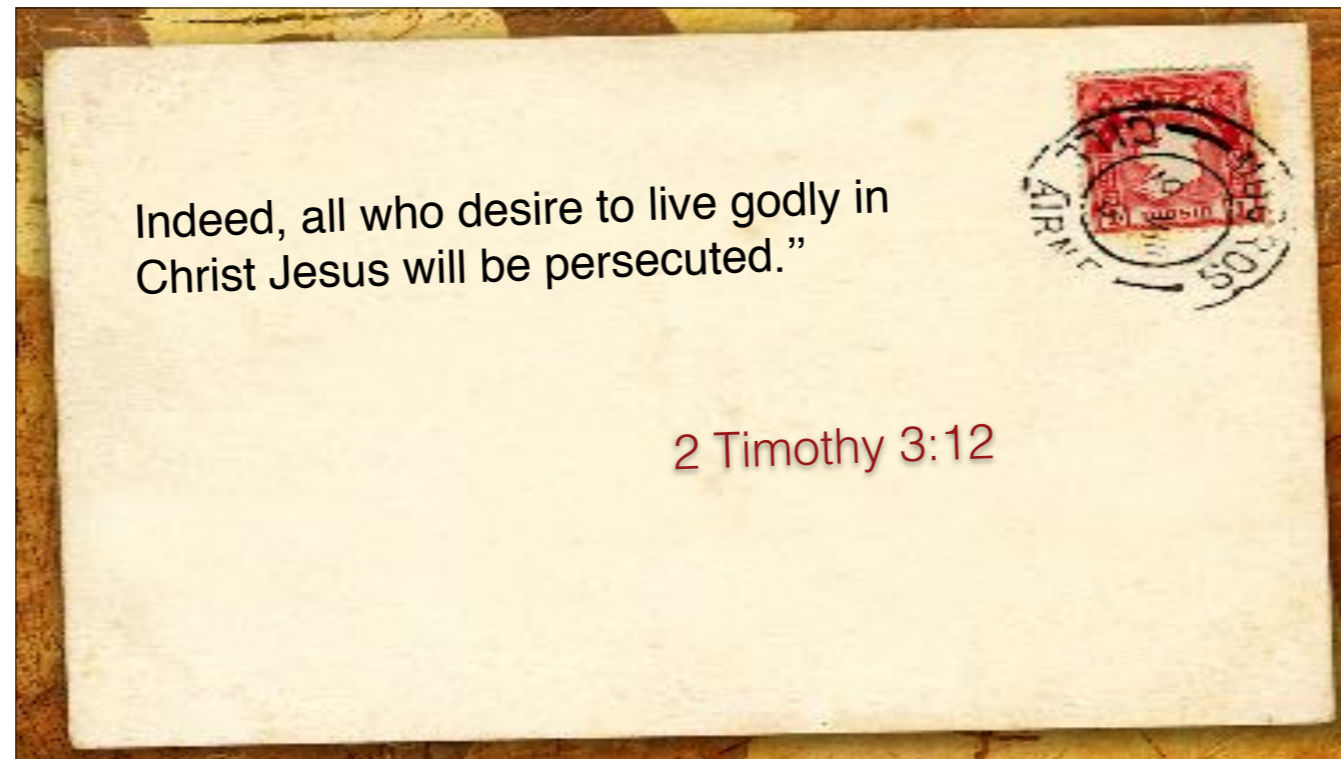
JOHN WAS A PARTAKER IN TRIBULATION

THE CHURCH WE ARE GOING TO STUDY TODAY IN SMYRNA  
THEY SUFFERED GREAT TRIBULATION AND PERSECUTION



Jesus spoke to his disciples while they were in the upper room  
and he said this in John 16:33

These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."



AS A Matter of Fact  
the Apostle Paul put it this way to Pastor Timothy  
of Ephesus  
He said INDEED ALL WHO DESIRE TO LIVE GODLY

When John Wrote the book of Revelation Domitian was Caesar of Rome.  
Domitian was one of the most murderous dictators who ever lived, and he launched an very harsh persecution against the church and it was  
nowhere more felt than in the town of Smyrna.

REMEMBER IF WE HAVE learned one thing from history that is when the church suffers persecution it is purified and purged.

ONE THING PERSECUTION DOES IS THAT IT WEEDS OUT THE HYPOCRITES  
PHONEYS WONT STICK AROUND FOR PERSECUTION.  
AND I BELIEVE GOD GAVE US THIS LETTER TO THE CHURCH AT SMYRNA TO SHOW US THAT GOD IS THER EIN SPITE OF  
PERSECUTION AND IN THE END WE WIN.

## Tribulation: Defined

“a state of suffering or distress, a trying experience”

tribulation : defination

a state of suffering or distress, a trying experience

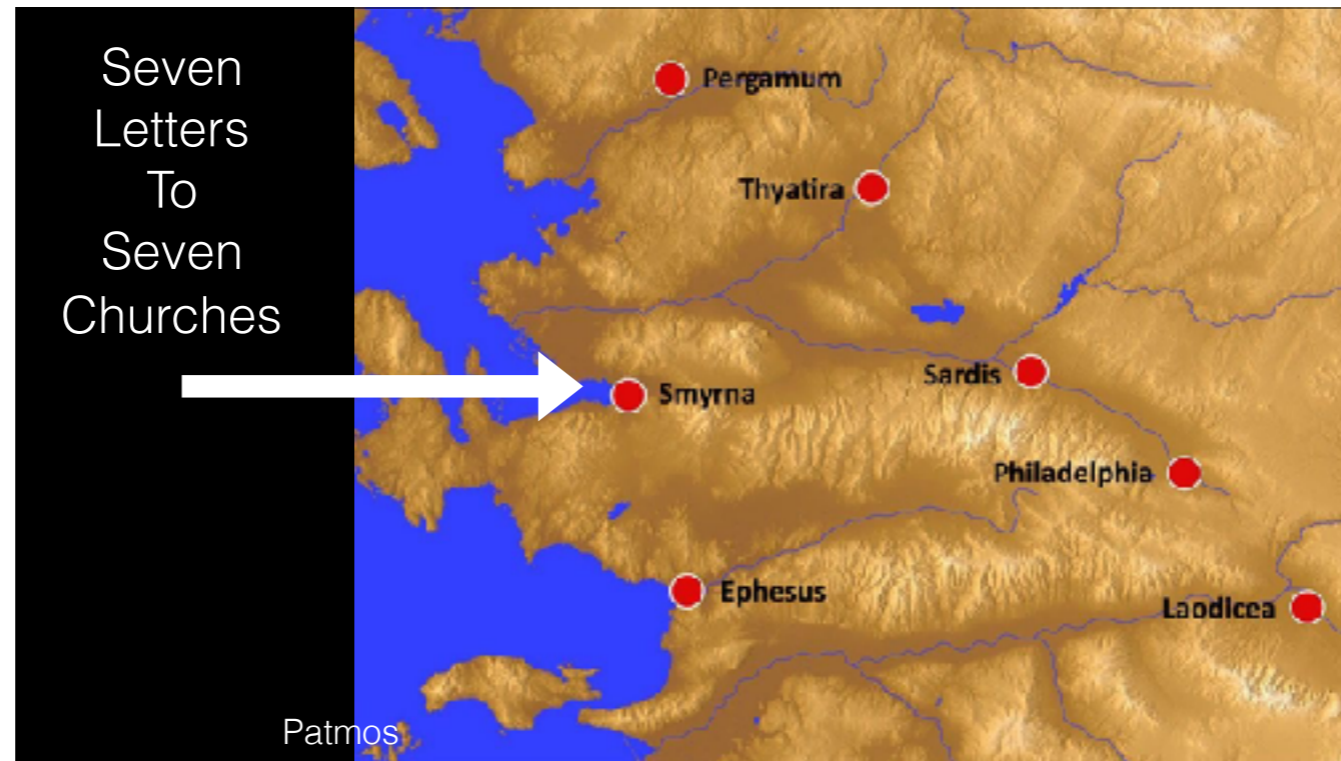
As we study the church at Smyrna today you will see that these were a people who were suffering persecution and tribulation and yet Persecution can't destroy the church it only makes it stronger  
THE CHURCH IN CHINA TODAY IS PERSECUTED, and yet its one of the strongest churches in the world.

they don't take their faith for granted, because it costs them something

No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

1 Corinthians 10:13





IN THE 2ND AND THIRD CHAPTER OF REVELATION WE LOOK AT 7 DISTINCT CHURCHES IN ASIA MINOR , LOCATED IN WHAT TODAY WOULD BE MODERN TURKEY.

WHEN YOU LOOK AT THE 7 CHURCHES ON THE MAP, THEY ARE LISTED IN ORDER OF THE WAY A TRAVELOR WOULD HAVE GONE ON A MAIL ROUTE TO DELIVER THE 7 LETTERS.

NOT ONLY ARE THEY LISTED IN A GEOGRAPHICAL ORDER FOR THE TRAVELOR , BUT WE FOUND LAST WEEK, THAT THEY ALSO COMPARED TO 7 DISTINCT TIME PERIODS OF CHURCH HISTORY. BEGINNING IN THE FIRST CENTURY WITH EPHEBUS REPRESENTING THE APOSTOLIC AGE, BUT THE FINAL CHURCH LAODICIA WHICH WAS LUKEWARM REPRESENTING THE LAST DAYS IN WHICH WE LIVE.



## *Jesus Told John To Write To The 7 Church's*



**Spiritual Report Cards**  
**2 Church's Passed**  
**Smyrna and Philedelphia**



**Revelation chapters 2 and 3**

**HE THAT HATH AN  
EAR LET HIM HEAR  
WHAT THE SPIRIT  
SAITH UNTO THE  
CHURCH'S. Revelation 2;7**

1. EPHESUS =FELL SHORT
2. SMYRNA= FAVOR
3. PERGAMOS=FELL SHORT
4. THYATIRA=FELL SHORT
5. SARDIS =FELL SHORT
6. PHILADELPHIA=FAVOR
7. LAODICEANS=FELL SHORT

OF THESE 7 LETTERS 5 RECIEVE HARSH CRITICISM 2 DO NOT  
OF THESE 7 LETTERS 6 RECEIVE SOME SORT OF PRAISE 1 DOES NOT

REMEMBER EPHESUS LEFT THEIR FIRST LOVE, THEY WEREN'T PERSECUTED THEY JUST LOST THEIR ZEAL

TWO CHURCHES STOOD OUT SMYRNA BECAUSE OF THE FIERCE PERSECUTION  
AND PHILADELPHIA THEY WENT THROUGH AND THE CHURCH AT PHILADELPHIA WHICH GOD SAID I PUT BEFORE YOU AN OPEN DOOR THAT NO MAN CAN  
AND HE SAID YOU HAVE KEPT MY WORD.



TODAY WE DEAL WITH THE 2ND OF THE 7 CHURCHES and it's called SMYRNA

## The Seven Churches of Revelation

### Smyrna: Background

# SMYRNA

#### The City

- “Smyrna” means “myrrh”
- 35-40 miles north of Ephesus
- Shape of the older buildings
- resembles a crown
- located in Modern Turkey



“In Roman times, Smyrna was considered one of the most brilliant cities of Asia Minor, It was the crown of Asia minor and in fact some of the buildings were shaped like a crown.

Smyrna rivaled the other two leading cities which were Pergamum and Ephesus.

They had wide streets that were paved.

Smyrna was noted for its great schools of science and medicine, and for its beautiful buildings.

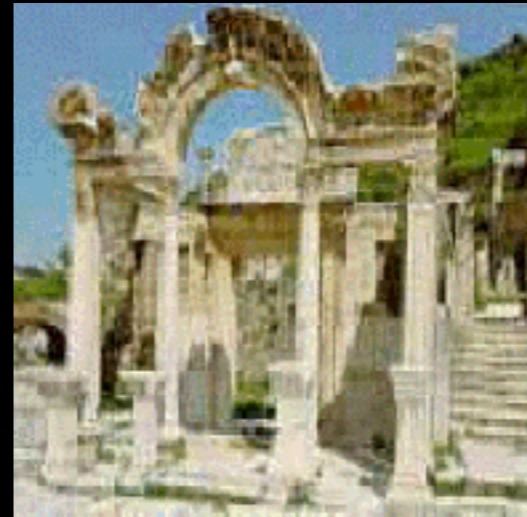
Among them was the Homerium, for Smyrna was one of several places which claimed to be the birthplace of the poet.

“On the slope of Mt. Pagus they had a theater which seated 20,000 spectators.

In the 23 AD year a temple was built in honor of Tiberius and his mother Julia, and the Golden Street, connecting the temples of Zeus and Cybele, is said to have been the best in any ancient city”

# THE CHURCH AT SMYRNA

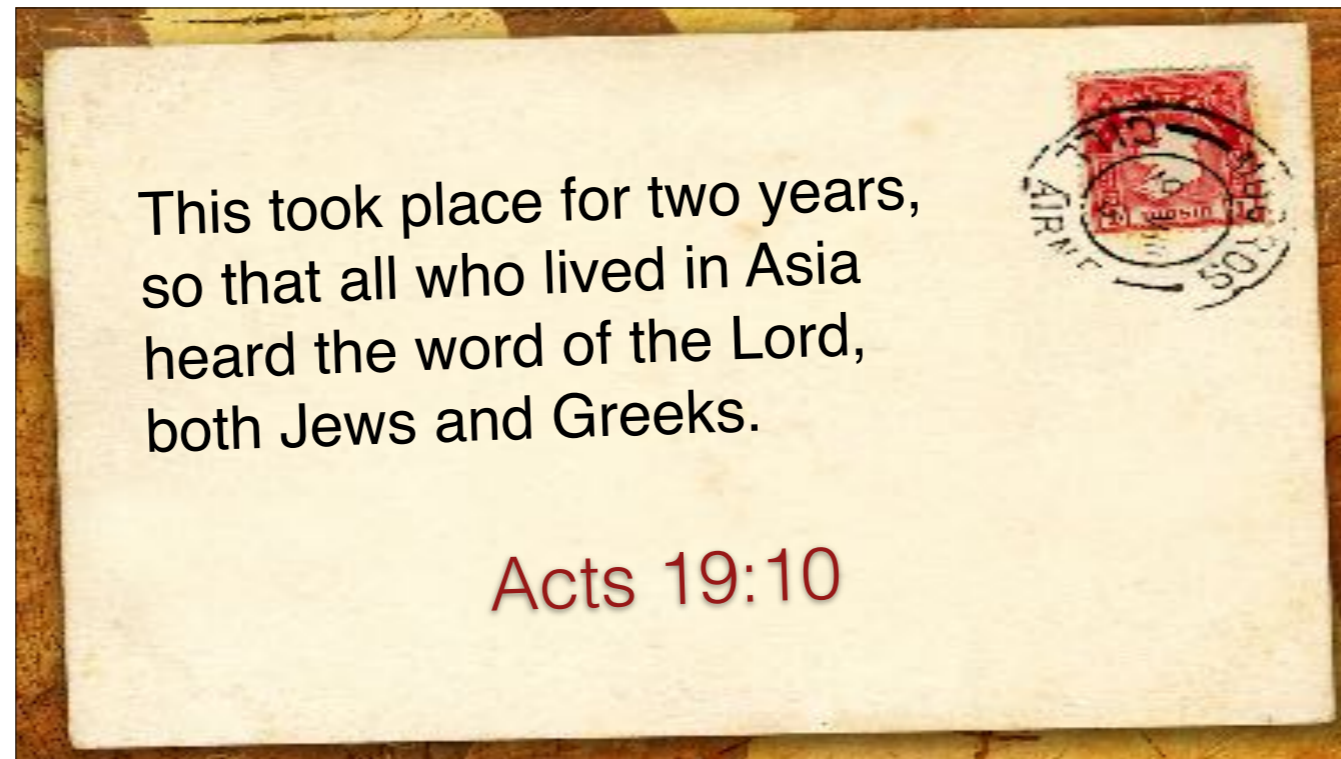
- Not a lot is known about them
- Only found here in Revelation
- No mention in book of Acts
- Polycarp was the Pastor



NOT A LOT IS KNOWN ABOUT THEM  
REMEMBER THE CITY IS ONLY ABOUT 35-40 MILES NORTH OF EPHESUS

THERE IS NO MENTION OF THIS GREAT CHURCH IN THE BOOK OF ACTS...  
WHICH IS SO STRANGE

POLYCARP WAS THE PASTOR AND BISHOP  
I WILL SHARE MORE ABOUT HIM LATER



SO I Told you I thought this church at SMYRNA was founded by Paul on his third missionary Journey even though we don't know for sure.

LET ME TELL YOU WHY I BELIEVE THIS

BECAUSE ON PAULS THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY HE RETURNS TO EPHESUS. (WHICH REMEMBER WAS ABOUT 30-35 MILES FROM SMYRNA)

and look what Luke recorded in ACTS 19:10 about PAULS STAY IN EPHESUS

THIS TOOK PLACE FOR TWO YEARS SO THAT ALL WHO LIVED IN ASIA HEARD THE WORD OF THE LORD BOTH JEWS AND GREEKS..

So whether Paul started the church or someone just heard the gospel during his stay in Ephesus , this church probably sprung up during his 3rd missionary journey.

## The Seven Churches of Revelation

Smyrna: The Text (Revelation 2:8-11)

<sup>8</sup> “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: <sup>9</sup> ‘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.

1/2

Now with all that introduction lets get to our text which is kind of brief today. Acts 2:8-11

## The Seven Churches of Revelation

Smyrna: The Text (Revelation 2:8-11)

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> 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.'



FIRST OF ALL LETS LOOK AT THE NAME PERHAPS YOU WILL REMEMBER WHEN THE THREE WISE MEN BROUGHT GIFTS TO THE CHRIST CHILD WHAT DID THEY BRING. **GOLD FRANKINCENSE AND MYRRH.**

**Myrrh was a substance that was taken from a thorny tree and it was crushed to make an expensive perfume and they also used it to put on a dead body for aromatic purposes.**

**Whats interesting is this substance called Myrrh shows up 3 times in the life of Christ**

**FIRST; MATTHEW 2 the wise men bring him gifts of Gold Frankensense and Myrrh**

**Then Secondly When Christ was being Crucified: Mark 15:22-23 says**

**Then they \*brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull. They tried to give Him wine mixed with myrrh; but He did not take it.**

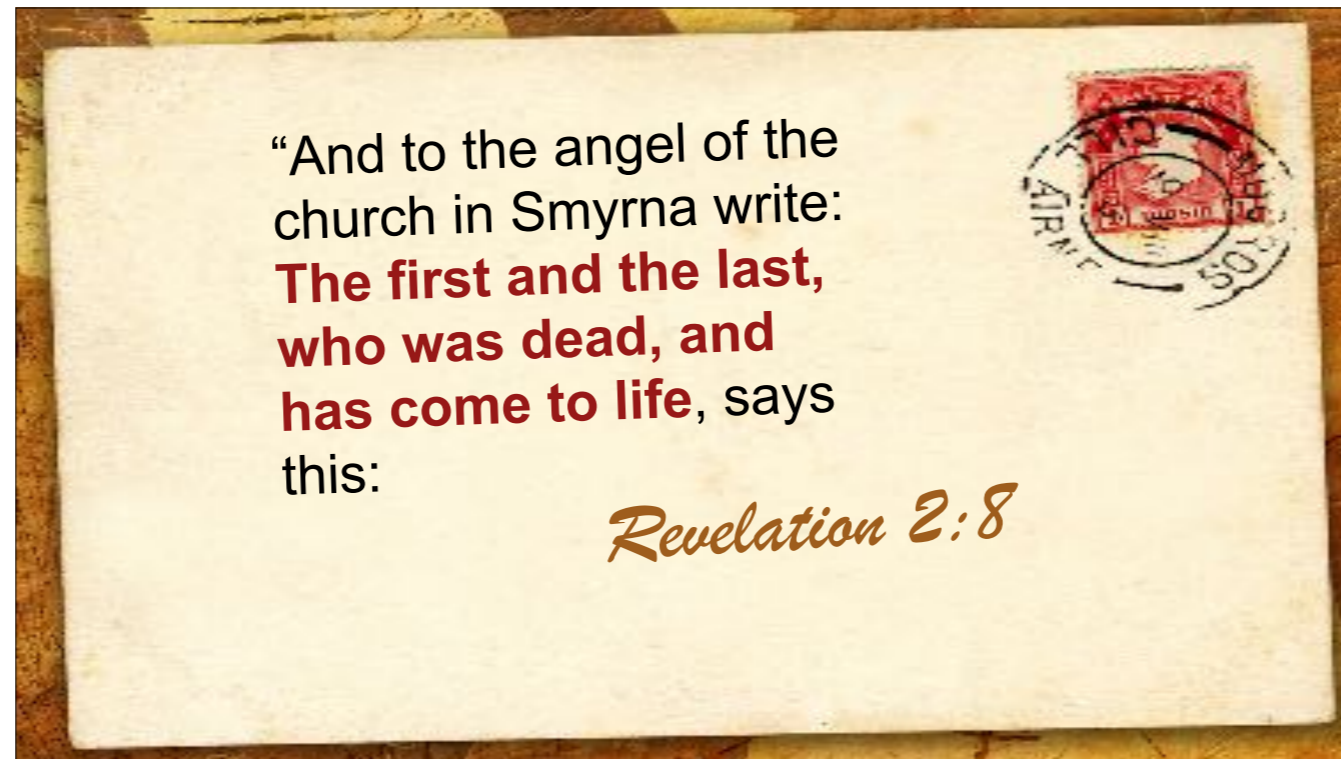
**THEN WE SEE IT ONEO MORE TIME IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST:**

**IN JOHN 19:39-40 NICODEMUS who offered up his tomb for Jesus**

**Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight. So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.**

**100 lbs of smell good wow:**





So REMEMBER THE FIRST PART OF EACH LETTER  
JESUS IDENTIFIES HIMSELF WITH A PORTION OF THE VISION THAT JOHN SAW  
THAT SPECIFICALLY RELATES TO THAT CHURCH

**For Smyrna HE IS THE FIRST AND THE LAST WHO WAS DEAD AND HAS COME TO LIFE.**

**Smyrna was a thriving city of about 100,000 people but it had been destroyed numerous times either by natural disaster or an invading army, and yet it always came back to life. And Jesus tells them i am the one who was dead and came back to life.**

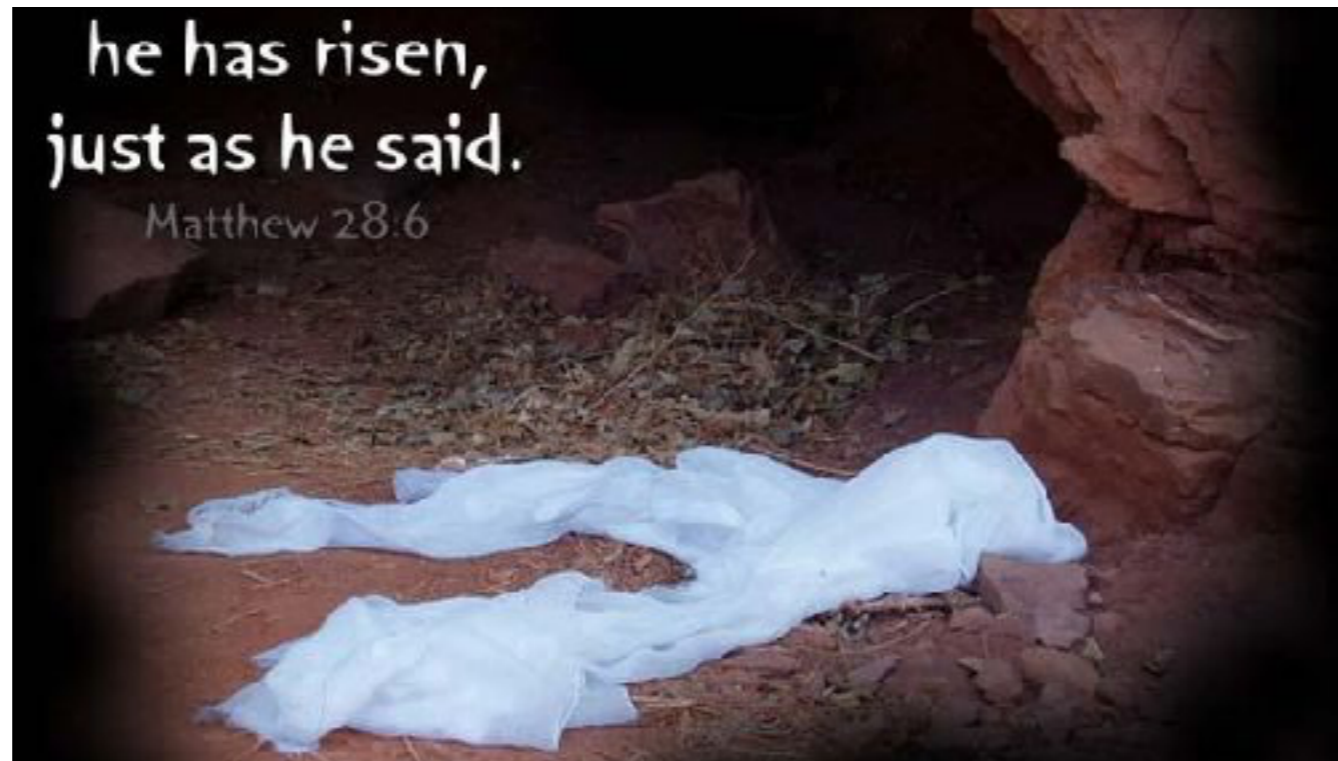
He also CALLED HIMSELF THE FIRST AND THE LAST.  
Same as Alpha and Omega the beginning and the end.

THE NAME GOD GAVE TO HIMSELF in Isaiah 44;

“Thus says the Lord, the King  
of Israel and his Redeemer,  
the Lord of hosts: **‘I am the  
first and I am the last,** And  
there is no God besides Me.

*Isaiah 44:6*





THE SECOND THING JESUS SAID OF HIMSELF  
I AM THE ONE WHO WAS DEAD AND HAS COME TO LIFE

WE JUST RETURNED FROM THAT EMPTY TOMB  
AND I AM SO GLAD CHRIST IS THE FIRSTFRUITS OF THE RESSURECTION  
BECAUSE HE LIVES I CAN FACE TOMORROW



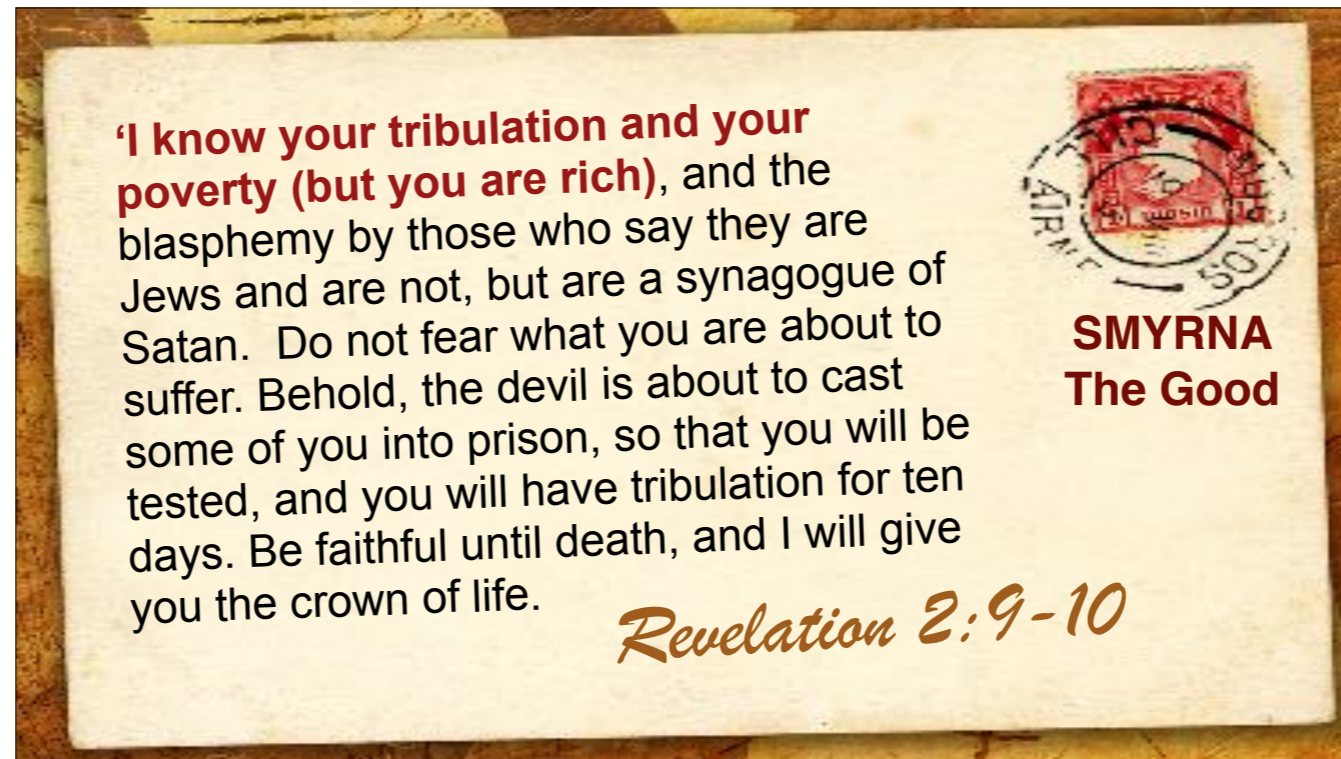
When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

*Revelation 1:17-18*

I told you that in each letter Jesus identifies himself with a part of the vision

HERE IS THE REFERENCE JOHN QUOTED IN THE FIRST CHAPTER WHEN HE HAD HIS VISION.

SO JESUS WAS THE FIRST AND THE LAST,  
THE ONE WHO WAS DEAD AND IS NOW ALIVE.  
AND HERE HE ADDS ALIVE FOREVERMORE  
AND THE KEYS TO DEATH AND HELL



now i TOLD YOU JESUS ALWAYS BEGINS WITH SAYING SOMETHING GOOD  
IN EACH LETTER EXCEPT ONE: (laodicea not one good thing he could say)  
so What does he say good about SMYRNA

'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich),  
Smyrna was the most beautiful city of Asia Minor often referred to as the crown of Asia Minor. They were known for their schools of science and medicine

But there was a **sharp contrast between the wealth of this city and the poverty of the Christian community.** No doubt many of them were denied employment because of their faith.

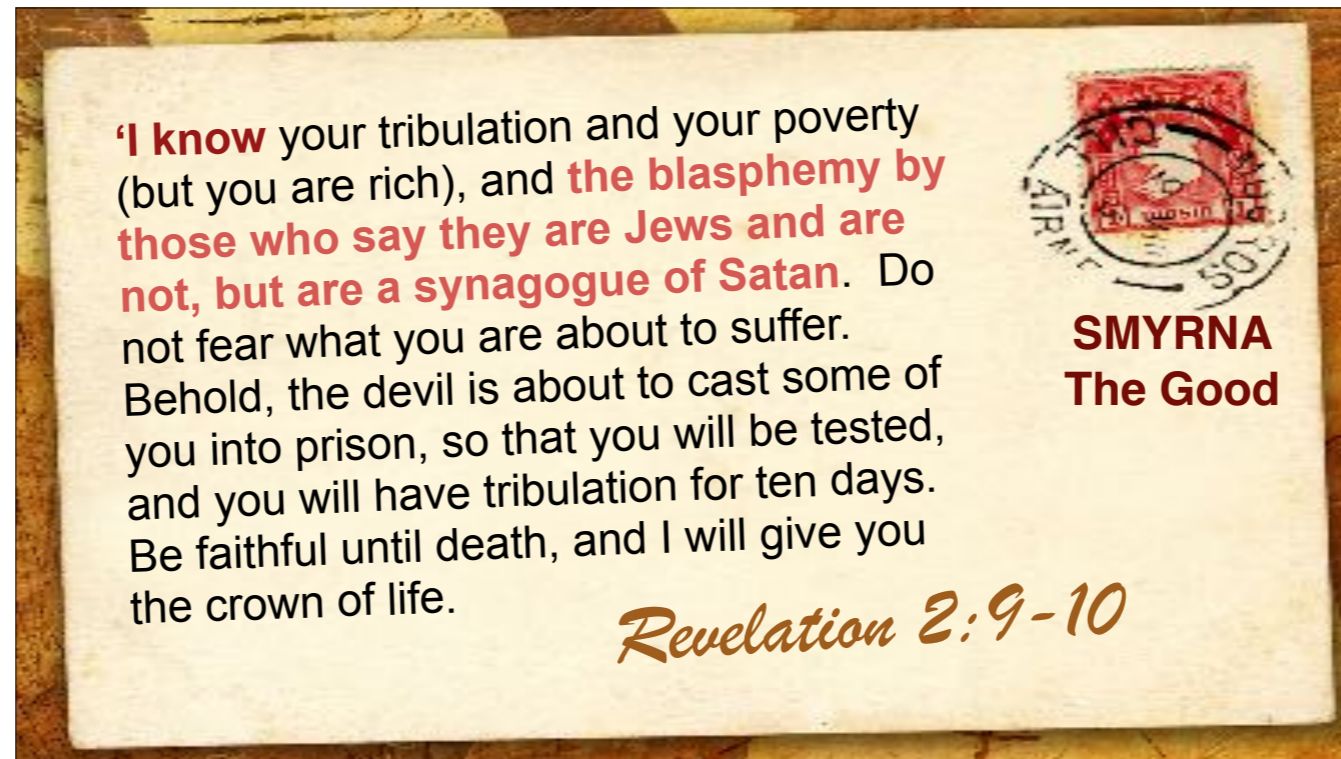
**Jesus says I know your poverty but you are rich**

**What a contrast with the church of Laodicea** which he will say to them. **You say you are rich and need nothing but the truth is you are wretched poor blind pitiful and naked.**

Riches and poverty is measured different in the kingdom of God

He goes on and I know  
and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

It is not certain who is referring to here but most likely these were people who claimed to be Jews but they were worshipping Rome and the emperor



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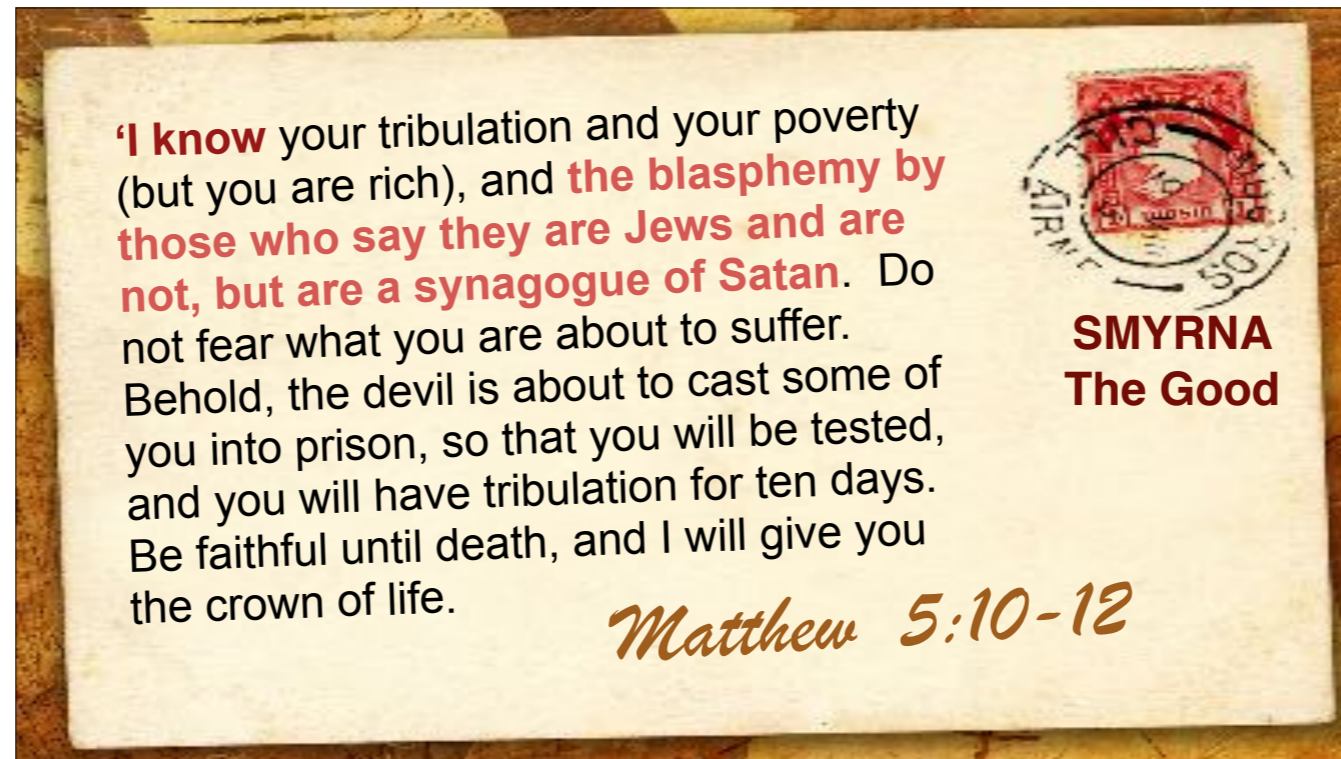
It is clear that part of the persecution HE CHURCH AT SMYRNA FACED was they were Blasphemed and spoken evil of.

It is not certain who is referring to here but most likely these were people who claimed to be Jews but they were worshipping Rome and the emperor  
Remember Paul not all who are Jews belong to Israel

Do not fear what you are about to suffer.

In this Letter Jesus speaks prophetically of what they will face

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.



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Remember I have always shared with you that nothing in my life either good or bad can happen to me until it first filters through gods sovereign hands.

Satan could not touch them without a Gods permission

We see that s in the story of Job

We see it with Peter. Simon Simon Satan has desired to sift you as wheat

God is always there measuring your trial and guaranteeing your outcome

Death was not the final chapter here be faithful unto death he said and I will give you the crown of life.



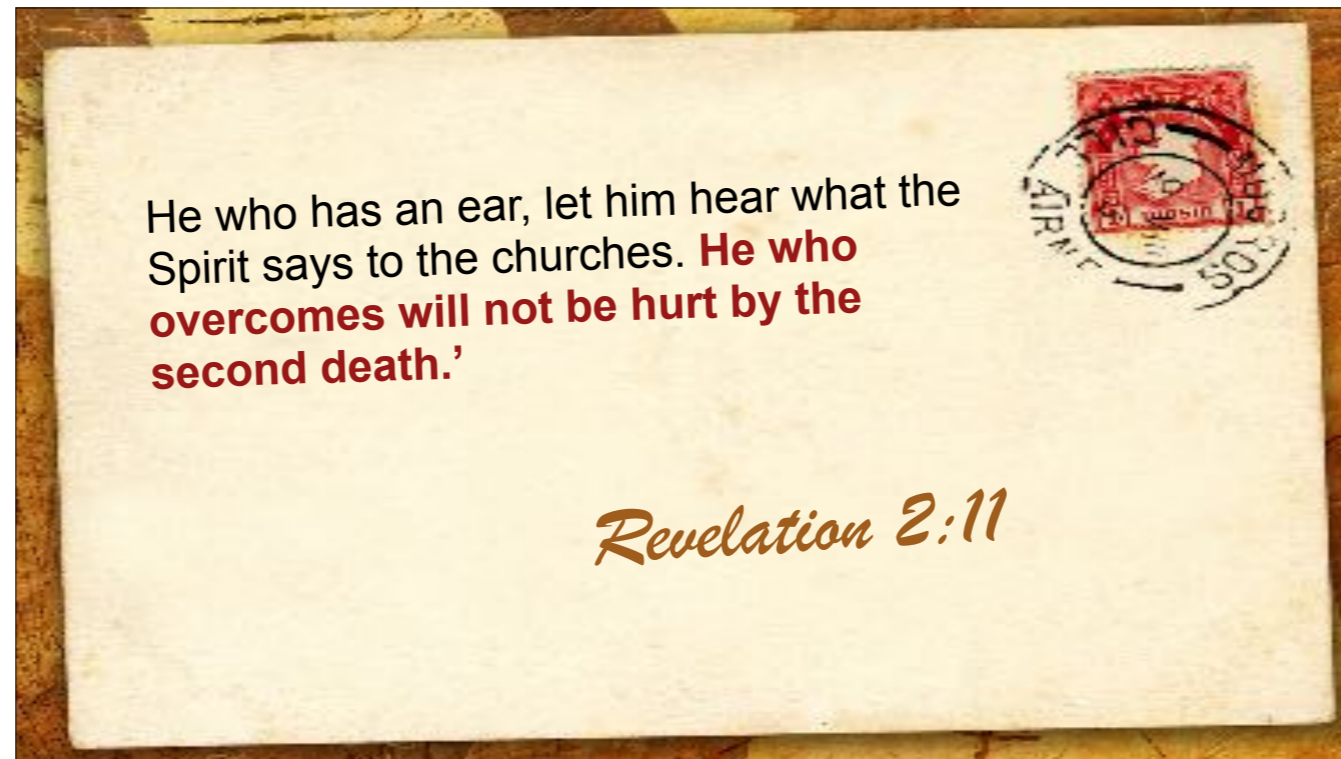


Every pastors dream to have a church where there is not one bad thing to say about them.

HERE IS A CHURCH THAT IS NOT MENTIONED ANY WHERE ELSE IN THE BIBLE AND NOT EVEN IN THE BOOK OF ACTS, ALTHOUGH EPHESUS IS MENTIONED A NUMBER OF TIMES.

AND YET THEY WERE SO GOOD , JESUS HAD HIS EYE ON THIS CHURCH

THERE WAS NO REBUKE IN HIS LETTER  
AND THEREFORE NO CALL TO REPENTANCE.  
THIS WAS A CHURCH THAT WAS DOING GOOD



now the promise to the overcomer

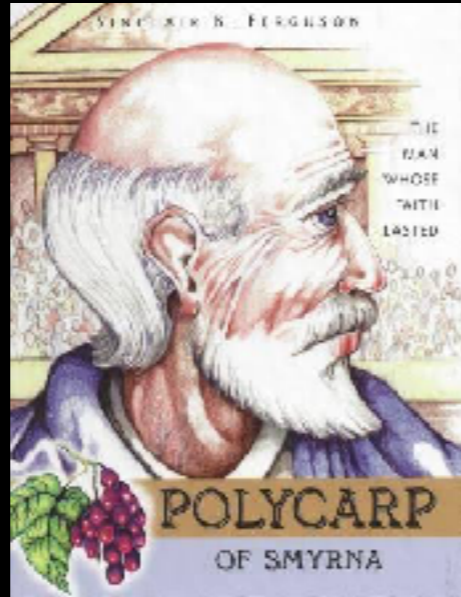
notice how it relates to this group of people at SMYRNA

Notice the promise to the overcomes again tied to the martyrs

He who overcomes will not be hurt by the 2nd death

Born once you will die twice

But born twice you will die once.



"Eighty-six years have I served (Jesus), and He never did me any wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?"

.....burned at the stake in the town square of Smyrna and martyred for his faith.

earlier I SHARED WITH YOU THAT THE PASTOR OF THIS CHURCH AT SMYRNA WAS NAMED POLYCARP, was also NAMED A BISHOP BY SOME OF THE EARLY APOSTLES He was a disciple of the Apostle John.

He was a simple humble man and only one of his letters was found it was a letter he wrote to the philipian church.

In 160 AD the Roman government began to persecute Christians under the emperor Marcus Aurelius, and one of the ways they did this was to require all Romans to perform what was known as emperor worship.

This involved burning a small amount of incense in a fire in front of a statue of the emperor and saying the words, "Caesar is Lord." Every person in the Roman Empire was required to do this, and Christians who refused were persecuted for it.

Polycarp, was dragged before a large crowd in the city square of Smyrna, and he was instructed to renounce his faith in Christ and perform the emperor worship.

Polycarp, who was now very old, bravely refused and said, "Eighty-six years have I served (Jesus), and He never did me any wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?" With that Polycarp was burned at the stake and martyred for his faith.

Rachel Joy Scott - 17 years old



On April 20 1999, on what seemed to be a normal Tuesday  
Two Students Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold shared a hatred that  
would provoke them to murder one Teacher and 12 Students and leave 23 others wounded

The very first person they killed was a young girl Rachel Joy Scott,  
(LET ME READ FROM AN ARTICLE I READ ON RACHEL SCOTT AND HER FAITH)

Three weeks before the shooting she had witnessed to the shooters Eric and Dylan. Eric and Dylan were the odd pair out and students mostly stayed away from them. But Rachel tried to talk to them and encouraged them to leave their hateful feelings and turn to Jesus. But they hated her the more and even made homemade videotapes mocking her christian faith.

On the day of the shooting, Rachel was outside the school building having her lunch. Eric and Dylan entered the school campus and first shot Rachel. They shot her in the leg twice and shot her again in the back. They left but returned seconds later. On noticing that she was still alive, Eric walked over to Rachel and grabbed her by the hair, lifted up her head and asked her "Do you still believe in your God?" Her response was unflinching and unwavering, "You Know I Do", and that provoked Eric and he responded "Then go be with Him," and shot her in the head.

#### Rachel's Last Drawing

Two hours before the shooting, Rachel's final drawing was a picture of her eyes shedding 13 tears ( 13 people were shot that day ) that touch a rose and turn to blood drops. The rose is growing out of a Columbine plant and is connected to a verse from the Bible that says, "Greater love has no man than this, that a man would lay his life down for his friends". That drawing inspired her parents to write a book called "Rachel's Tears".



NOW THE QUESTION THAT MOST PEOPLE WANT TO KNOW IS  
WILL WE HAVE TO FACE PERSECUTION IN AMERICA

WE DON'T KNOW WHAT TOMORROW HOLDS  
BUT WE KNOW WHO HOLDS TOMORROW

I THINK ONE THING WE KNOW FOR SURE IS  
REVELATION TELLS US THAT IN THE END OF TIME THERE WILL BE MARTYRS  
FOR THE FAITH

When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, **I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God**, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" And there was given to each of them a white robe; and **they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also.**

*Revelation 6:9-11*



## **The 5th Seal**

In a few weeks we will get to the 6th chapter and I will show you where I believe we are now in the book of Revelation which is the opening of the 7 Seals on the book that God was holding which I believe to be Wrath of God.

The 5th seal which occurs shortly before God's wrath is Revealed to this world is the Opening of the 5th seal. Which reveals the martyrs

“Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.



## **The Beatitudes**

*Matthew 5:10-12*

A couple of weeks ago we were on the Mount of Beatitudes where Jesus taught his famous sermon on the mount.