

The Canadian *Lord's Day* Association

Bible Course

Acts to Revelation

Lesson 71

Name: _____

Read Revelation 2:8-11

The second message is for the city of Smyrna, 35 miles north of Ephesus. Smyrna apparently was a quaint town with a natural harbor – a jewel of Asian minor. This is now [Izmir](#) in Turkey and is the only one of the churches still around today. Smyrna was the birthplace of Homer. Greek culture was prevalent with temples to gods and goddesses and pagan philosophy. With their strong tie to the Roman empire, the emperor was worshiped as god. The Jews received an exemption from worshipping the Roman emperor as god. The Christians were originally viewed as part of the Jews. However, there was a substantial group of non-Christ believing Jews. The non-believing fellow Jews disowned them and turned against them leading to persecution. The Christians lack of “patriotism” in not worshipping the emperor was fueled by the non-believing Jews and resulted in much persecution.



1. Christ has no admonition or correction for the church of Smyrna. He demonstrates special compassion for this persecuted church. They suffered from _____ (“but thou art rich”) in a wealthy city. They suffered from _____ of them which say they are Jews and are not. They suffered imprisonment, “that ye may be _____ (tested). They suffered death – martyrs.

Polycarp

In 156 A.D., aged Polycarp fled from Smyrna. He was tracked down and captured. He was brought to the arena and burned at the stake for being a Christian. Does Christianity cost us anything today?

2. Smyrna was counseled, “be thou _____ unto _____.”
3. Smyrna was also comforted,
- Christ is eternal: ...the _____ and the _____,
 - Christ is victorious: ...which was _____ and is _____.
 - Christ is all knowing: ...I _____ thy works, and _____, and _____. He knows every need.
 - Christ is in control: ... ye shall have _____ days (10 is a number of fullness – just the right amount of time, no more, no less).
 - Christ has a purpose: ...that ye may be _____. Christians must expect persecution. Without persecution believers are more likely to fall into sin or lethargy.
 - Christ has a promise: ...he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the _____ (avoided by the second birth).

4. What lesson can we gain from the message to the church in Smyrna? _____

Read Revelation 2:12-17

About 50 miles north of Smyrna, Pergamos was the capital of Asia Minor, a large city of 150,000 people. The central government was in Pergamos. All the great pagan religions had shrines here. A special god, Aesculapius (or Asklepios), was the Greek god of healing – supposed to be the founder of medical science. People came from far to seek healing in one pagan temple that was inhabited by thousands of harmless snakes. Medicine and science was worshipped and the symbol of their worship was the serpent. This medical symbol still exists today as a staff entwined with serpents

called the caduceus. Because of its many altars and cults, it could be referred to as ‘Satan’s seat.’ Pergamos’ problem can be summarized with this example:

Example

A ship is made for going in the water.

HOWEVER

When water enters the ship, the ship is in trouble.

Pergamos

The church is made for living in the world.

HOWEVER

When the world enters the church, the church is in trouble.

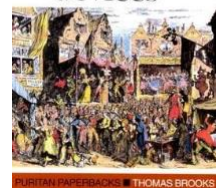


In Pergamos, a number were letting the world come into the church. Fornication and idolatry were tolerated. Pergamos was not entirely worldly, but sin was creeping in.

5. I know thy works, and where thou _____, even where _____ is.
6. Pergamos had its martyrs, “and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days where in _____, was my faithful _____, who was slain among you”... but now Satan was changing his tactics and wearing down defenses against sin.
7. “But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of _____ ...so hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the _____, which I hate. Satan realizes that false prophets with some true prophecies can deceive many. People may have gifts (Balaam), but not grace. Gifts are not saving. When Balaam couldn’t curse Israel, “these caused the children of _____, through the _____ of _____, to commit _____ against the Lord” (Numbers 31:16). Satan worked so that Israel adopted the sins of fornication and idol worship of the Canaanites.

Worldliness is deadly! God is a jealous God – He wants no rivals...repent!

Suggested reading:
**Precious
remedies
against
Satan's
devices**



PURITAN PAPERBACKS • THOMAS BROOKS

8. Repent, or else I will come unto thee _____, and will _____ against them with the _____ of my _____.

9. Christ ends with a comforting promise: To him that _____ will I give to eat of the _____, and will give him a _____ a _____ written, which not man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

10. What lesson can we gain from the message to the church in Smyrna?

Evaluator_____

11. *"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna."*
Revelation 2:17

Meditation

How often God's word is to you a sealed book; how often you hear from the pulpit the most encouraging preaching, yet get not encouragement from it; how often you hear Christ held forth in his Person, blood and righteousness, and go away as you came, without any sensible relief,. What is the reason? Because you are overcome. Unbelief, bondage darkness of mind, insensibility rest upon your spirit, and all these keep you from feeding upon the manna. But sometimes a gracious word comes over all these hills and mountains of unbelief, bondage, doubt and fear, and as this word drops into your heart, you begin to shout victory over all your foes and fears. Then the word of God begins to open itself up in its sweetness and blessedness. The Lord of the house brings out the hidden manna, and the word of God is made sweet and precious to the soul. Sometimes you read the word of God as a dry and barren task to satisfy conscience. When is that? When you are shut up in unbelief and bondage. But at other times the word of God is read with pleasure, and it is to you the joy and rejoicing of your heart. This is when you can believe it; and thus faith turns the word of God into manna. But if you are barren, then the Word of God is barren; if dead, the word is dead; if cold and lifeless, the word is so too. But when the scene changes, when the clouds are dispersed, then you see light in God's light. Then it is a blessed Bible, a precious book, full of sweet promises and encouraging invitations. It is in this way the manna is given to the over comer.

Taken from, Ears from Harvested Sheaves- JC Philpot.