

A MESSAGE FOR THE CHURCH



Week Two - To Smyrna

A Note to the Parents/Teachers

The book of Revelation can be a confusing and even scary book to many people. But it doesn't have to be! And it wasn't meant to be. Remember, it begins with "The revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:1) and ends with "Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!" (22:20). It's about the hope we have in Jesus restoring us into the Kingdom of God! Still, there are clear warnings for those who refuse Jesus. Let that be our focus as we lead our kids through these letters to the Church.

- **Big Idea:** Suffering is guaranteed in this world. But eternal life is also guaranteed for those who are faithful to Jesus!

Starter

- **Evidences of Grace**
Ask kids to share ways they've seen God at work lately. Anything, big or small, which is good is from God. When a kid shares, encourage everyone to thank God together.
- **Question**
Have you ever done something really hard, but it was worth it in the end? What made it worth it?

Sing Together

Story - from Revelation 28-11

John continued to write down what he saw and heard from Jesus. Jesus had a message for his church. John saw him holding seven stars and standing among seven lamp stands. Jesus told him, *“The stars represent God’s messengers to the Church. The lamp stands represent the churches scattered throughout the world.”*

John was told to write down a message for the churches in seven large cities, but God’s Spirit preserved these messages so that followers of Jesus would read it for generations to come. Even though it was written to a specific people a long time ago, God still wants our church to hear this message today.

Jesus said, *“Write this to the messenger of the church in Smyrna:*

“This is what the First and the Last says, the Beginning and the End, the one who was dead and came to life: I know your works and your pain and your poverty — but you are actually rich! I know the lies told of you by those who say they are my people, but are not. They are actually followers of Satan!

“Don’t be afraid of what you are about to suffer. But be on guard — the enemy is about to throw some of you into prison to test you, and you will experience affliction for ten days. It won’t last forever. Be faithful to me and the kingdom, even if it leads you to death, and I will give you the crown of life.

“Let anyone who has their ears open listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will never be harmed by eternal death.”

The church in Smyrna seems to have been suffering because of their faith. The world around them didn’t want them to follow Jesus and his ways. But Jesus was reminding them that he was with them. His Spirit was still present. And even though they would indeed see hard times, one day all things would be made right. Even though they may actually be put to death for following Jesus, like they had put Jesus to death, they would follow Jesus into new life forever!

[Dialogue Questions - you may use some or all]

- Why did the church in Smyrna need to be comforted and encouraged?
- Why do you think the people around them treated them badly? Why didn't they like them following Jesus?
- Have you ever been treated like this for following Jesus? What if you are someday?
- What hope and comfort was given to the church in Smyrna? Can we have this same hope and comfort?

Breakout Time

• **Prayer:**

God, thank you for being with us always, in good and bad times. Help us to truly follow you always. In the name of Jesus, amen.

• **Craft:**

- Use the sheet attached to color, cut out, and paste together a crown. Talk about how Jesus promises the crown of life to all who stay faithful to him as King.

BLESS Activity

For kids to do during the week

Because this Story is true, we want to be faithful to live in it. We ask Spirit to help us Bless, Listen, Eat, Speak, and Sabbath (rest & celebrate) in ways that tell the good news of God's Story.

This week, focus on the **Sabbath** rhythm. Ask your parents if you can take time this week as a family to rest and play. While you do, remind each other of the hope we have that one day you will rest in God's presence forever.

