Session 4

Encouragement in Persecution - Rev 2:8-11

I. Review

A. 1st Commandment in 1st place

II. Church of Smyrna

A. Background

III. What does Jesus say to them?

A. Look at me!

1. I Am the First & the Last
2. I died and came to life

B. I AM

1. Jesus' declaration of deity
   a. Creator
   b. Sustainer
   c. Returning King
2. I had the first word, I will have the last.

C. **I Died and came to Life**

1. His intimate knowledge of death
2. His power to overcome death and raise to life

D. I Know

1. Your tribulation
2. Poverty
3. Slander

E. Speaks of more tribulation coming

1. Your accuser will put you in prison that you may be tested
   a. Silver & Gold – tested through fire Zec 13:8-9
      (1) Ps 66:10 -
      (2) Is 48:10
      (3) Jer 9:7 – Refining because of sin
      (4) Dan 11:35; 12:10 – end times purification
      (5) Mal 3:2-3 – Sons of Levi purified through fire.
2. You will have 10 days of tribulation

F. Calls them to remain faithful

1. Rewarded with the Crown of Life
2. Promised to those who endure & love Him – Jam 1:12

3. Psa 116:15 Precious in the sight of Yahweh is the death of His godly ones.
4. Polycarp - Bishop of Smyrna (69-125ad)
   a. Disciple of John
   b. Then, the proconsul urging him, and saying, "Swear, and I will set thee at liberty, reproach Christ;" Polycarp declared, "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He never did me any injury: how then can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?"

G. He describes what He does for those who overcome.

1. He will not be hurt by the second death
   a. Rev 20:14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

H. What about Suffering for His Name today?

1. Mt 5:11-12
2. Jn 15:18-16:4
3. Mt 24:9-14
4. Act 5:40-41
5. 1Th 2:14
6. I Thess 3:1
7. 2 Thess 1
8. Phil 1:27-30
9. 1 Cor 15:32
10. 2 Cor 6:4f
11. 2 Cor 4:7f
12. 2 Cor 11:23
13. Rom 15:5
14. Rom 8:17
15. 2 Tim 3:10f
16. Php 3:8-11
17. 2Ti 1:7
18. Heb 10:32
19. James 1
20. Jas 5:10
21. 1 Pet 2:18-24
22. 1Pe 4:1
23. 1Pet 4:12-14
24. 1Pe 5:6

Suggested references

1. Foxes Book of Martyrs
2. Voice of the Martyrs – http://persecution.com
3. Open Doors – http://opendoors.org
4. The Heavenly Man – Brother Yun
5. Persecution in America - http://religioushostility.org
6. When a Nation Forgets God – 7 Lessons from Nazi Germany – Erwin Lutzer

I. What of the Church in America? In Elk River?

1. Let Him who has ears, hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches"
2. Entertainment
3. Social
   a. Friends & peers & neighbors
4. Economic
   a. Jobs
   b. Business opportunities/boycotts
5. Education
6. Political

a. Political Correctness
b. Marriage
c. Abortion
d. Freedom of Religion & Speech

7. Legal challenges
   a. Constitution – separation of church & state
   b. Harassment lawsuits
   c. 501c3 Non-profit status threats
8. Military
   a. Rules are changing – Chaplains
9. Physical – see the following that happened in San Francisco in 2008
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=769imWn-f30
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=O4Xb-au-wpU
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=PrRxFoBSPng