



Seven: Letters of Revelation
Revelation 2:8-11
05/19/2019

MAIN POINT

Jesus' faithfulness to us enables us to remain faithful to Him through times of suffering.

INTRODUCTION

Share a way, big or small, suffering has touched your life this week. How did you react?

Did your circumstances or your reactions to those circumstances reveal anything about the character of God? If so, what?

What difference did the hope of Christ make in your suffering or persecution?

| Revelation 2:8-11.

According to Jesus' letter to them, what problems was the church at Smyrna facing?

What do Jesus' words to the church in Smyrna teach about suffering?

The believers in Smyrna were very poor, but Jesus told them they were rich.

What did He mean by that?

How are all followers of Christ rich spiritually? Read Ephesians 1:3-14 to aid in your discussion.

| James 1:1-4,12.

In what circumstances does James command us to be joyful? How is this possible?

How do you tend to respond to difficulty or persecution in your life? How does your attitude compare to the one James commands believers to adopt in such situations?

Why is perseverance important? What reward comes with persevering in the faith (v. 4)?

In what specific ways does suffering provide an opportunity for believers to show they believe in Jesus and rejoice? How is Jesus' life a model for this?

How can testing or trials actually strengthen a believer's faith? What is promised to those who "persevere under trial" (v. 12)? How have you experienced this?

| 1 Peter 4:12-19.

Why shouldn't we be surprised by persecution and suffering (vv. 12-13)? What is the difference between "participating in the sufferings of Christ" and suffering as a "criminal"? How can we be sure that we are suffering for the right reasons?

APPLICATION

How has God used suffering and trials to strengthen your faith in the past? To deepen your joy? How might remembering God's past faithfulness in your life help you trust Him in the present?

Read 2 Timothy 3:12 and John 15:18-21. While we do not currently face much persecution for our faith compared to Christians in other parts of the world, why is it important to be ready for potential persecution in the future? How can we prepare for true persecution?

How might we as a group help each other find joy in Christ in the midst of trials? How might we help each other persevere in faith in the midst of trials? What trial are you facing right now?