

JESUS AT THE CENTER OF THE CHURCH

Suffering Message 2

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August 20, 2023

C. Encouragements in pain... (Revelation 2:10-11)

1. Suffering is _____.

► Outline

"... But if you remain faithful even when facing death, I will give you the crown of life."
Revelation 2:10b (NLT)

A. Introduction (Revelation 2:8)

2. Remember what _____.

B. Commends... (Revelation 2:9-10. C/R: James 1:2-4)

1. Faithful in the _____ times.

Answers: B. 1. difficult C. 1. temporary 2. awaits

Resource Information: Scripture quotations marked (NLT) are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, a Division of Tyndale House Ministries, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved. C/R refers to a 'cross reference.' Today's outline and discussion guide are available through the Brookwood Church app.

► Discussion Guide

Use this guide by yourself or with friends to pursue a deeper relationship with Jesus. To connect with others, visit brookwoodchurch.org/adults.

Conversation Starter

Describe a situation when you knew difficult times were approaching and how you handled them.

Prayer

Spend a few minutes in prayer, inviting God into this time. Ask God to show you what He wants you to learn in this study.

Bible Study and Group Discussion

Read Revelation 2:8-11

1. What does it mean that Jesus is *the First and the Last*? Why is it important that He is alive?
2. The Christians in Smyrna faced severe persecution for their beliefs and refusal to worship Roman emperors. How do you stand firm in your beliefs and proclaim Jesus in a world increasingly hostile to Christianity?
3. God knows all we're going through. How does knowing you're not forgotten help you grow deeper in your faith?
4. Jesus knew the Christians in Smyrna suffered in poverty because of their beliefs, yet they were rich in their faith. Is your faith in poverty, riches or somewhere in between? Describe ways you can strengthen your faith.
5. Jesus tells the Christians in Smyrna not to be afraid of what's to come. How do you deal with anxiety and fear of the future? How can you invite God to help you with these emotions?
6. Jesus is very specific about what's coming for these Christians and who will cause it. Spiritual warfare is real, and the devil is working against us. What's **your** role in fighting spiritual warfare, and how can you invite God to help you fight these battles?

7. These Christians knew they would suffer, yet still believed. How does it help your relationship with Jesus, knowing that you'll spend eternity with Him no matter what suffering and pain you endure?
8. Jesus' final command to the church was to *Be faithful, even to the point of death* (vs 10, NIV). They were to stand firm in their faith, no matter the circumstance. Describe a time when your faith wavered.
9. The Christians in Smyrna strengthened each other as they faced terrible persecution. How do your relationships with other believers help you stand strong in your faith? How can you grow those relationships?
10. This week, pray and ask God to give you opportunities and boldness to share the Good News of Jesus with someone.

Daily Devotional

Spend time with God each day this week reading the Daily Devotional. If you do not have a Daily Devotional book, you can pick one up at the Information Desk, the Reception Desk or on the Brookwood app.

Memory Verse

Don't be afraid of what you are about to suffer. The devil will throw some of you into prison to test you. You will suffer for ten days. But if you remain faithful even when facing death, I will give you the crown of life.

Revelation 2:10 (NLT)

Daily Reading

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|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Day 1: James 1:2-4 | Day 5: Romans 5:3-5 |
| Day 2: 1 Peter 2:22-23 | Day 6: Isaiah 43:2 |
| Day 3: Genesis 50:19-20 | Day 7: Acts 28:3-5 |
| Day 4: Philippians 1:12-14 | |

Prepare for Next Sunday

Next Sunday, August 27, we'll continue our series *Jesus at the Center of the Church*. Prepare by reading **Revelation 2:12-17**.

