

April 23, 2023

## Suffering and Testing Revelation 2:1-11 Pastor Kirk Gambrell

Vol. 13 Num. 17

### Using This Study

#### ❶ EXAMINE His Word

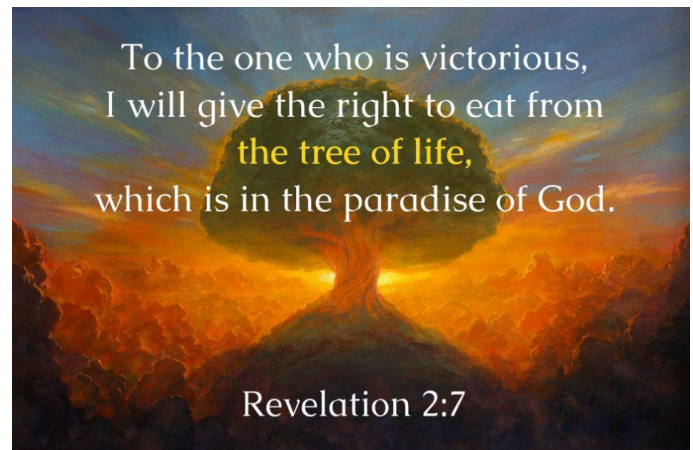
What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

#### ❷ EXPLORE His Word

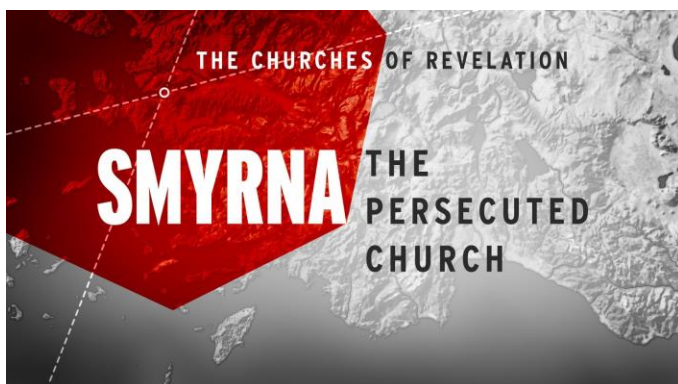
What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

#### ❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.



This week we will look at the first part of Revelation chapter 2. This section addresses two of the churches that John writes to, Ephesus and Smyrna. Ephesus is told they have fallen from their commitment to Jesus that they had at first. Smyrna is told they will suffer but that there will also be a reward. The instruction to these two churches can give us insight to how we can serve Christ best. Join us this week as we talk about how we can best live for the Lord.



### **The Message to the Church in Ephesus**

**2** "Write this letter to the angel of the church in Ephesus. This is the message from the one who holds the seven stars in his right hand, the one who walks among the seven gold lampstands:

**2** "I know all the things you do. I have seen your hard work and your patient endurance. I know you don't tolerate evil people. You have examined the claims of those who say they are apostles but are not. You have discovered they are liars. **3** You have patiently suffered for me without quitting.

**4** "But I have this complaint against you. You don't love me or each other as you did at first! **5** Look how far you have fallen! Turn back to me and do the works you did at first. If you don't repent, I will come and remove your lampstand from its place among the churches. **6** But this is in your favor: You hate the evil deeds of the Nicolaitans, just as I do.

**7** "Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches. To everyone who is victorious I will give fruit from the tree of life in the paradise of God.

### **The Message to the Church in Smyrna**

**8** "Write this letter to the angel of the church in Smyrna. This is the message from the one who is the First and the Last, who was dead but is now alive:

**9** "I know about your suffering and your poverty—but you are rich! I know the blasphemy of those opposing you. They say they are Jews, but they are not, because their synagogue belongs to Satan. **10** 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.

**11** "Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches. Whoever is victorious will not be harmed by the second death.

**o EXAMINE His Word (Observation)** (For personal preparation)

**What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details from this passage.**

Make 10 of your own observations from this passage. Avoid jumping to make interpretive decisions or drawing applications. Save those for the sections that follow. At this point just observe this passage and what it says. Look for things that are emphasized, repeated, and what stands out to you. Look at the verbs, what actions are in the text? Who is involved in the text? There is no right or wrong answer, just list 10 things you see in the text.

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**2 EXPLORE His Word (Interpretation)** (For Community Group discussion)  
What does God MEAN?

1. What is the church of Ephesus commended for?
2. What complaint is raised about the church in Ephesus?
3. What is the warning for the church in Smyrna?
4. What is promised for the church in Smyrna?
5. Who is the message from? How do you know?
6. Are these real churches?

③ **EMBRACE His Word (Application)** (For Community Group discussion)  
Why does this MATTER to me?

7. What can we learn from the message to the church in Ephesus?

8. What can we learn from the message to the church in Smyrna?

9. What is a key application point that you see in this passage?

Summarize your thoughts on the passage

**Write about what God wants you to KNOW, to FEEL, and to DO...**

*Sermon Notes*