OCC Connections Bible Study (Group or Personal)

Faithful unto Death: Rich in Christ: Revelation 2:8-11

Read for context: James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:6-7; Daniel 3:16-18.

Big Idea: Jesus, the First and the Last who died and came to life, calls the suffering church at Smyrna (and us today) to bold faithfulness. Though they face tribulation, poverty, and slander, Christ calls them rich and promises the **crown of life** and victory over the second death to those who overcome.

1) Read the Text

Read **Revelation 2:8-11** aloud. (Consider also *James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:6-7; Daniel 3:16-18.*)

Ask the Lord to give you courage and to trust Him in trials.

2) Observe the Toyt (chase 2 3 prompts

2) Observe the Text (choose 2–3 prompts)

- How does Christ describe Himself in v.8, and what does this reveal about His authority over suffering and death?
- What does Jesus **acknowledge** in v.9 about the church's condition?
- What **opposition** is mentioned in v.9, and who is behind it?
- What warning and encouragement does Jesus give in v.10?

•	What two promises are given in vv.10-11 to those who
	overcome?

3) See the Connections

Context: Smyrna was a wealthy port city, but the church was poor and persecuted. Unlike Ephesus, Smyrna receives no rebuke, but only commendation and encouragement. The "synagogue of Satan" refers to those who slandered the church and opposed them. The "ten days" of tribulation show a limited time. God will at times limit the time of testing (like Daniel 1:8-21). Christ calls the church to remain **faithful unto death**, with the promise of eternal life and the crown of life.

Word Work:

- First and Last (ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος) Strongs: G4413-Protos and G2078 - Eschatos: This first and last is to show Christ's rule and reign over all of time.
- **Tribulation** $(\theta \lambda \tilde{\imath} \psi \imath \nu)$ Strongs: G2347: pressure, affliction, trouble.
- Crown of life (στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς) Strongs: G4735 Crown and G2222 Life. Think of how Christ wore the
 crown of thorns (Matthew 27:29) so that we can wear the
 crown of life.

Cross References:

- **James 1:12**: Blessed is the one who *perseveres* under trial; they will receive the **crown of life**.
- 1 Peter 1:6-7: Trials prove and refine genuine faith.
- **Daniel 3:16-18**: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's faithfulness unto potential death.
- 2 Corinthians 8:2, 9: The Macedonian churches' example of being poor yet rich.

4) Interpret (What It Means)

• Christ is with us in our trials and tribulations:

Jesus is the First and the Last. He died and rose again. This reveals the power of Christ; He controls time and life.

When believers face slander, poverty, or pressure, we are still rich in Him. Our struggles are not wasted; Christ sees, holds, and loves us. The "synagogue of Satan" reminds us that behind opposition is spiritual warfare. Yet our identity is set by Christ, not our accusers.

• The Devil's tactics, Christ's victory:

Jesus speaks **ahead** of the pain: "Do not fear what you are about to suffer," preparing our hearts. "Ten days" signals a short, God-bounded test (like Daniel 1:8-21); tribulation has a finish line under Christ's authority. Prison, pressure, and slander are the devil's tactics, yet God uses them to **prove** faith, not destroy it.

• Faithful until the end, crowned with life:
Even if faith in Christ costs our lives, life in Christ
remains. We are secured by the One who conquered death.
The crown of life symbolizes our participation in Christ's
victory (salvation). We will not be hurt by the second
death (damnation) nothing can separate us from Christ.

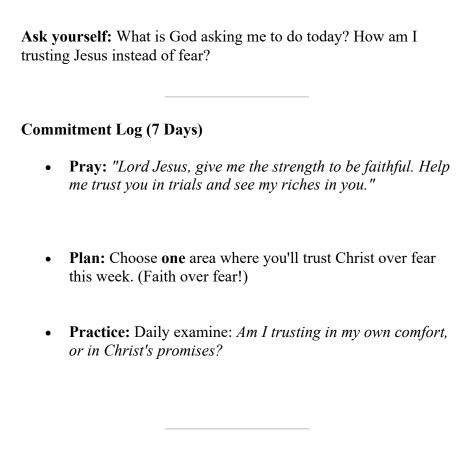
5) Apply (How We Live)

• Secure yourself by trusting in the Lord Place your faith in the One who rules over time, life, and death. Cast your cares upon Him. Count the cost (like the tower builder and warring king). Cast your pebble (choose Him). The reward of salvation far outweighs the losses of this world (Luke 14:28-33). Think of how Christ asks the question of what good is it to gain the whole world but lose your soul?

• Stand firm in the battle, grow in Christ's strength You have entered a spiritual war between good and evil. Don't be surprised by pressure or testing. Set your heart on Christ. Put on the armor of God: pray, take up the shield of faith, and the sword of the Word. Grow in holiness and bear fruit. Grow your relationship with God and people. Know that the battle is won in Christ.

• Endure to the end, live for eternal riches

Remain in Christ's love and the truth of His Word. Serve as an ambassador of Christ, share the gospel, and live and love like Christ. We are rich in Him. Let us give and serve in tangible ways.



6) Pray the Text (Revelation 2:8-11)

- **Praise:** "Jesus, You are the First and the Last. You died and came to life. You rule over all."
- Confession: "Forgive me for fearing trials more than I trust Your promises."
- **Dependence:** "Give me courage to be faithful unto death. Remind me, (especially during trials and tribulations) that I am rich in You."

7)	Life Stage Helps
	rents/Kids: Discuss what it means to be "poor but rich." Dra rown and talk about the crown of life.
	Suples/Roommates: Where are we facing pressure today? Pragether for faithfulness and courage.
	idents/Young Adults: Name one fear about following Jesus; blace it with a promise.
	w to Faith: Ask a mature believer: How do you stay faithful en following Jesus is costly?
	ngles/Widows/Seniors: Read <i>James 1:12</i> and <i>1 Peter 1:6-7</i> ; ite a prayer asking God for endurance.