

# Smyrna

Revelation 2:8-11

Smyrna was the second city to receive a letter from the apostle John in the book of Revelation



**Acts 19:10** suggest that the church in Smyrna was founded during Paul's 3<sup>rd</sup> missionary journey

# Smyrna History

## 627 BC

- Mostly destroyed by Lydians

## 545 BC

Destroyed by Cyrus the Great

## 301 to 195 BC

- Lysimachus, General of Alexander the Great, entirely rebuilt it on a new site to the Southwest on the coast.
- became a great trading-center and the chief port for the export trade.
- In 195 BC it became the first city in the ancient world to build a temple in honor of Dea Roma



# Smyrna History



- 133 BC, bequeathed to Rome by Eumenes III, the last king of the Attalid dynasty of Pergamum
- In 23 BC, Smyrna won permission to build a temple to the emperor Tiberius (14 AD to 37 AD).
- Smyrna was considered the most brilliant city of Asia Minor, successfully rivaling Pergamos and Ephesus.

# Smyrna History

- Its system of coinage was old and today, coins of many different period are found about the city.
- It was celebrated for its schools of science and medicine, and for its handsome buildings.
- The birth place of Homer



The fortress of Kadifekal was built by Lysimachus in ca. 300 BC.

# Modern Smyrna



- The modern city of Izmir, Turkey
  - second largest in Turkey
  - Population 3.3 million
- 35 miles north of Ephesus on the Aegean coast
- There is still an active church in the city today
- Only one of the 7 cities mentioned still in existence

# Ancient Ruins of Smyrna Lie Among The Modern City of Izmir



destroyed by an  
earthquake in 178  
AD and rebuilt by  
the Roman Empire



**Agora First Level Arches**



## **Ancient agora of Smyrna**

This 2nd century A.D. agora (gathering or market place), midway between the acropolis and the harbor, was partially excavated by German and Turkish archaeologists from 1932-1941. Porticoes lined the north and west sides of the agora, and an altar to Zeus sat in the center.

# Pagan Worship

Clay idols of Hermes, Hestia, Dionysus, Eros & Hercules have been unearthed

At such a Kiln, votive offerings, personal offerings made to a pagan god, would be fired.



# Ancient Ruins of Smyrna Among The Modern City of Izmir



Little remains of the ancient city of Smyrna Except the agora, theater, and sections of the Roman aqueduct



## Life was insufferable as a Christian in Smyrna

- Roman Concillia
  - was responsible for supporting and regulating all details relative to emperor worship
  - imposed economic sanctions against those who refused to worship the emperor
    - Could not buy or sell in the market place
    - Had homes and possessions taken from them
- A large, active, hostile Jewish population
  - The Jews were the only ones exempted from emperor worship
- Polycarp, the most famous martyrdom of the early church fathers was placed upon a pyre to be burned (155AD)

*"To the angel of the church in write:*

*These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again.*

*9 I know your afflictions and your poverty--yet you are rich! I know the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.*

*10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

*11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death.*

*Rev 2:8- 11ESV*

# Revelation 2:8-11

## 1. Salutation (Rev. 2:8)

- God is forever

## 2. Divine Praise (Rev. 2:9)

- They were poor outwardly, but wealthy in the riches of God.
- Jesus knows their works, their situations, and those who were slanderers.

## 3. Do not be Afraid(Rev. 2:10, 11)

- Do not fear
- Stay the course
- Eternal Promise/Reward

# Revelation 2:8-11

## 1. Salutation (Rev. 2:8)

*The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life.*

- God is forever
- Rebirth

# Revelation 2:8-11

## 2. Divine Praise (Rev. 2:9)

*'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.*

- Jesus knows their works, their situations, and those who were liars.
- Different greeting from the other churches
  - *I know your tribulations... Thlipsis: θλίψις*
    - a pressing, pressing together, pressure

# Revelation 2:8-11

○ They were poor outwardly, ...

*...and your poverty...*

■ Poverty: *Ptocheia* (πτωχεία)

□ Destitute

□ As a beggar

□ Without possessions of any kind

□ Simply, abject poverty

• 2 Cor. 8:9

*...for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich*

# Revelation 2:8-11

*...but wealthy in the riches of God. (yet you are rich)*

- *Plousios: πλούσιος*

- [Eph 2:4](#)

*But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,...*

- [Jam 2:5](#)

*Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?*

# Revelation 2:8-11

*...but wealthy in the riches of God. (But you are rich) (cont)*

- *Plousios: πλούσιος*

- [Rev 3:17](#)

*For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.  
(a false sense of richness)*

- [2Pe 1:11](#)

*For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

# Revelation 2:8-11

## 2. Divine Praise (Rev. 2:9b)

- Jesus knows their works, their situations, and those who were slanderers.
- A synagogue of Satan
  - John 8:44
    - the devil is your father
    - you willingly do your father's desires
    - he is a murderer
    - he has nothing to do with the truth
    - the father of all lies.
  - Acts 25 -
    - Festus, Paul, Agrippa

# Revelation 2:8-11

## 3. Do not be Afraid(Rev. 2:10a)

*Do not fear what you are about to suffer*

### ☐ John 16:33

*I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*

- Peace through Him (in Me)
- Take heart... He has overcome the world

# Revelation 2:8-11

## 3. Do not be Afraid(Rev. 2:10a cont.)

*Be faithful unto death*

### ☐ Luke 12:4

- Don't fear him who can only kill the body

### ☐ 1 Peter 3:18

- Don't be afraid... Christ suffered , died, and lived

# Revelation 2:8-11

## 3. Do not be Afraid(Rev. 2:10b)

*...the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation...*

### ❑ Thrown in jail, tested and pressure for Ten Days

#### ▪ Dan 1:12-15

- test me for 10 days
- they were in better condition
- We see a fullness/completeness
- Gen. 31:7; Num 14:22; Neh. 4:12; Job 19:3; Dan. 1:20; Rev. 2:10; Rev. 12:3

# Revelation 2:8-11

- Do not be Afraid (Rev. 2:10c)

*I will give you the crown of life.*

Be faithful and receive the crown of life.

James 1:12

*Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.*

# Revelation 2:8-11

*Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. Rev 2:10c*

- Crown

- *Diadema*

- a blue band marked with white which Persian kings used to bind on the turban or tiara  
Rev 12:3; 13:1; 19:12

- Stephanos

- the wreath or garland which was given as a prize to victors in public games  
Rev 6:2; 9:7; 12:1; 14:14

# Revelation 2:8-11

## 3. Do not be Afraid(Rev. 2:10c)

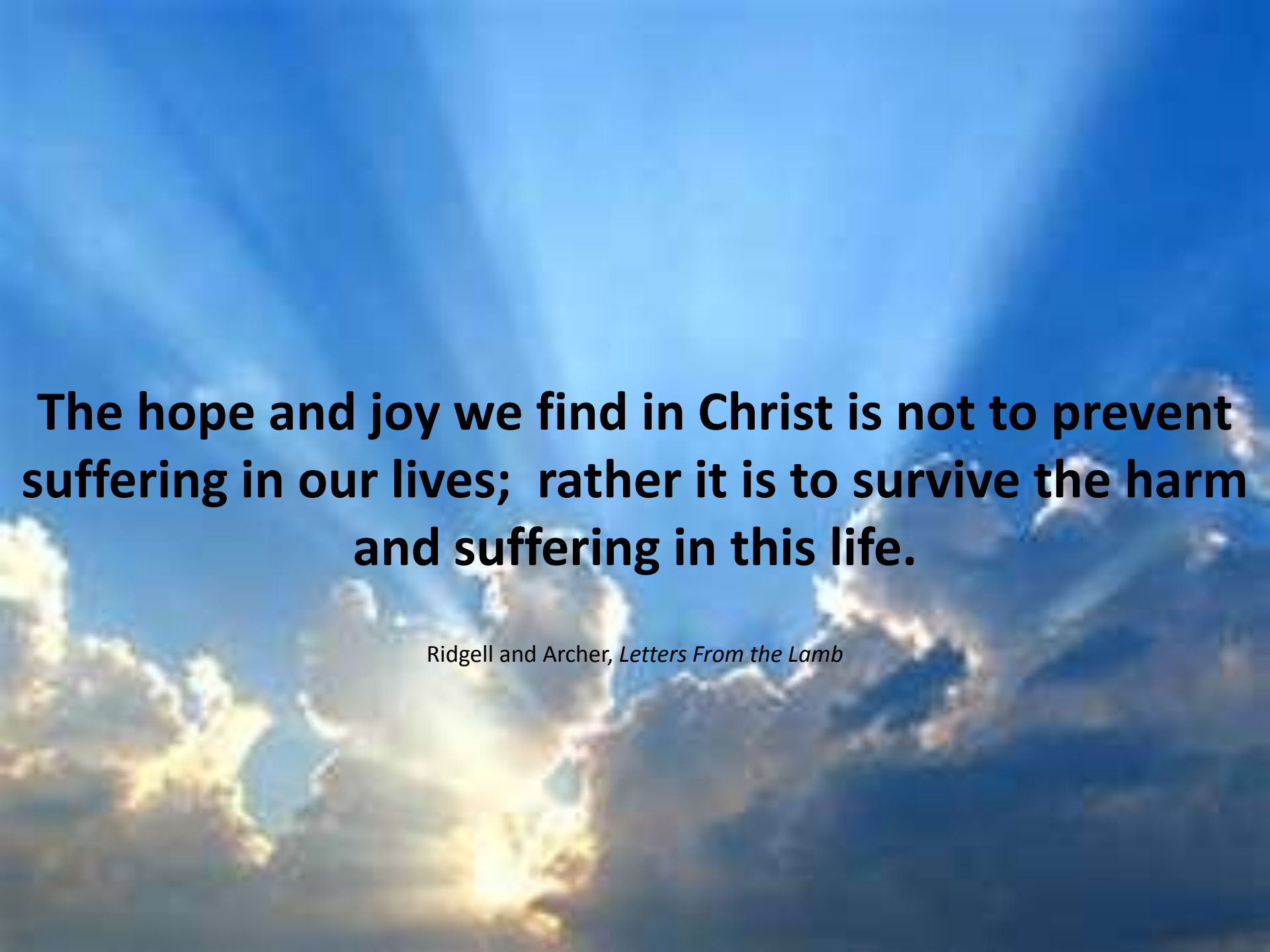
*The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death*

□ Mal. 3:17

*They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him.*

*Rev. 21:7*

*The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.*



**The hope and joy we find in Christ is not to prevent suffering in our lives; rather it is to survive the harm and suffering in this life.**

Ridgell and Archer, *Letters From the Lamb*