

DYING TO LIVE

REVELATION 2:8-11

Big Idea

The church of Jesus Christ has a radically different view of life and death.

The church's radically different life in Christ involves...

1.) A Radically Different View of _____ (v. 9a)

- The only two churches that do not receive a rebuke from Christ, Smyrna and Philadelphia, also appear to be the two smallest and ostensibly least impressive.
- Is success in the church is better evaluated by tangible metrics (numbers) or by obedience to God's Word and will?
- The letters to Smyrna and Philadelphia make clear that it is better to be puny, powerless, and penniless, than ungodly, insincere, or unfaithful.
- It is no good to gain a crowd but lose your lampstand.

2.) A Radically Different View of _____ (v. 9b)

- The church has a radically different view of success is because God has given us a radically different understanding of what is valuable.
- There is a wealth that is not of this world, and it is of ultimate significance.
- To the degree that our greatest treasures can be stolen away by the world, we necessarily value most what matters least to God (Matthew 6:19-21).

3.) A Radically Different View of _____ (v. 9c)

- Because of their unflinching testimony to Christ, the believers in Smyrna were subjected to ridicule and derision from the culture around them.
- In the eyes of Jesus, the slander to which they were subjected was not a mark of disgrace, but one of _____ (Matthew 5:11-12).
- Believers in Christ evaluate our lives not on the basis of what people say, but upon what God reveals in His Word (2 Timothy 3:12, Matthew 5:11-12).

4.) A Radically Different View of _____ (v. 9d)

- No one represents God or belongs to His kingdom by self-assertion.
- Too many churches have too many names on the membership roll that are not written in the Lamb's book of life.
- The name "Christian" is not a label we adhere to ourselves, but a new life that we receive by faith in Christ.

5.) A Radically Different View of _____ (v. 10)

- Trials are not something to be feared but to be expected as opportunities to grow in Christ and glorify His name (James 1:2-4, 1 Peter 4:12-13).
- Those who want only what is _____ in this life will miss what is exalted in the next.
- Because Christ is with us and for us we need not fear the world (Psa. 56:3-4).

6.) A Radically Different View of _____ (v. 10-11)

- The most commendable aspect of the church in Smyrna was its willingness to hold fast to this radically different faith even unto death.
- Our main focus should not be upon how we leave this life, but how we come into the next.
- For those hidden in the risen Christ, death is not an _____ but an _____ into the eternal presence of Him who is our heart's desire.
- Our chief concern in this life should not be the *first* death, but the *second*.
- Unending life is promised to everyone who lays down his life for Christ.

Application Questions

- How far would your devotion to Christ take you amidst dire persecution?
- Do you live like the world around you, or are you growing in the radically different perspective of the kingdom of God?
- What is Christ worth to you? Is He worth more to you than life?
- Though discipleship costs everything, the reward is worth infinitely more.