

REVELATION

THE HOPE OF JESUS REVEALED

Part 3: A Hope for Everyone

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Two Questions

1. Where is Jesus?
2. Where is hope?

Revelation 2:8-9a

“And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: ‘The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life. I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich)’...

First place we see Jesus: He is with you as you hurt.

Second Place we see Jesus: He is with the poor.

Revelation 2:9b-10a

...and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation.

Understanding Smyrna's Persecution

Who: The Church in Smyrna's persecution was coming from other religious people.

Why: Smyrna was persecuted because they believed that a relationship with God is for everyone and no longer just a few. (see Ephesians 2:11-22)

Third place we see Jesus: He is visible in the church as we live out his promise that everyone is invited to participate in his kingdom.

For the 1st century church, diversity was the evidence of Christ's sacrifice.

Is the Church in Whatcom County known for its diversity or its sameness?

Revelation 2:10b Be faithful unto death...

Four Ways to Be Faithful (*Philippians 2:3-8*)

1. Empty yourself of the need to be superior to others
2. Begin to live sacrificially
3. Speak with humble honesty
4. When you misstep, simply confess and repent. (*Rev 2:1-7*)

Here Comes the Hope

Revelation 2:10c-11

...and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.

Revelation 21:1-5

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true."

The hope for Smyrna is that God will make all things new.

The Second Death: Revelation 20:14, 20:6

Revelation's hope is not rooted in life after death but in the life after life after death.

Where is the hope now?

The hope for you is that future life is available now.

The hope for us is that we can endure suffering and even death because Christ our King has defeated death.

Resources for Further Reading (i.e. Where Garret borrowed his ideas from):

Surprised by Hope by N.T. Wright

King Jesus Gospel by Scot McKnight

Revelation for Everyone by N.T. Wright

Approaching the End: Eschatological Reflections on Church, Politics, & Life by Stanley Hauerwas

Small Group Questions

1. Was the neighborhood where you grew up more diverse or not very diverse?
2. In what ways do you bring diversity to God's church?
3. Are there certain types of people in our church that make you uncomfortable or that you have a hard time relating to?
4. In what ways could you: empty yourself of the need to be superior, live sacrificially, or speak with humble honesty in order to be faithful?
5. How can we pray for the "tribulations" in your life?