

DYING TO LIVE

R E V E L A T I O N 2 : 8 - 1 1

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 **SUCCESS** (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 least powerful.
- Do we think that the church succeeds only to the degree that we honor Christ, or that we only honor Christ to the degree that we “succeed” as a church?
- The examples of Smyrna and Philadelphia make clear that it is better to be puny, powerless, and penniless, than ungodly, insincere, or unfaithful.

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

- As followers of Christ, we can have a radically different view of success because we have a radically different view of what is valuable.
- There is a wealth that is not of this world, and it is of ultimate significance.
- If our treasure can be destroyed by earthly circumstances, then it is bound to lead us away from Christ and produce anxiety and grief (Matthew 6:19-21).

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

- Because of their unflinching testimony to Christ, the believers in Smyrna were the object of 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 **DISTINCTION** (Matthew 5:11-12).
- Believers in Christ evaluate our lives not on the basis of what people say, but what God says through his Word (2 Timothy 3:12, John 16:33).

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

- Jesus is making clear that no one represents God or belongs to His kingdom simply because he claims to.

- Too many churches have too many names on membership roll that are not in the Lamb's book of life.
- The name "Christian" is not a label we wear, but a life that we live and receive by faith.

5.) A Radically Different View of **TRIBULATION** (v. 10)

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

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

- The most commendable aspect of the church in Smyrna was its willingness to hold fast to this radically different faith unto death.
- Our main focus should not be upon how we leave this life, but how we enter the next.
- For those hidden in the risen Christ, death is not an **END** but an **ENTRY** 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.
- There is the promise of life in Christ for all those willing to die for Christ.

Application Questions

- How far would your devotion to Christ take you?
- Do you have a radically different perspective? Are you living a radically different life than the world without Christ?
- What is Christ worth to you? Is He worth more to you than life?