

## Equipping Hour

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### The Church

*The Seven Churches in Revelation*

#### Smyrna

##### Key Verse: 2 Timothy 3:12

“Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”

##### Overview

There were two churches that Jesus wrote to and did not bring a word of condemnation against, Philadelphia and Smyrna. The church at Smyrna was a suffering church. It was a pure church that suffered great persecution from Romans and Jews.

Smyrna’s population was around 200,000. It was located about 35 miles north of Ephesus. It was located on the coast of the Aegean Sea. With a well-protected harbor, it had extensive trade that went in and out of the city. During the first century A.D. Smyrna was one of the grandest cities in all of Asia. It was also one of the most beautiful cities in Asia and was surrounded by rich farmland. Ancient coins described the city as ‘first of Asia in beauty and size’. It was famed for its school of science and medicine. Smyrna means “myrrh”. Myrrh is an ointment that is used as fragrance and used in embalming bodies.



There was a large temple dedicated to the Emperor Tiberius Caesar Augustus in Smyrna which portrayed its close alliance to the Roman Empire. Later in Domitian’s rule (ca. 81–96) it became the headquarters for the imperial cult of emperor worship in that area of the empire. Once a year, every citizen in Smyrna was required to burn incense to Caesar, declare him as lord, and receive a certificate verifying that they performed that act. The Romans often rewarded Smyrna for its loyalty to Rome. There were many other temples of pagan deities in the city such as Apollo, Aphrodite, and Zeus.

Smyrna, modern-day Izmir, Turkey, is the only city of the seven churches that is still populated today.

##### Background

1. Acts 19:10. Who heard the gospel that Paul preached? \_\_\_\_\_
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## The Letter

### Revelation 2:8

1. Who is the angel? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What two ways does Christ describe Himself?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_

### *Christ's Commendation*

#### Revelation 2:9

1. What three things did Christ "know" about the church?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is "a synagogue of Satan"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### *Christ's Command*

#### Revelation 2:10

1. What are the two commands of Christ?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the reward for those who are faithful? \_\_\_\_\_

## *Christ's Challenge*

### **Revelation 2:11**

1. Who is this challenge given to? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the promise for those who overcome? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Revelation 21:8. What is the second death? \_\_\_\_\_

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“Eighty and six years I have served Him, and He has done me no wrong. How then can I blaspheme my King and Savior? You threaten me with a fire that burns for a season, and after a little while is quenched; but you are ignorant of the fire of everlasting punishment that is prepared for the wicked.”

— Polycarp, a disciple of the Apostle John and the pastor of Smyrna, before he was burned at the stake.

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### **Application**

1. What are you living for—heaven or earth?
2. What are fears that you have that you need to repent of?
3. How are you encouraging brothers and sisters in Christ to “be faithful”?