
[SERMON NOTES]

It's Review Season (*Revelation 1:3,12-13*)

Distinct mark of a faithful church: A genuine passion for God seen through a love for _____ and _____.

3 Attacks on the Churches Worship:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The Church of Smyrna (*Revelation 2:8-11*)

Jesus is the _____ of life.

Persecution is _____.

Persecution _____ the church.

Look forward to _____.

While we probably won't need to be faithful to the point of death, we are called to be _____ nonetheless.

[QUICK REVIEW]

Looking at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or something that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

[MY STORY]

From the death of a loved one to recovering from surgeries, life is filled with opportunities to endure. For all of us, the question isn't whether or not you will be faced with a hardship, rather *which ones* and *will you endure*. With that in mind: ***What is the hardest thing you've ever endured? And how did that situation shape you into who you are today?***

[DIGGING DEEPER]

In this week's message, we learned that we all face the choice to either *be born twice and die once*, or to be *born once and die twice*. Perhaps you've heard the phrase "born-again Christian." It's a reference to **John 3:1-21**. **Read this passage and write down 3 reflections that stand out from this passage.**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

For the early church, being a Christian meant there was a good chance you would have to face *persecution* - the literal threat of a more difficult life or even death as a result of faith. Read the following passages that discuss the idea of persecution. **Matthew 5:10-12, 2 Corinthians 12:9-1, Acts 16:19-40.**

What do you notice about the mindset and actions of those going through persecution?

Persecution always seems to draw out deep sacrifice, surrender, and commitment to Jesus. ***Why do you think that is?***

Throughout our lives, we will (most likely) never experience genuine persecution as Christians living in America. What a true blessing that is! Regardless, we are still called to be faithful no matter what. Spend some time filling out the lists below of **a) ways in which you are grateful we don't experience persecution and b) areas where your comforts may get in the way.**

Grateful to be able to...

Example: go to church freely

Keeping an eye on my comforts...

example: easy to not share my faith

[WEEKLY READINGS]

Studies say that someone who reads their Bible 4 times or more a week improves their joy, happiness, contentment, and overall approval of their life. (*1 Tim. 4:8-10,16; 2 Tim. 3:16-17*). As a church, we believe that! Below are 4 passages of Scripture this week to dive into to pull deeper on our weekend's message. We encourage you to take notes in your Bible, and ask yourself: *What does this teach me about God? Myself and others? And how do I follow Jesus better?*

Acts 16:19-40

1 Peter 4:12-16

1 Thessalonians 3

Hebrews 10:19-39