



DISCIPLESHIP UNIVERSITY AT
FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH
PROP 4500: REVELATION

Part IV: Message to Smyrna – Persecution

THE CHURCHES OF ASIA



BACKGROUND: CITY OF SMYRNA

- *Smyrna was another large city in Asia, and could be considered the second greatest city in the province behind the capital, Ephesus. In fact, these two cities carried on a _____ with each other.*
- *Smyrna is the only of the seven cities to remain in existence today (modern day Izmir, Turkey).*
- *Smyrna was considered one of the most _____ cities of its time.*
- *Smyrna was a very old city, but it had been destroyed 700 years prior to the writing of Revelation. It remained in ruins 300 years until rebuilt by _____*

_____. Though a Greek city, it changed its allegiance to Rome.

- There were two major temples in Smyrna at the time of the writing of Revelation. First, there was the temple of _____, who was the personification of Rome. It was built in 195 BC, and was the first such temple built to her. Second, there was a temple built for _____, the Roman Emperor. It was built in 25 AD. Smyrna, then, was a major center of _____.
- The city also had a very thriving and prosperous _____ community. In fact, it was the largest population in all Asia. This group had an empire-wide exemption from the requirements of emperor worship.
- We do not know when the church in Smyrna was established, but we do know that Paul had not visited the church.
- Famous bishop: Polycarp (AD 69-155).

CHARACTERISTIC OF CHRIST

Jesus is the _____ and the _____, who _____ and came to _____ (v. 8).

- Does this description remind you of any other descriptions of God we've seen so far in Revelation?
- How would His eternality have encouraged believers in Smyrna? How does it encourage you today?

CONDEMNATION

Is there any condemnation for the church in Smyrna?

CORRECTION

Though there is no sin that is condemned in Smyrna, Christ offers what might be considered a preventative correction for the believers there: “Do not fear what you are about to suffer” (v. 10; cf. Luke 12:4, Philippians 1:21).

- *What is the natural human reaction in the face of persecution?*
 - *John Wayne: “Courage is being scared to death, but saddling up anyway.”*
- *What two things did Jesus say were coming to the church in Smyrna? Would there have been reason to fear?*
- *Who is behind these attacks on the believers?*

A WORD TO THOSE WHO CONQUER

- *The one who conquers avoids the _____
_____. What is that?*

- *Instead, we receive the _____ of
_____.*