

**Crushing At Smyrna
The Church Under Persecution
Revelation 2:8 – 11**

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We have looked at the first church referenced by John, the church in Ephesus. It is a picture of the church of the Apostles, the early church which had lost its first love in the defense of orthodoxy. They were so busy fighting for the faith that they forgot what it was all about...the love of Jesus and our love for Him and what He did for us on the cross.

In it we also see the churches of today. Those that at one time loved the Lord and those who belonged to Him. They were all about reaching others for Him and fulfilling the Great Commission, but they have now moved towards being defenders of the faith. Having confronted errors in doctrine, they have come to the point that today, they are now actively harming and damaging those who have not yet grown up in the Lord, they have lost their first love. Instead, they take those who need to be disciplined, and wind up chasing them off elsewhere or away from the Lord entirely in the name of being theologically correct.

As Ramsay looked at the seven churches in Revelation, his observations were “In this work, Jewish in origin and general plan, and to a great extent Jewish in range of topics, there is inserted this episode of the Seven Letters, which appears to be almost entirely non-Jewish in character and certainly non-Jewish in origin and model.” (Ramsay 1904, 35) The seven letters are, again, Jesus Christ addressing issues that He sees in the church.

Smyrna is the second church in the overall order of the seven. As we discussed before, the order of the churches, divinely inspired, aligns quite nicely with church history, yet we also see that examples of each church live in every church age and we can also find examples of each today.

About Smyrna, Smyrna was just up the coast from Ephesus. It was north of Ephesus. The church at Smyrna and the church in Philadelphia both wound up having nothing negative said about them by Jesus. “This is one of only two churches (the other being Philadelphia) with no weaknesses. It is telling that these two were also the least significant of the seven churches in terms of numbers and influence. The current preoccupation of the modern church with numbers and influence must be reexamined. It is more important to be faithful than to be powerful. This is also one of two letters (with Pergamum next) without the formula “I know your (good) deeds.” Instead, the divine knowledge of (and empathy for) their situation is described.” (Osborne 2002, 129)

Being on the coast, “Smyrna was also a port city, about thirty-five miles north of Ephesus. It survives today as Ismir, in Turkey. One of John’s converts, Polycarp, served as a minister there until his martyrdom about A.D. 155.” (Morris 1983, 53)

The overall tone of this letter reflects the need of those receiving a word from Jesus, the need of those who are being squeezed for their faith. “The letter is full of joy and life and brightness, beyond all others of the Seven; and such is the impression the city still makes on the traveller (who usually comes to it as his first experience of the towns of Asia Minor), throwing back the glittering rays of the sun with proportionate brightness, while its buildings spring sharp out of the sea and rise in tiers up the front slopes of its Pagos.” (Ramsay 1904, 43)

The view looking from the site of the acropolis of Smyrna down towards the bay.



(Bolen 2012, Used with Permission)

The letter to Smyrna is the shortest of all of the letters and is intended to be encouragement to the church from Jesus. The word Smyrna = Bitterness; suffering. Myrrh. (Smith and Cornwall 1998, 229) Myrrh has to be crushed for the fragrance to become apparent, the name of the city already begins to tell us something of the church and what it is they are going through.

Unlike Ephesus, which we have numerous references to in the scriptures, the only reference to Smyrna is here in Revelation. There is no other letter to Smyrna in the Bible. At the time of John penning Revelation, the population was around 100,000, now, as Izmir Turkey, the population is 3 million plus.

Smyrna had been a Greek colony as far back as 1000 B.C. Around 600 B.C. it was invaded and destroyed by the Lydeans and for 400 years there was no city there at all. Then around 200 B.C. Lysimachus had it rebuilt as a planned and unified whole. It was built with streets that were broad, straight, sweeping, and beautifully paved. The city had experienced death and had literally been brought back to life. It is undoubtedly because of Smyrna's historical past, Christ refers to Himself as, "He who was dead and has come to life." (Keathley III 2002, Re 2:8) As you look down from the acropolis, you can still see a portion of old agora.



(Bolen, Smyrna agora from acropolis 2012)



(Bolen, Smyrna agora 2012)

In the center of the civic agora once stood an altar to Zeus. This altar was magnificently decorated. In the center of the civic agora once stood an altar to Zeus. This altar was magnificently decorated. The deeply carved relief of Poseidon and Demeter and some third unidentified deity currently on display at one of Smyrna's archaeological museums was believed to have been part of the artwork surrounding and decorating this once magnificent structure. (deSilva 2018, Smyrna)

Smyrna was also a free city. It was fiercely loyal and faithful to Rome and naturally moved to Emperor worship. "In 196 B.C. Smyrna built the first temple to Dea Roma—the goddess of Rome, the spiritual symbol of the Roman Empire. Once the "spirit" of Rome was worshipped, it wasn't much of a step to worship the dead Emperors of Rome." (Guzik 2013, Re 2:8a)

Being only 35 miles or so apart, there appears to have been an ongoing rivalry with Ephesus as to who was the most loyal to Rome. It is this loyalty that could have been one of the major reasons why persecution began in this city.

Smyrna was awarded a neokorate by Tiberius in AD 26 when Smyrna built a temple to Tiberius, his mother Livia, and the Senate of Rome. No traces of this important temple have yet been identified. (deSilva 2018, Smyrna)

Due to Izmir being built on the same location as Smyrna, many of the sites of interest are unavailable as there is modern construction sitting over the sites.

During the period that John is writing, Smyrna is also the location of many Jewish Synagogues who will be directly addressed by Jesus in His letter. Those Jewish Synagogues have not left and are still there today.

As we look at the letter to the church in Smyrna, we will also come to realize it is a picture of the church being persecuted by Rome. One could say this is a picture of the church from Nero until Constantine it has been, and continues to be a picture of the church in persecution today. How should we respond to the repeated claims that there were more Christian martyrs in the 20th century than in all precious centuries combined? (Sailer, et al. 2012)

We are blessed to be living where we are, but the clouds are gathering as the culture continues to run headlong in the opposite direction. Persecution is not far from us and could possibly appear under the guise of laws against "hate speech." California came up to the precipice this past year with legislation that would have potentially made the Bible an illegal document to sell. In Canada and places in Europe, a Pastor could wind up doing jail time for simply teaching from Romans 1 and agreeing with what the scriptures actually say about the culture. This is not all, there are powerful media forces circling and working to destroy the ability to teach and preach the gospel in the United States.

For the rest of this decade, evangelicals will experience an intense public relations campaign against their character, motivations, and objectives. Given America's politically correct environment, you can count on evangelicals being portrayed as hate-mongering, narrow-minded, old-fashioned, bigoted religious zealots. (Barna 2016, Kindle Locations 872-875)

Far from the minds of many today, is the simple fact that we live in dangerous times. To be a believer in Jesus Christ is to be promised persecution, and in much of the world, that is a real issue. "In the 2000 years of the Church's history, it has been estimated that nearly two thirds of all the martyrs died in the 20th century. In the "Christian World Encyclopedia," scholar David B. Barrett maintains that during the last 20 centuries there have been close to 40 million "martyrs," 26,685,000 of them in the 20th century. Barrett uses the term "martyr" in a very broad sense. He writes: "This century has seen very numerous martyrs, especially because of Nazism, communism, and racial and tribal conflicts." There is more religious persecution in the 21st century than at any other in history. Brutal religious persecution is going on around the world today. Thousands of religious believers were martyred in the last few years. Many others have suffered imprisonment, torture, burning, enslavement and starvation. Christians are the most persecuted group in the world." (Water 2001, 848)

In 1999 America was stunned to learn of a shooting spree at a Colorado High School. It left 15 people dead and many injured. As the details became known one aspect of the story from the last few seconds of life of one of the students at the Columbine High School was made known. With a gun to her head, Cassie Bernall was asked, "Do you believe in God?" "Yes," she said. She was then shot. (Water 2001, 890) Christian, it is later than you think.

Per Open Doors USA

In the last year (2019):

2,983 Christians were killed

9,488 churches were attacked

3,711 Christians were detained without trial and imprisoned (Open Doors 2020)

2020 Top Ten Most Dangerous Countries

1. North Korea
2. Afghanistan
3. Somalia
4. Libya
5. Pakistan
6. Eritrea
7. Sudan
8. Yemen
9. Iran
10. India (Open Doors USA 2020)

Revelation 2:8–11

"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: 'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say 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 cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.'" (NASB95)

Unlike the letter to Ephesus where Jesus reflects an almost "cold admiration which he expresses for the noble history of the Ephesian Church, a history which, alas! belonged only to the past: he is filled with warm affection. The joy that brightens the letter is caused not by ease and comfort and pleasures, but by the triumph over hardship and persecution, by superiority to circumstances; and the life that invigorates

and warms it is that strong vitality which overcomes death and rises victorious from apparent dissolution.” (Ramsay 1904, 268) This church, in light of what they are going through, is remaining faithful to Jesus.

In each of these seven letters we see Jesus acknowledging the fact that there is an angel involved with each church and that would also mean that there is today, an angel involved with each church. After acknowledging the Angel who is overseeing Smyrna, Jesus begins His letter to the church in Smyrna by relating His attributes to them as God. He wants this church to know and be comforted in the fact that He is the one and same person as talked about by the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 44:6. “Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: “I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.”” (NASB95)

Jesus steps right up and immediately identifies with the eternal everlasting God so this church can be comforted that they are serving the God of the universe. The church in Smyrna, which is under persecution, needs this assurance from the King. Jesus is the eternal almighty God, and the God of the universe is going to be providing a group of people, who are being pressured by the world to the point of death, encouragement. Unlike Ephesus where He pointed to past deeds, here He is all about the present faithfulness of this church and those in it.

In the role of the eternal and infinite one He launches His word of encouragement to a church exposed to fierce persecution. He was already in existence at the beginning of all things, and will be after all comes to an end. He is the eternal and abiding one. Two aspects of eternity are placed side-by-side to describe the Lord as eternal. Neither time nor things within time pose any limitation for Him. (Thomas 1992, 161)

In Hebrews 13:8 we see that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” (NASB95) It is important to those who are being persecuted to be reminded of that. For a church in persecution, this is some important to remember.

Jesus starts right there; as creator, He knows what His people need to hear. He was there at the beginning. He became a man and He offered up His life. He knows persecution and He knows the intense pressure they are under. 1 Timothy 2:5–6 “For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.” (NASB95)

For those of us looking at the face of persecution, important verses to remember that point to us the love of Jesus Christ for you and me. Romans 5:6–9 “For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. (For rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person perhaps someone might possibly dare to die.) But God demonstrates his own love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, because we have now been declared righteous by his blood, we will be saved through him from God’s wrath.” (NET)

Because Jesus rose from the dead, we also have that same expectation to look forward to. 1 Corinthians 15:3–4 “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,” (NASB95)

Even though we are being persecuted, even though the church at Smyrna is being persecuted, there is a need to move our view from the temporal things of this world to that of the eternal God. Romans 8:28–39 “And we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose, because those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; and those he called, he also justified; and those he justified, he also glorified. What then shall we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Indeed, he who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, freely give us all things? Who will bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is the one who will condemn? Christ is the one who died (and more than that, he was raised), who is at the right hand of God, and who also is interceding for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will trouble, or distress, or

persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we encounter death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we have complete victory through him who loved us! For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor heavenly rulers, nor things that are present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."(NET)

Background to Part of the Problem

Rome had granted Jews the privilege of practicing their religion in any part of the empire, thereby exempting them from participation in the emperor cult and from military service. After the war of A.D. 66–70, Jewish self-interest widened the gap between synagogue and church also in the diaspora. From a Jewish point of view, the Christians were messianic troublemakers and their claim to be the true Israel was simply absurd. (Krodel 1989, 110-111)

The specific accusations of Jews before government authorities were probably that Christians were upsetting the peace of the status quo, were not a Jewish sect, and refused to pay homage to Caesar as Lord (cf. anticipations of this in John 19:12; Acts 24:1–9). In addition, the history of Smyrna reveals its particular loyalty to Rome, especially that it had built more than one temple in honor of Roman religion (Tacitus, *Annales* 4.55–56). Such religious patriotism meant generally that there would be even less patience with Christians refusing to pay homage to the deity of the emperor. (Beale 1999, 240, Beale 1999)

Polycarp was the pastor of the church in Smyrna, or soon would be. He was led to faith by John and was martyred in Smyrna in 156.

I remember the events of that time more clearly than those of recent years. For what boys learn, growing with their mind, becomes joined with it; so that I am able to describe the very place in which the blessed Polycarp sat as he discoursed, and his goings out and his comings in, and the manner of his life, and his physical appearance, and his discourses to the people, and the accounts which he gave of his intercourse with John and with the others who had seen the Lord. And as he remembered their words, and what he heard from them concerning the Lord, and concerning his miracles and his teaching, having received them from eyewitnesses of the 'Word of life,' Polycarp related all things in harmony with the Scriptures. (Eusebius of Caesaria 1890, 238-239)

The Martyrdom of Polycarp

Herod, the police captain, and his father, Nicetes, came out to meet him. After transferring him to their carriage and sitting down at his side, they tried to persuade him, saying, "Why, what harm is there in saying, 'Caesar is Lord,' and offering incense" (and other words to this effect) "and thereby saving yourself?" Now at first he gave them no answer. But when they persisted, he said, "I am not about to do what you are suggesting to me." (Holmes 1999, 233)

Therefore, when he was brought before him, the proconsul asked if he were Polycarp. And when he confessed that he was, the proconsul tried to persuade him to recant, saying, "Have respect for your age," and other such things as they are accustomed to say: "Swear by the Genius of Caesar; repent; say, 'Away with the atheists!'" So Polycarp solemnly looked at the whole crowd of lawless heathen who were in the stadium, motioned toward them with his hand, and then (groaning as he looked up to heaven) said, "Away with the atheists!" (3) But when the magistrate persisted and said, "Swear the oath, and I will release you; revile Christ," Polycarp replied, "For eighty-six years I have been his servant, and he has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?" (Holmes 1999, 233-235)

These things then happened with such swiftness, quicker than words could tell, the crowd swiftly collecting wood and kindling from the workshops and baths, the Jews being especially eager to assist in this, as is their custom. (Holmes 1999, 237)

Jesus saw what was going on in Smyrna. He knew what was going on and says they are being slandered by folks who say they are Jewish, at least by lineage, but are now serving Satan. Jesus would know about that personally as well. While having a discussion with the Jewish religious leaders in Jerusalem, He identified, for them, who they were really serving. John 8:44 “You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.” (NASB95)

Let’s take a quick trip to remember where we are in time as this is going down.

It is in the reign of Domitian, in the mid-90’s AD.

The Temple has already been destroyed, and at this point we are still about 40 years away from the Bar Kochba rebellion in the future which will result in the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of all Jews from the land by Rome.

The implication that the church is the true synagogue because unbelieving, oppressive Jews are called a “synagogue of Satan” is paralleled in Qumran, where apostate Jews are called “a congregation of Belial...” (Beale 1999, 241)

What we pick up on in verse 9, this is a poor rich church.

John uses the strong word *ptōcheia*, which Trench distinguishes from *penia*: ‘The *penēs* has nothing superfluous, the *ptochos* nothing at all.’ The poverty of the Smyrneans was extreme. Yet Christ can say you are rich (contrast 3:17). There is a richness in spiritual things which has nothing to do with this world’s wealth. Many think that the Smyrneans’ poverty was in part due to pillage of their goods by the Jews. (L. Morris 1987, 68)

Jesus continues, worse things than losing your worldly possessions and being slandered are coming.

Revelation 2:10

“Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.” (NASB95)

So what does Jesus mean when He says tribulation for ten days?

What does that mean?

The trial is limited to 10 days; God is ensuring them a manageable time, in accordance with 1 Corinthians 10:13: “God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear.” The “ten days” is not meant literally but alludes to the 10-day testing of Daniel in Daniel 1:12–14. It refers to a limited period in which the saints will triumph through endurance. It will be a terrible time of severe suffering, but God will get them through it. (Osborne, Revelation: Verse by Verse, Osborne New Testament Commentaries 2016, 73)

Persecution Under Rome

1	Nero	54
2	Domitian	81
3	Trajan	98

4	Adrian	117
5	Septimus Severus	193
6	Maximin	235
7	Decius	249
8	Valerian	254
9	Aurelian	270
10	Diocletian	284

It could be that the reference is to the period of persecution under Rome, or it is a limited persecution under the current administration, or we could conjecture other meanings. At the end of the day, the length of persecution is limited.

Not all were faithful under this persecution.

“And when a very great tumult arose in consequence of the cries, a certain Phrygian, Quintus by name, who was newly come from Phrygia, seeing the beasts and the additional tortures, was smitten with cowardice and gave up the attainment of salvation.

But the above-mentioned epistle shows that he, too hastily and without proper discretion, had rushed forward with others to the tribunal, but when seized had furnished a clear proof to all, that it is not right for such persons rashly and recklessly to expose themselves to danger. Thus did matters turn out in connection with them.” (Eusebius of Caesaria 1890, 189)

For those who are faithful until death, Jesus promises the crown of life.

The crown of life is apparently the crown of eternal life. (Walvoord 2008, 64)

The New Testament speaks of Five Crowns. (Larkin 1921, 150)

I found six, but depending on how you count, there could be only four.

The στέφανος τῆς ζωῆς means that if the crown is the reward of victory the content conferred with it is life. Close to this saying stands the metaphor of the tree of life (Rev. 2:7). One might imagine that the crown is plucked from this tree. It is the life which no death can ever snatch away from the one who is crowned therewith. This crown is the promise and gift of the Lord (δώσω Rev. 2:10) for those who love Him and are faithful to Him, Jm. 1:12; 2 Tm. 4:8. (Grundmann 1964-, 630-631)

There are two types of crowns mentioned in the NT, στέφανος [stephanos] and διάδημα [diadēma] . Most discussions of these two words indicate that the stephanos is a victor's crown, whereas the diadēma is a royal crown. (Garland 2006, Re 22:21)

The crowns associated with the reward of the believer are always stephanos. Paul associates this crown with the reward of victory in competition (1Cor. 9:25). (Garland 2006, Re 22:21)

Crowns in the New Testament

Crown of righteousness – Those Who Love His Appearing

2 Timothy 4:8

“in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (NASB95)

Crown of Glory – faithful shepherd

1 Peter 5:4

“And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.” (NASB95)

Crown of Gold – Evidence of Redemption

Revelation 4:4

“Around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads.” (NASB95)

Crown of Rejoicing – Soul Winners Crown

1 Thessalonians 2:19

“For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming?” (NASB95)

Imperishable Crown – Life of Self-Control

1 Corinthians 9:25

“Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.” (NASB95)

Crown of life –Perseverance Under Trial

James 1:12

“Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.” (NASB95)

The crowns that we are eligible to receive as believers are rewards. It is possible to be a believer and have only one crown, redemption.

1 Corinthians 3:11–15

“For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man’s work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man’s work. If any man’s work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.” (NASB95)

Revelation 2:11

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.” (NASB95)

Again, the command to hear and the looking back reference to the blood applied to the ear lobe of the priest in Leviticus.

Then, just as before, we have a promise to the overcomer, and as such, a promise to the overtaken.

One means by which harm will come to nonovercomers is the second death, but overcomers are exempt from this. Unbelievers are given over to this destiny at the great white throne judgment. John identifies the second death with the lake of fire in 20:14 and 21:8. This is more than physical death; it is eternal death (Beckwith; Walvoord). The idea behind the second death is implicit in Dan. 12:2 and John 5:29. It was current in Jewish circles as in the Jewish Targum on Deut. 33:6 and in Philo. It is not annihilation, but conscious unending punishment. As is true of the promise in Rev. 2:7, this one also ties in with the early chapters of the Bible (cf. Gen. 2:17; 3:22; cf. also Rev. 20:6) (Thomas 1992, 174)

Overcomers have life, they are allowed access to the tree of life and have life as an eternal possession. The overtaken, the one who does not know Jesus, cannot say that, contrary to some who teach this, we do not all win. Hebrews 9:27 "And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment," (NASB95)

Daniel 12:2

"Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt." (NASB95)

If heaven is forever, then so is hell; there is absolutely no biblical ground for supposing that one is eternal and one is temporal. Likewise, there is no possibility of a person escaping hell after arriving. (Geisler 2005, 339)

Jesus, in His first two letters to the church, lets them know up front, they need to be overcomers. He also lets them know the rewards for being an overcomer. When looked at in terms of the one who is not an overcomer, one who is not a believer, it then says clearly, the access that the believer has, the unbeliever does not have.

I find it interesting that by the time we come to the Council of Nicea shortly after Constantine made it legal to be a Christian, one of the decisions made, Canon X, rejected those who were not overcomers IF any who have lapsed have been ordained through the ignorance, or even with the previous knowledge of the ordainers, this shall not prejudice the canon of the Church; for when they are discovered they shall be deposed. (Percival 1900, 24)

As we move through Revelation, we will come to places where Jesus is judge, and as such, He will be shown judging a wicked world and we will also see the final destination of those who have spent a lifetime of rejecting Him. Jesus made reference to it as Gehenna which has been translated to the word Hell. There is the first resurrection which ultimately will involve all believers, then there is a second resurrection

Revelation 20:11–15

"Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." (NASB95)

The next church we come to is the church infiltrated. This is the church of "if you can't beat them, join them."

The church at Pergamos, a picture of the church marrying the world and living together in some type of satanic harmony.

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