



II. THE MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH AT SMYRNA – 2:8-11

Our lives are a Christ-like fragrance rising up to God. But this fragrance is perceived differently by those who are being saved and by those who are perishing. To those who are perishing, we are a dreadful smell of death and doom. But to those who are being saved, we are a life-giving perfume.

2 Corinthians 2:15 (NLT)

1. The Lord's care for this church (v.8-9)

- I am in control of all things
- I have conquered death
- I know everything you are going through

2. The Lord's compliment of this church (v.9-10)

- You have remained faithful through it all

3. The Lord's complaint against this church

- None

4. The Lord's counsel to this church (v.10-11)

- Do not be afraid of the future

Possible meaning of the "10 days"

- ⇒ Since 10 is a number of totality—their suffering would end in death
- ⇒ The 10 Roman Emperors who were the worst persecutors of the church:
 - Nero AD 64-68
 - Domitian 90-96
 - Trajan 104-107
 - Marcus Aurelius 161-180
 - Septimius Severus 193-211
 - Maximinus 235-237
 - Decius 250-253
 - Valarian 257-260
 - Aurelian 270-275
 - Diocletian 303-312

- Be faithful until death and I will give you the crown of life

- Overcomers will not be hurt by the second death

**Born twice—die once
Born once—die twice**

Happy and holy are those who share in this first raising of the dead. The second death has no power over them. They will be priests for God and for Christ and will rule with him for a thousand years.

Revelation 20:6 (NCV)

II. WAYS TO PERSEVERE THROUGH MY PAIN

1. Know that God is with me even when I can't feel it

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Joshua 1:9 (TNIV)

As sure as ever God puts his children in the furnace, he will be in the furnace with them.
Charles Spurgeon

2. Realize that God is working even when I can't see it

And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

Romans 8:28 (NLT)

3. Remember that God has a plan even when I can't understand it

I know the plans that I have for you, declares the LORD. They are plans for peace and not disaster, plans to give you a future filled with hope.

Jeremiah 29:11 (GWT)