

BE FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

REVELATION 2:8-11 // TODD DUGARD
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Jesus is the first and last and was raised from the dead (2:8), and so we must not fear... (2:10a) our current difficulties (2:9), our future path (2:10b) nor our eventual death (2:10c-11).

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Jesus is alive and aware of your situation. How have you seen evidence of Jesus' presence in your life in recent weeks?
2. What comfort can the church draw from knowing that Jesus is the 'first and last' and that he 'died and came to life'? Are you comforted by this knowledge?
3. What was the most difficult task you had to accomplish in the last week? How did you manage to overcome any fears associated with the challenge?
4. While we all welcome the opportunity to pursue Christ in peace and prosperity, believers who face no challenges whatsoever may end up spiritually soft. To help us grow mature, we heard a strong call to serve as applicational part of this message. How does a commitment to regularly serving each other develop greater faith and spiritual strength?

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5. Are you on the “Lord, make my life easier” agenda? As you look to your foreseeable future, does it appear that the Lord is going to make your life easier or let you face greater challenges? How do you feel about this future?

6. *When we experience suffering or pain, we tend to think God’s plan for us in failing. Scripture shows us that God’s plans include our pain and suffering. He leads us and sustains us through these experiences. The church at Smyrna had to understand that Jesus was present in their suffering and would help them conquer their fears. As you reflect on the encouragement from this text, consider ways that a Christian in physical poverty is rich in spirit? How could Christians in a physical prison express their spiritual freedom in Jesus?*

7. *Jesus promised a crown of life to the believers who would be faithful unto death. Over the centuries, we have seen Christians follow Jesus even it cost them their life. They are martyrs, like Polycarp, and their faithfulness continually inspires the church. Is martyrdom a likely outcome of your faith? If not, what life necessities are at risk as you proclaim and demonstrate daily allegiance to Jesus?*

8. Is there any sense that you’ve allowed the fear of experiencing even a small loss keep you from serving faithfully? If you are convinced you should attempt to conquer your fears, what are some of the key steps you’ll need to take? How can other close believers support you?