

Dear Church...: Week 2

June 14, 2020

Revelation 2:8-11

Warming Up

1. Share with the group a time when someone has written you an encouraging letter. What were the circumstances/occasion? How did it impact you?

Knowing the Gospel...

2. Jesus begins his letter to the church with these words in verse 9...“I know”. Considering what comes immediately next, how can these words be of comfort and encouragement to believers in persecution, trials, etc.? Check out these passages and discuss the nature of Jesus’ knowledge of our situations: Isaiah 53:1-11, Matthew 10:22, John 15:20, 2 Chronicles 16:9, Isaiah 41:10.

3. What 2 commands in verse 10 does Jesus give to the church?

How has Jesus set the example for us in following these 2 commands? Matt. 10:38-39, Matt. 26:28.

What kinds of things make it difficult for you to obey 1 or both of these commands?

What resources has he given us to obey these commands? Is. 41:10, Joshua 1, John 14:15-27, 2 Tim. 1:7, Phil. 4:6-7, 1 Peter 3:14, 1 Cor. 10:13, 2 Thes. 3:3

Living the Gospel...

4. The church in Smyrna was experiencing severe trials and affliction. And it was going to get harder. According to Jesus in verse 10, what was the purpose of some of

their trials? Check out these verses and discuss how God uses suffering and trials in the lives of believers: Rom. 5:3-5, James 1:2-4, 12, 1 Peter 5:10, 2 Cor. 4:17, Phil. 3:10, Ps. 119:71. How has God used trials and suffering in your life? In the past? Currently? How can your group pray for you?

5. Hebrews 13:3 tells us to pray for believers in prison. Spend some time in your group praying for believers here in the States and around the world that are being persecuted for following Jesus and standing for the gospel.

Telling the Gospel...

6. How, as a Christian, can a person maintain a good testimony during times of persecution?

7. How does a person overcome fear of “persecution” when sharing the gospel?

Next Week: Special “Think Outside” week on racial reconciliation