

## When Following Jesus is Tough Revelation 2:8-11

*“To the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again. <sup>9</sup> I know your afflictions and your poverty—yet you are rich! I know the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. <sup>10</sup> Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life. <sup>11</sup> He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death.*

### The Church in Smyrna:

#### Self-Revelation about Christ:

- He is \_\_\_\_\_
- He defeated death, and \_\_\_\_\_

#### The Commendation: Life is not easy but you are faithful.

- [1] They faced intense pressure \_\_\_\_\_
- [2] They became social outcasts \_\_\_\_\_
- [3] They were slandered \_\_\_\_\_

#### The Cause of Their Suffering (And Ours) \_\_\_\_\_ John 15:18-2 2 Timothy 3:12

#### The Challenge from Our Lord:

1. Make \_\_\_\_\_, not \_\_\_\_\_, the driving force in life.
2. Focus on the \_\_\_\_\_

#### Small Group

- What stood out to you most from what you heard or read in this weekend’s message?
- While some of us will never face the same kind of persecution as the church of Smyrna or fellow Christians around the world, where might you take a hit for your faith in your context or community? How do you respond in those situations? What have you learned from them?
- Have you ever allowed culture to influence your faith and lead you to compromise, or have you stayed strong in the midst of culture? How have you or haven’t you?
- How should the church evaluate faithfulness? Where would you start? What does faithfulness look like for us personally and at Snowy Range?
- We are called to faithfulness, but often fail in our pursuit of this task. What answer does the Bible give about failure? How does that answer strengthen us to succeed?
- Describe the faithfulness of Jesus. How was He faithful to us even when we were the opposite toward Him? How does that move us to be faithful followers?
- How does looking forward to Jesus’ return prompt you to live faithfully now, regardless of your circumstances? What hope does this passage give to someone who is suffering? Are you enduring a painful trial right now? How can the group pray for, and support you?