

# Small Group

February 14, 2018



## Revelation Chapter 2

### Revelation of Jesus Christ: Of Kings and Kingdoms

The first two churches addressed are the Church at Ephesus and the Church at Smyrna. Ephesus had both commendations and condemnation. Their condemnation was that they were in danger of "losing their first love." The Church in Smyrna, on the other hand, had only commendation and no condemnation. Along with the Church at Philadelphia they are the only one who do not receive a condemnation. The challenge for them is to stay strong in the midst of their trials. They are called to hold on because their faith will be tested. Both churches are facing the magnetic pull away from the center of Christ. The Ephesians are beginning to be pulled in another direction while those in Smyrna are allowing themselves to be pulled closer to Christ.

## Bible Study Questions



### . Read Revelation 2: 1 – 11 (see page 4)

1. What is the Church at Ephesus commended for? What are they doing well? How could these “good works” become a deception?

2. The Apostle Paul wrote the following to the Ephesians:

<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. <sup>13</sup> Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. (Ephesians 6: 10 – 13).

Where did the Ephesians go wrong? Why did they fail to do or fail to defend against resulting in them losing their first love?

3. What did Jesus mean when He said to them: “If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.” (verse 5)

4. How did Smyrna become a church that received no condemnation? What kinds of things do you think they were doing right?

5. Even a church that does things right will face trials. Godliness is not an exemption from difficulties. Discuss why, to quote Rabbi Harold Kushner, “bad things happen to good people.”



## Personal Application Questions

Please answer the questions below as they best apply to you personally. Speak in the “I”. There is no obligation to answer any question.

1. Which church situation do you relate to more in this season of your life, the Church at Ephesus or The Church in Smyrna? Discuss a particular verse that you relate to at this time.

2. Have you ever felt like you were compromising your first love to Jesus? What must you do, personally, to ensure that you do not compromise your faith and values?

3. We are all pulled in many directions. Where do you feel most stressed right now? Where is your faith being most severely tested?

4. We live in a world where the culture is becoming increasingly hostile to Christianity. Do you ever experience hostility towards your faith? How do you typically respond?

5. Give one example of where you have gained victory over an area of struggle.

5. **Assignment:** Read Revelation chapters 2 & 3. Complete this sentence:

a. “If Christ came to our church He would commend us for our \_\_\_\_\_ and tell us we need to improve in the area of \_\_\_\_\_.”

These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands. <sup>2</sup>I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. <sup>3</sup>You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.

<sup>4</sup>Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first.<sup>5</sup>Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.<sup>6</sup>But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

<sup>7</sup>Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

### **To the Church in Smyrna**

<sup>8</sup>“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 about 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 life as your victor’s crown.

<sup>11</sup>Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.



