

I. Introduction

A brief review of the previous sermon, “The Letter to the Church in Ephesus.”

The letters to the seven churches in Revelation chapters 2-3 serve as a manual given by God to the church that must pass through the midst of judgment before God executes His final judgment.

Whenever God brought disaster or judgment, He always provided a manual or guidance for His redeemed people.

The judgment of the flood in Noah’s time

The judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah

The plague on the firstborn in Egypt

II. Main Body

Jesus is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again (v. 8)

He is the One who takes responsibility for salvation from beginning to end.

Because Jesus died and rose again, we have no need to fear death.

Although the church in Smyrna is in tribulation and poverty, in reality they are rich (v. 9)

They were accused by those who claimed to be Jews, had their property confiscated, and lived in hardship and poverty, yet they held fast to their faith to the end.

The Lord said to them, “You are rich.”

Those who willingly become poor in order to keep the integrity of their faith are truly rich.

The Apostle Paul was one such person (Philippians 4:8; 2 Corinthians 6:10).

They are rich because they have received the kingdom of heaven as an inheritance and possess Christ Himself (2 Corinthians 8:9; James 2:5).

No matter how much money one has in the world, a person without faith is truly poor.

The church in Laodicea was materially wealthy but spiritually poor (Revelation 3:17).

The rich man in Luke chapter 12 had abundant crops, yet he was poor in God’s eyes.

Rather than living for this temporary world, let us devote ourselves to good works and store up treasures in heaven, where we will live forever (Matthew 6:19-20; 1 Timothy 6:17-19).

Tribulation endured for the sake of faith should be received with joy (v. 10)

To the church in Smyrna, already suffering from tribulation and poverty, the Lord foretells another trial.

This is because He loves them deeply and desires to give them an even greater blessing (Matthew 5:10-12).

The martyrdom of Polycarp, a disciple of John

To those who remain faithful unto death, the crown of life will be given (v. 10).

Those who keep the integrity of their faith to the end will not be harmed by the second death (v. 11)

The first death is physical death; the second death is being thrown into hell.

People fear the first death.

But by keeping the integrity of our faith, we will not be harmed by the second death.

III. Conclusion

**Bible
Memorization**

A VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

“Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?” (James 2:5, ESV)

**Bible
Reading**

1/26(Mon)	1/27(Tue)	1/28(Wed)	1/29(Thur)	1/30(Fri)	1/31(Sat)	2/1(Sun)
Genesis 43-45	Genesis 46-48	Genesis 49-50, Exodus 1	Exodus 2-4	Exodus 5-7	Exodus 8-10	Exodus 11-13

QT

Quiet Time Passage

1/26(Mon)	1/27(Tue)	1/28(Wed)	1/29(Thur)	1/30(Fri)	1/31(Sat)	2/1(Sun)
Matthew 6:25-34	Matthew 7:1-12	Matthew 7:13-29	Matthew 8:1-13	Matthew 8:14-22	Matthew 8:23-34	Matthew 9:1-13

**Sharing
Questions**

1. Through today's sermon, share one new insight you gained or a particular grace you received.
2. The church in Smyrna was praised without receiving any rebuke. For what reasons was the church in Smyrna praised?
3. The Bible sometimes calls those who are poor in the world “rich,” and those who are rich in the world “poor.” Why does Scripture speak this way? What is the biblical standard of wealth?
4. If you have ever suffered loss or tribulation in order to keep the integrity of your faith, share your experience.