

## Faithful unto Death

Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian Church

**Revelation 2: 8-11.** "And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty; (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."

Faithful unto death is the call that we have from the Lord. Not faithful for a short time, but forever. This is what God demands of those who follow him. The church at Smyrna was facing persecu-

tion like Christians in other places were enduring. While it would not be easy, the Lord promised that those who were faithful unto death would receive a crown of life. We here in America don't really know, at least not yet, what real persecution is.

In other countries our brothers and sisters in Christ are facing it right now. Some break under the stress and go back on their faith, and others endure a painful death believing in the promise of God. I'm sure that more and more we will see such things here in America. Find it hard to believe? Look at how America is turning farther and farther away from God. We allow those of man made religions to come here and practice their faith while in the countries that they came from Christians are being slaughtered.

Because we don't see it firsthand many can't believe that such things are going on. Believe the truth these things are happening as many Christians are facing death for their faith. We here are told that in the name of "Religious Freedom" we are not to mention Jesus because atheists, Jews, Moslems, and other groups are offended by him. Jesus said that if they hated him they would also

hate us for believing in him. **John 15:18.** "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. Christians are hated because they believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God."

Jesus taught us to pray for our enemies, while they are often taught to kill anyone who is not like them. It is hard to imagine how anybody can be so evil as to kill someone for what they believe. The devil has been quite effective in fooling people into thinking that they are serving God, while doing the devil's work. Yet, while this is going on in parts of the world, he has others deceived into teaching that sin is acceptable unto God. This too, destroys lives when people follow this false teaching.

The Lord warned his people that they would be persecuted for their faith. It has happened throughout history and is spreading today. Why? Because the devil knows that time is short and he wants to turn people from the truth, either by deception, or by force. Like the church at Smyrna, we have been told and it is up to us to decide where we stand. There are only two choices, we stand with the Lord, or we fall with the world.

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This is a dramatized version of facts taken from the Book of Judges, intending to show some of the customs of these ancient and traditional times.

**JEPHTHAH**

ON THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER, JEPHTHAH, CAST OUT OF THE HOUSE BY HIS HALF BROTHERS BECAUSE HIS OWN MOTHER WAS NOT AN ISRAELITE, GOES TO LIVE IN THE LAND OF TOB, BORDERING ON THE DESERT...

...AND MANY OF THE CAREFREE YOUNG MEN OF ISRAEL JOIN HIM TO LIVE A WILD LIFE...

COME, JEPHTHAH, LEAD US IN ANOTHER RAID UPON THE AMMONITES!

WITH HIS FOLLOWERS, JEPHTHAH SETS OUT ON A RAID UPON THE AMMONITES...

THERE, IN YONDER AMMONITE TOWN, WILL WE FIND MANY RICHES AND SPOILS!

BUT THE GATES OF THE TOWN ARE TOO STRONG AND THE WALLS ARE TOO HIGH!

BEFORE WE COULD SMASH IN THE GATES THEY WOULD KILL US ALL WITH THEIR ARROWS!

NEVER FEAR! WE SHALL WAIT UNTIL NIGHT FALLS - THEN SHALL YOU SEE HOW WE WILL ENTER THE TOWN.

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