

GOTCHA

Braveheart... a battle line is drawn that impacts a future

The Church in Smyrna

Walking with God

Living for God

Faithful...struggling

Their letter is your letter

"Write this letter to the angel of the church in Smyrna. This is the message from the one who is the First and the Last, who was dead but is now alive: I know about your suffering and your poverty—but you are rich! I know the blasphemy of those opposing you. They say they are Jews, but they are not, because their synagogue belongs to Satan. Don't be afraid of what you are about to suffer. The devil will throw some of you into prison to test you. You will suffer for ten days. But if you remain faithful even when facing death, I will give you the crown of life. Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches. Whoever is victorious will not be harmed by the second death." Revelation 2:8-11

He understands our suffering

Eternity is the prize

Suffering has no boundaries...not a certain age, not a certain type of people

When suffering brings doubt

Matthew 11:2-3

Jesus' love is bigger than our circumstances

Matthew 11:4-5

You may want to run...but blessed are those who stay

"And tell him, 'God blesses those who do not turn away because of me.'" Matthew 11:6

Doubting in pain doesn't disqualify us

"I tell you the truth, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John the Baptist."

Matthew 11:11

God's perspective is not our perspective

Letting go of today, while reaching out to tomorrow

Suffering is a product of a world gone bad

"Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time." Romans 8:18-22

Looking to the future brings us hope

"And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us. We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)" Romans 8:23-25

Feeling weak is normal

"And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness." Romans 8:26

God is doing good in the midst of pain

Romans 8:28-30

To the Church in Smyrna, to John in jail, to us...

...if God is with us, who can be against us?

"What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us?" Romans 8:31

A day is coming...no pain, no suffering...a beautiful, eternal future

Jeff Pries • January 23 & 24, 2010



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