

What Set This Revelation Church Apart from the Others?

In a recent episode of The John Bevere Podcast, John Bevere and his son Arden offered a powerful look at Jesus' letter to the church in Smyrna found in Revelation 2:8–11. This biblical message has critical relevance for believers today, especially those facing suffering or discouragement.

"This city was steeped in pagan worship," John said, describing Smyrna as "one of the most dark cities in Asia Minor." It was a place infamous for brutal idol worship, pornographic public theater, rampant prostitution, and the open massacre of Christians in the arena.

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Yet in the midst of this darkness, Jesus commended the believers for their faithfulness. "I know about your suffering and your poverty, but you are rich," He says in Revelation. Bevere reminded listeners, "This is one of the two churches that Jesus gives no rebuke. He only affirms them."

The suffering faced by Smyrna's believers was not just spiritual—it was economic and physical. Arden noted, "Because they wouldn't participate in the pagan trade guilds, they were excluded from income." John added, "They were ostracized. And Jesus says, 'The devil is about to throw some of you into prison... but be faithful, even unto death.'"

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For believers today, especially those in Western nations, the Beveres warned against becoming spiritually unarmed. "It is hard to serve Jesus when it's easy," John said, quoting a Navy SEAL who had previously addressed their team. "And it's easy

to serve Jesus when it's hard."

Arden asked how believers today should respond when they feel surrounded by darkness, anxiety or depression. John shared a personal testimony of spiritual resilience: "I just started saying, 'God, You're faithful.' And the more I said it, the more it fed me... I had to learn to feed on His faithfulness."

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One of the most inspiring portions of the episode focused on the martyrdom of Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna. At 86 years old, he refused to deny Christ. "'Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?'" Polycarp declared before he was executed by fire and sword.



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Jesus' promise to the believers in Smyrna still stands today: "Be faithful even when facing death, and I will give you the crown of life." John explained, "That crown was given to victorious athletes. It's a symbol of overcoming. And Jesus says, 'You will not be harmed by the second death.'"

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The Bevers closed the episode by urging all believers, whether facing persecution, social rejection, or private discouragement, to remain steadfast. "Remember," John said, "this life is a vapor. Stay faithful to Jesus. The reward is eternal."

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.