

**Jeremy White, Lead Pastor October 19 & 22, 2023
Valley Church Week 4 – The Letter to Smyrna**

**Introduction**

 **The Divine Outline of Revelation (from Revelation 1:19)**

* Write what you have seen (chapter 1)
* Write what is happening now (chapters 2-3)
* Write what will take place in the future
(chapters 4-22)

**Revelation 2:8-11**

“Smyrna” = root word “myrrh” (a spice used in burial of the dead)

God the Father is the “first and the last” (Isaiah 41:4, 44:6, 48:12)

Jesus the Son is the “first and the last” (Revelation 1:8, 2:8, 22:13)

“I know your afflictions and your poverty – yet you are rich!”
(Rev. 2:9)

See 2 Corinthians 8:9

Matthew 24:4-8

**Living in the Last Days:**

1. Do not be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do not be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**The Big Idea:**This fallen world has never been a friendly place for followers of Jesus. But we are growing in the faithfulness of God. Followers of Christ will be subject to the wrath of man, but never to the wrath of God! Don’t be deceived. Don’t be afraid!

**QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS AND PERSONAL REFLECTION:**

**Personal Life:**

1. Have you ever experienced anything you would define as “persecution” for your beliefs in Jesus Christ? If so, please share about those experiences with your group…

**Ponderings:**

1. Smyrna was a church living in material poverty, yet Jesus says they are “rich.” How important is it for us as believers to focus our attention on our spiritual, rather than material wealth in these “last days” and why?
2. In the weekend message, Pastor Jeremy tied in the words of Jesus from Matthew 24, who predicted the frequency and intensity of exposure to wars, famines, earthquakes, conflicts, etc.
* How is it possible to remain fearless in a world where we are exposed to so much information?
* When you become anxious or fearful about world events, how does your faith in Jesus Christ guide you through those times? Discuss…
1. In light of the recent terrorist attacks and war in Israel, has your curiosity about end times events been heightened, or has it basically remained the same? Discuss why you think this is the case…

**Promptings:**

1. As a core promise of Christ’s New Covenant, you have received a “new heart” that is faithful to and in alignment with the heart of God. Yet the flesh pulls you in various directions in your thoughts, words and deeds. How are you learning to “become faithful” (Rev. 2:10) in regard to walking in your new (and true) identity in Christ? Discuss…