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Central Congregational Church
"For the Glory of God and the Good of our Neighbors"
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Death Defying Faith Revelation 2:8-11

Central Passage

Revelation 2:8–11 (ESV) — **8** "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: 'The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life. **9** " 'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. **10** Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. **11** He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.'

Central Thought: The promise for those in Christ Jesus of resurrection and eternal life frees us from the fear of death, and frees us to live lives of patient endurance and sacrificial love.

To the Church in Smyrna

- ❖ Jesus' eternal nature and his historical, physical resurrection from the dead are the foundation of our faith and our hope. (v.8)

Colossians 1:15–20 (ESV) — **15** He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. **16** For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. **17** And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. **18** And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. **19** For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, **20** and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

1 Corinthians 15:16–19 (ESV) — **16** For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. **17** And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. **18** Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. **19** If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

- ❖ Jesus knows what you're going through, and what's really going on! (v.9)

Matthew 7:21 (ESV) — **21** "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. (See also Luke 21:1-4)

- ❖ Suffering is a normal, but our victory is assured! (v.10-11)

Philippians 1:29 (NLT) — **29** For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him. (See also James 1:2-4)

James 1:2–4 (ESV) — **2** Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, **3** for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. **4** And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Revelation 20:11–15 (ESV) — **11** Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. **12** And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. **13** And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. **14** Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. **15** And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.