

Revelation: The Promise of Glory
The Persecuted Church at Smyrna
Revelation 2:8-11

Religious persecution existed in the American colonies, and because of its history, the framers of the Constitution included protections against it at the founding of our nation. Today, we think in terms of systemic oppression as the result of race or class, but we seldom think about persecution in terms of our faith calling us to suffer.

1. Jesus _____ us truly
2. Jesus _____ us zealously
 - A. Satan uses suffering to _____ us
 - B. God uses suffering to _____ us
3. Jesus _____ us deeply

Of the seven churches, the only two that are unequivocally commended are the suffering churches in Smyrna and Philadelphia. Suffering has a way of reminding us which things in life really matter, forcing us to depend radically on God, and thus purifying our obedience to God's will. When we remain faithful in the face of rejection and persecution, Jesus promises us a reward far greater than the power and status offered by the world.