

Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> October 2014

Conquering Heroes

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Calvary  
Christian  
fellowship



Revelation

### RECAP:

1. Seven questions for a book of sevens
2. What is Jesus really like?
3. Lost love.

**BIBLE READING:** Revelation 2: 8 – 11

### INTRO:

The persistent challenge of raising a new generation of church leaders.  
What happened when the last apostle (John) died?

### 1. A 2<sup>ND</sup> CENTURY STORY OF MARTYRDOM

Polycarp

### 2. AN ANCIENT CITY OF SUFFERING

Smyrna

- A Beautiful city
- A Resurrected city
- A second fiddle city
- A surviving city
- A suffering city

Smyrna was home to:

- A church under attack
- A synagogue of Satan.

### 3. A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY TESTIMONY OF RECONCILIATION

Carmella

### 4. A FUTURE CROWN OF LIFE

For you and me?

The first death and the second death.

## SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

### In a family, small group or community

These notes are to help you as a family, community or small group unpack the Sunday teaching. It's a bit unrealistic for a small group to do everything - **so feel free to be selective!**

#### OPENER & PRAYER

**The Next Generation** When Jesus' generation died out, who would continue to lead the church in His teaching? Polycarp, discipled by the elderly John, was one of the new generation of Christian leaders who helped the church of the second century walk in truth.

Search online for information about Polycarp, his martyrdom and his letter to the Philippians.

Look at our church's arrow diagram (from our PPP meeting). Note the goals which aim to help disciple a new generation of believers. How can you and your group support our goal? How could you help disciple our young people? Give some time to praying for them tonight.

#### DISCUSSION TOPICS & PRAYER

**Suffering Believers** Suffering is not a popular theme but it is biblical! None of us are promised exemption. Jesus had no words of criticism for the Smyrna church and praised them, urging them to be faithful, even to the point of death. Consider the problems this church faced.

Discuss the statement: "It's too easy to be a Christian in Britain today."

**A Jewish Reconciliation** Think back to Carmella's account on Sunday of reconciliation with her parents in Israel earlier this month. What were the parts of her story which stood out for you? Give thanks to God for this reconciliation after 37 years. Continue to pray for Carmella's family.

**A Crown of Life** The "crown of life" is promised to persevering believers in v10 and also in James 1:12. Read out other relevant verses: 1 Cor 9:25; 2 Tim 2:5; 2 Tim 4:8; 1 Peter 5:4.

Crowns are normally reserved for kings and queens. According to the New Testament who gets to wear this crown and why?

Olympic crowns were made of olive leaves. What did you find out about the crown Jesus bestows on His people?

To the angel of the church in Smyrna write:

These are **the words of him who is the First and the Last**, who died and came to life again. I know **your afflictions and your poverty – yet you are rich!** I know the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

**Do not be afraid** of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and **you will suffer persecution** for ten days. **Be faithful**, even to the point of death, and **I will give you the crown of life**. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death.

*Revelation 2:8 - 11*