

Faithful In Trial

2025-06-29 • PASTOR HUDSON GARCIA



Revelation 2

FOR THE LEADER

These questions help you run the conversation. They are not your study. Get into the passage yourself first, because your group needs what God taught you, not just a list of questions. These also lean on Sunday's message, so a few will not land for anyone who missed it. Watch it before you lead.

WHAT THE MESSAGE WAS ABOUT

Smyrna was poor for one reason: they refused to worship the emperor, and that refusal locked them out of the marketplace. Jesus looks at their poverty and calls them rich. Pastor Hudson Garcia preached this letter with one central claim: faithfulness under pressure does not start with willpower. It starts with the fact that Jesus was faithful first, all the way to a Roman execution, before anyone was asked to be faithful back. The letter warns of testing for ten days, an echo of Daniel, who also chose faithfulness in an empire that demanded otherwise.

To get started

- When has someone been faithful to you before you had earned it?

Looking back at the message

The order matters here: Jesus first, then us. Keep that order.

- 1 Hudson said we stay faithful in trials by trusting the faithfulness of Jesus, not by gritting our teeth. What is the difference between those two in practice?
- 2 Hudson compared Rome's version of tolerance to ours: believe anything you like, as long as you also affirm what everyone else affirms. Where do you recognize that today?
- 3 Jesus tells a church locked out of the marketplace: I know your poverty, yet you are rich. What kind of riches is he counting? OPTIONAL

Looking at the passage

Read Revelation 2:8-11 aloud, and Daniel 1:8-15 for the ten days.

- 4 Read Revelation 2:8-9. How does Jesus describe himself before he says anything else, and what does he say he knows about them?
- 5 Verse 10 says: do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. Notice what Jesus promises and what he does not. What is the actual promise?
- 6 Read Daniel 1:8-15. What does Daniel propose to the official, and what was the official risking by agreeing?
- 7 Of the seven letters in Revelation, this one contains no rebuke at all. What does that absence tell you about Smyrna? OPTIONAL

Bringing it home

Cost here is usually social or financial rather than physical. Be honest about that.

- 8 Smyrna's faithfulness cost them financially. Where might yours cost you something real?
- 9 What is the next step of faithfulness sitting in front of you: at work, at home, or with your time?
- 10 Jesus was faithful first, before asking anything of you. How does that change the way you face something hard?
- 11 Is there a pressure you have quietly given in to? OPTIONAL

The group together

Daniel had three friends. Nobody in these stories stands alone.

- 12 Daniel had three friends who made the same choice he did. What difference does it make to not choose faithfulness alone?
- 13 How can this group make faithfulness less lonely for each other?
- 14 Who do you know who is under real pressure for their faith right now?

BEFORE YOU FINISH

What is one step of faithfulness this week that would cost you a little?

You might pray about

- For those paying a price for following Jesus
- For confidence rooted in his faithfulness rather than ours
- For those who feel poor and are called rich
- For courage in the pressure that is actually in front of us