

## **The Mysteries regarding the Church at Smyrna**

- I.** Smyrna means “crushed myrrh” (Rev. 2:8-11).
1. A rich port city 35 miles north of Ephesus.
  2. Myrrh was a valuable commodity (cf. Mt. 2:9-11).
    - 1) Used medically for wounds.
    - 2) Used in embalming.
    - 3) When myrrh is crushed the full fragrance is brought out.
  3. Christ begins by addressing the pastor and then includes others in the church; He switches from 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular to 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural (v. 10).
  4. There is no reprimand addressed to this church.
  5. The only negative statement is to those of “the synagogue of Satan” who are an outside group described in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person: “them” and “they”.
  6. Therefore, the description of the Image must be interpreted as supportive rather than correctional as is the case with most of the churches.
- II.** The Image assures those at Smyrna that Christ is aware and understands their physical sufferings.
1. “The first and the last” (v. 8).
    - 1) He is the First in the spiritual building of the Church: the foundation (1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20).
    - 2) He is the Last in the spiritual building of the Church: the Keystone (1 Pet. 2:6).
    - 3) Christ is *all things in all ways* to the Church (Eph. 1:22-23).
  2. “The One who became in the state of death and the One who became alive.”
    - 1) Christ had victory over death (Rev. 1:18).
    - 2) Christ holds the keys to the death process (cf. Heb. 2:14).
      - i. He is the first-fruit of our type of resurrection.
      - ii. Death now has no sting (1 Cor. 15:54-57).
    - 3) He has the keys to Hades.
      - i. The ‘door’ will remain shut to the church (Mt. 16:16).
      - ii. The church will go to another place (Jn. 14:2-3).
      - iii. Obviously, those in this church will face physical death for their faith and must remember Who is in control of their physical life.