

Bible Study #19

2/15/22

Revelation 2 (Cont) Smyrna

- *Polycarp* (an **Apostolic Father**) was a disciple of John and Bishop of the church at *Smyrna* *
- According to *Eusebius* (an early church historian), *Polycarp* was handed over to the Roman authorities by the local Jewish leadership and martyred for the faith
- The Jewish leadership of that time had determined that Christianity was not part of their Judaism and therefore, did not warrant the Jewish protection under Roman Law (thus, the name “Synagogue of Satan”)

Listing of selected Fathers of the Church and documents

1. *Didache* 80 – 100 A.D. (140)
2. Pope St. Clement - pope - 80 A.D.
3. *Letter of Barnabas* 70/79 or 117/132
4. St. Ignatius of Antioch - D 110 A.D.
5. St. Polycarp - 69/70 – 155-156 A.D.
6. St. Justine Martyr - 100/110 – 165 A.D.
7. St. Irenaeus - 140/160 – 202 A.D.
8. St. Papias 130 A.D.
9. *The Muratorian Fragment* – 155-200 A.D.
10. Tertullian - 155 – 240/250 A.D.
11. St. Hippolytus of Rome - 235 A.D.
12. Origen 185 – 253/254 A.D.
13. St. Cyprian of Carthage 258 A.D.
14. *The Council of Elvira* - 300 A.D.
15. *The Council of Nicaea* – 325 A.D.

Listing of selected Fathers of the Church and documents (Cont)

- 16. St. Athanasius 295-373 A.D.**
- 17. St. Cyril of Jerusalem 315 –386 A.D.**
- 18. St. Basil the Great - 330 – 379 A.D.**
- 19. St. Gregory Nazianzen 330 – 389 A.D.**
- 20. St. Gregory of Nyssa 335 – 394 A.D.**
- 21. St. John Chrysostom 334/354 – 407 A.D.**
- 22. St. Ambrose of Milan 333 or 339 – 397 A.D.**
- 23. St Jerome 347- 419/20 A.D.**
- 24. St. Augustine 354 – 430 A.D.**
- 25. Pope St. Damasus I 366-384 A.D.**
- 26. St. Cyril of Alexandria 376 - 444 AD and *the Council of Ephesus 431 A.D.***
- 27. Pope St. Leo (the Great) 440-461 A.D. and *the Council of Chalcedon 431 A.D.***
- 28. Pope St. Gregory the Great 590 – 604 A.D.**
- 29. St. John Damascene 645-749 A.D.**

Revelation 2 (Cont)

- The ten day tribulation can mean that this will not last a long time or (according to Father Sebastian), it was a reference back to **Daniel 1:8-16** *)
 - *Daniel* and his companions requested they be allowed to be tested for ten days by eating only vegetables from the king's table
 - This was to avoid eating forbidden food or meat offered to idols
 - Again, Father pointed out that we must be familiar with the **Book of Daniel** or we might miss out on understanding some 20% of the New Testament
 - Jesus made many references to Daniel especially every time he called himself the son of man (**Daniel 7:13**)

Revelation 2 (Cont)

- As discussed earlier, *Daniel* prophesied that the Messiah would return in 490 years which fell within the time of Jesus
- At this point, the *Emperor Domitian* had mandated that everyone worship Caesar and the Roman pantheon
- The polytheist had no problem with this, but the Christians were allowed to only worship the one true God
- A citizen would be left alone if he complied (to include eating the food offered to the pagan gods) while the Christians who did not were martyred
- John was saying that the Christians of *Smyrna* were going to be tested and put on trial to determine whether or not they would eat the food offered to the Roman gods

Revelation 2 (Cont)

- This context helps us understand the phrase, *“Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life... He who conquers shall not be hurt by the second death”*
- The first death was the bodily death; the second death was the spiritual death
- This second death is like the fire at the end of the **Book of Revelation 20:4-10***
- This is where we find everyone being raised from the dead, and those not found to have been written in the Book of Life as judged by their deeds, will be thrown into the lake of fire with Satan and his minions for eternity

Revelation 2 (Cont)

- That will be the second death
- John was saying that even if they died, they will not be hurt by the second death, but will be given the crown of life, and the tree of life
- Father pointed out that each letter ended with a similar saying