

Revelation 2:8-11
Smyrna

‘Eighty and six years I have served him, and he has done me no wrong. How then can I blaspheme my King and Saviour? You threaten me with a fire that burns for a season, and after a little while is quenched; but you are ignorant of the fire of everlasting punishment that is prepared for the wicked’.

Polycarp

In this brief letter, the Apostle John gives two unlikely commands in (10).

The first is ‘do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer’.

The second is ‘be faithful even to the point of death’.

Those are two commands that are difficult to keep. So, what is it that makes that possible?

The Apostle John provides three reasons to persevere under persecution.

1. The attention of Christ

2. The sovereignty of God

3. The promise of life

Conclusion

How should we equip our church plants for the possibility of martyrdom, for persecution and perhaps even for prosecution?

Help them grasp the three things Jesus

1. The attention of Christ: he's clocked what we're going through
2. The sovereignty of God: nothing happens outside of his ultimate control
3. The promise of life: death cannot harm us and we win in the end