

**March 2, 2022**

The Lord wants you to experience real and abundant life:

***Rev. 2:10 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 life as your victor's crown. (NIV)***

Of course, this is a part of the letter that John writes down from the mouth of the LORD to the church of Smyrna. There are some very interesting similarities to the churches of today. In v. 13, Jesus says, ***I know where you live--where Satan has his throne. (NIV)*** It seems in many ways, that the evil one does indeed seem to have a great pull over the societies of today. What was not thought of in the past, because of its depravity, is now shown on television and plastered on social media. Many Christians in this world are suffering because of their willingness to stand for their faith in Christ. Many are being thrown into prison and their possessions confiscated and their families dispersed or incarcerated.

There will come a time when Christians will be attacked, and many will have to die for their faith. As horrible as that sounds and as egregious as this will be, we can know that we will be in the hands of the Almighty. He will watch over us. He will give us strength to face whatever may come. Now here is the blessing that is proclaimed, the LORD Himself will give us life as our victor's crown. The victor's crown was only given to the winner of the race. This was given to the one who gave everything to win. He trained to the maximum. He was willing to do whatever needed to accomplish the goal. And the prize received is life. Not just existence. Not just time here on this planet. It is life; real life; eternal life; abundant life.

**Dear LORD, thank You for life. This life is only something that You can give. Not only have You created us, but You are also making us more and more into the image of Your Son. Help us to walk in this abundant and transformed life. In Jesus Name, Amen**