



EARS2HEAR



SMYRNA



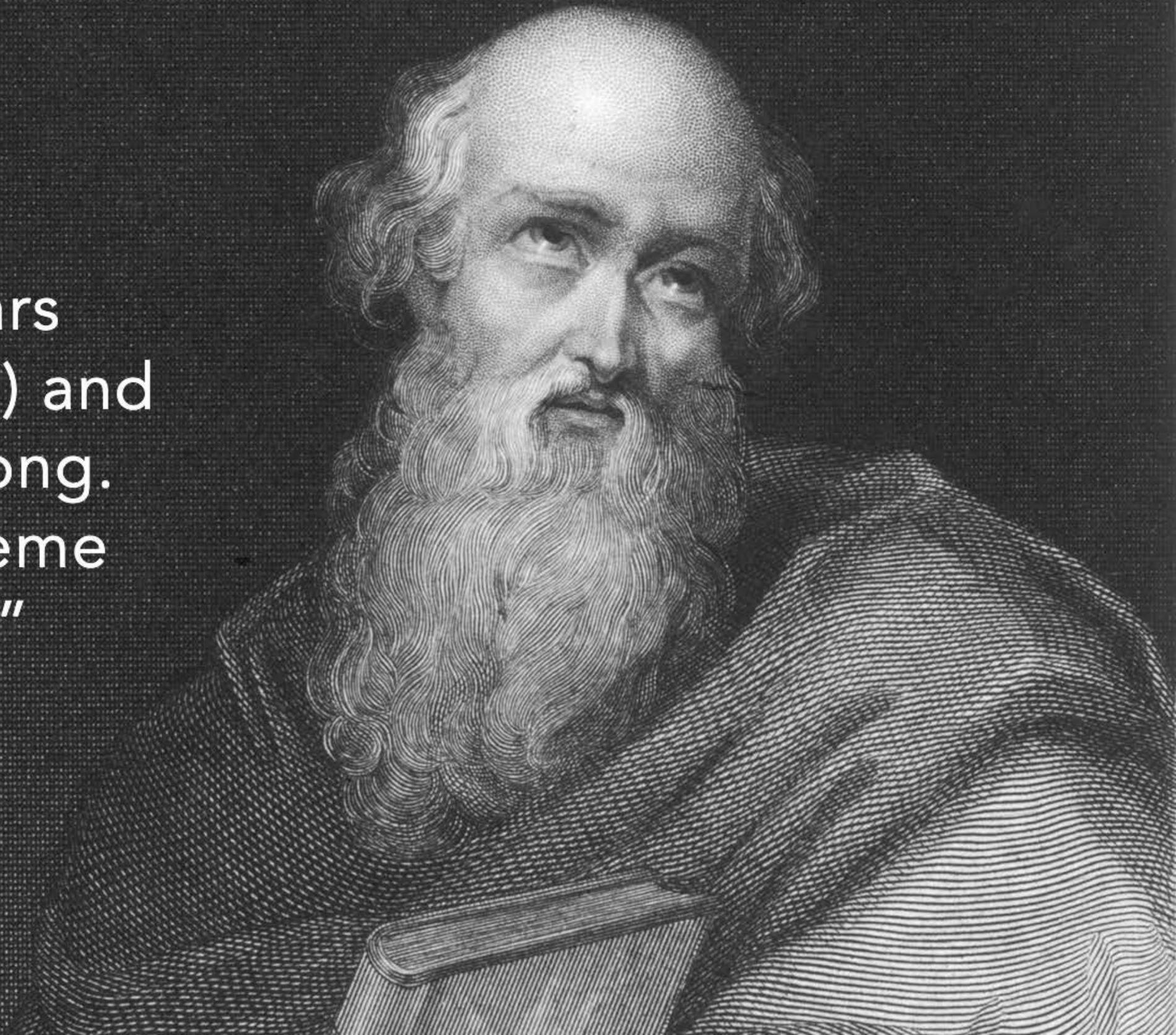
Revelation 2:8-11

To the angel of the church in Smyrna write:

These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again. I know your afflictions and your poverty—yet you are rich! I know about the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 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.

Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.

"For eighty and 6 years
have I served Him (Jesus) and
He has done me no wrong.
How then can I blaspheme
my Lord and Savior?"



Even though the persecution of Christians was common, the average Roman citizen held them in high esteem because of how life giving they were as neighbors. If you were poor, sick, disabled, a widow, an abused woman, at risk child you knew it was the Christians who would take care of you.

Scott Sauls, [A Gentle Answer](#), p 29

1. Suffering is never wasted.

Romans 5:3-4

Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.

Revelation 2:10

“I tell you, the devil will put some of you into prison to TEST you....”

A TEST
reveals the truth

2 Corinthians 12:7-9

Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

Revelation 2:9a

I know your afflictions and your poverty—yet you are rich!

1. Suffering is never wasted.

2. Jesus connects this world to the next.

Revelation 2:8b

...the First and the Last, who died and came to life again.

Revelation 2:10b

Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life...

John 11:38

Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. "Take away the stone," he said.

Revelation 21:1-5

Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

1. Suffering is never wasted.

2. Jesus connects this world to the next.

3. Jesus knows the cost.

Revelation 2:9

I know your afflictions and your poverty.... I know about the slander...

Hebrews 12:2b

For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

