

Revelation 2:10 – Toughened by Testing

➤ TESTING TOUGHENS

➤ PROSPERITY SOFTENS

Ten Roman emperors, from Domitian in 96AD until the Edict of Milan in 313AD, persecuted Christians greatly, laying the foundation for mass evangelization, both in Rome and in many other places.

1. Thousands of believers renounced Christ in order to avoid torture or death, or even confiscation of property. These thousands contributed to the downtrends of the Roman Empire. Many chose to even die not to renounce.
2. This suffering toughened the believers who chose to remain true to the Lord Jesus Christ, and laid the foundation for evangelization of the world.
3. The Romans, though a great empire, could not conquer the world during this period of persecutions.
4. During this time some brave groups of people, living through these persecutions, became the pivot of believers for the Roman Empire; they sent out missionaries to China, India, Armenia, Africa and many other places.
5. It is not the standards of Rome, but the pivot of believers from the strong churches of Asia Minor, who risked their lives, even some unto death, who sent out Christian missionaries throughout the world to bring the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
6. The Church is never ready to accomplish God's purposes until *testing*, in both prosperity and adversity, *toughens* the Church.

Revelation 2:10 – Toughened by Testing (continued)

7. To pass both tests of suffering and prosperity, we have the first three centuries of Christianity from 96 to 313 AD, where much took place. Many of these people passed these tests, enduring intense persecution, because they *refused* to renounce the Lord Jesus Christ.
8. The 10 great persecutions resulted in many thousands of converts, both inside and outside of the Roman Empire, including China, India, Armenia, and even Persia, where Roman legions were deceived and destroyed.
9. Eventually, even Egypt and North Africa became the center of Christianity including Alexandria in Egypt and the revived Carthage, an ancient city-state in North Africa, near Tunis.
10. There were believers of every race under the sun during these three hundred years of great persecution.