

The Message to Pergamum

Revelation 2:12-17

August 7, 2022

I. Introduction

A. Ephesus (2:1-7)

1. Have you left your first love?
2. If so, why? Matthew 22:37; 24:12
3. Will you repent and return, or face being removed?

B. Smyrna (2:8-11)

1. Will you remain faithful even through tough times?
2. If so, eat freely of the tree of life!

C. What does Jesus see and feel as He stands in our midst today?

II. The Message to Pergamum (or Pergamos – KJV)

A. The city – v. 12a

1. Located in Northeast Asia Minor 15 miles from the coast, 85 miles north of Ephesus, 45-60 miles north of Smyrna
2. Built on a 1,000 ft. cliff overlooking the Caicus Valley
3. It was the center of the imperial cult of Asia
4. Capital of the Roman province of Asia
5. Pergamum had a library (200,000 volumes) that rivaled Alexandria's
6. Became part of the Roman Empire in 133 BC
7. A nominal Christian testimony has continued in the area to modern times.
8. It was a city allowed to perform executions.

B. The Christ – v. 12b

1. *"The one who has the sharp two-edged sword."*
 - a. See also 1:16
2. This term is used seven times in the New Testament, six of those in Revelation.
3. It seems to depict Christ as the Protector and Judge.
 - a. See Isaiah 11:4; II Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 19:15, 21

C. The Commendation – v. 13

1. *"I know"* (see Exodus 2:23-25); God knows how hard it is to live for Him
2. *"...you dwell where Satan's throne is..."* This may refer to:

a. Emperor worship

b. Any number of Greek gods particularly Esculpius (a pagan god whose idol was in the form of a serpent).

c. Zeus (this altar is now on display in E. Berlin)

d. He has a stronghold there

3. Many in this small church held fast the name of the Lord and did not deny the faith.

a. Satan has always tried to undermine loyalty to Christ by persecution.

4. One of the faithful was Antipas, an otherwise unknown martyr of the faith.

D. The Condemnation – vs. 14, 15

1. *"But I have a few things against you."*

a. A few can always do a lot in God's hand for good (John 6:)

b. And a few can cause great trouble (Joshua 7).

2. They held the teaching of Balaam.

a. See Numbers 22-25; 31:15, 16. Compromise led to idol worship and immorality.

3. They held the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

a. This error was the licensing of immorality and/or the exaltation of the clergy.

4. *"...undoubtedly intermarriage with the heathen and spiritual compromise were real issues in Pergamos, where civic life and religious life were so entwined."* – J.F. Walvoord

E. The Correction – v. 16

1. Repent! Of two things:

a. Participating in the sins of Balaam and the Nicolaitan

b. Tolerating the sins of Balaam and the Nicolaitan.

2. Judgment by and according to the Word of God

F. The Challenge and Promise v. 17

1. Hear and Heed!

2. He who overcomes will receive:

- a. Hidden manna: "Hidden manna is the sufficiency of Christ..." CC Ryrie
- b. White stone: "The white stone, then, stands as a beautiful symbol of the eternal acquittal we gain through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." – Tim LaHaye.
- c. New name: a special name like "My faithful one." – v. 2:13

