

Lesson 6

The Letter to the Church of Pergamum and Thyatira: Do Not Compromise or Tolerate Immorality

Revelation 2:12-29

Invite the Holy Spirit to teach and speak to you through the Word of God as you meditate on Revelation 2:12-29 every day this week.

As you read through the verses presented this week, look for a special verse to make your memory verse for the week. We will share our verses at the end of our discussion time.

“And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations.”

1. What was a new or interesting thought from last week’s lesson?

Revelation 2:26

Pergamum (also called Peramus and Pergamon) was a wealthy city that hosted an expansive library and numerous temples to pagan gods and goddesses where idol worship incorporated temple prostitution. Pergamum was considered the “religious” capitol of the region.

Historically, the church of Pergamum represents the worldwide church from about 313-606 AD when the church and state functioned closely together and paganism crept into the church.

Revelation 2:13 says that Pergamum is “where Satan’s throne is and where he dwells.” This may refer to the many pagan temples in the area, including temples to Zeus, Athena, Dionysus, and Asclepius, along with a temple to the Roman Emperor and the headquarters of the Babylonian cult of the Magians. The spiritual atmosphere in the city may have been oppressive. (Mike Bickle notes on The Seven Churches of Revelation, page 16)

Thyatira was an ancient wealthy city in Asia Minor known for its indigo dye. There were more trade guilds in Thyatira than perhaps anywhere else.

Historically, the church at Thyatira represents the worldwide church during the Middle Ages, from about 600 to 1517 AD. This could also be called the Dark Age of the Church because it was steeped in paganism and compromise.

2. What does Jesus remind the churches of Pergamum and Thyatira about Himself in Revelation 2:12 and 2:18? Why would this be pertinent to them?

3. What is sharper than a two edged sword according to Hebrews 4:12? Is this sword effective and powerful?
4. Does the Word of God accomplish His purposes? See Isaiah 55:10-11. Can you relate this to Jesus in Revelation 2:12?
5. For what does the Lord commend the church at Pergamum in Revelation 2:13 and Thyatira in Revelation 2:19? Discuss their actions.
6. If you are in a difficult situation, do you think the Lord recognizes what you are up against? How does His statement to the church at Pergamum in verse 13 encourage you?

Antipas, referred to in verse 13, was a martyr from the church of Pergamum. Church history tells us that he was the bishop of Pergamum who was boiled to death in a copper vessel.

7. Would Jesus say your good works are more than they used to be? See Colossians 3:12-17 and Ephesians 2:10 and discuss.
8. What does Jesus hold against the church of Pergamum according to Revelation 2:14-15?

The doctrine of Balaam is found in Numbers 31:16 and Numbers 25. It involves deception of sin, idolatry and immorality. As a result God judged the Israelites. This doctrine and the doctrine of the Nicolaitians that we looked into in Lesson 4 are related because they both wrongly teach that because of His grace, God will not judge immorality and sin.

9. The church at Ephesus had purged itself of these deeds, but how does Jesus describe the church at Pergamum in Revelation 2:14-15?

10. How does Jesus feel about these doctrines? Do you think He has changed His mind since Revelation 2:6?

11. What does Jesus hold against the church at Thyatira in Revelation 2:20-21?

12. What will Jesus do to this woman Jezebel?

Elijah was an Old Testament prophet who lived during the reign of King Ahab and was known for his mighty miracles. Later it was prophesied that Elijah would come to prepare the way for the Messiah. Jesus then said in

Matthew 17:11-13 that Elijah had come, but had not been recognized. His disciples understood that He was speaking about John the Baptist. Jesus also said in Matthew 11:14 about John the Baptist, “If you care to accept it, he himself is Elijah, who was to come.”

John the Baptist was not actually Elijah, but he came in the same spirit as Elijah or with the same “heart” or attitude.

When Jesus refers to Jezebel in Revelation 2 He may be speaking in a similar fashion, meaning that this woman in Thyatira was “cut out of the same cloth” or had the same heart attitude as the original Jezebel of the Old Testament.

13. Jot down character qualities about the Jezebel of the Old Testament and discuss what she was like. Read I Kings 16:31-33, 18:4, 21:25-26 and II Kings 9:30-37.

14. Why do you think Jesus was opposed to Jezebel?

The “deep things of Satan,” Revelation 2:24, may refer to the false teaching of Jezebel that emphasized God’s grace to the extent that immorality and idolatry are overlooked. This teaching emphasizes tolerance over obedience. This is the deception of Satan.

15. Is the Lord still serious about His church compromising where immorality and idolatry are concerned? What do you think His advice would be to contemporary churches that compromise with immorality?

16. How does Revelation 2:21 instruct you about the graciousness of the Lord Jesus?

17. What is the instruction of Paul in I Corinthians 5:1-5 about matters of sexual immorality and what is the goal?

18. If we will judge ourselves, we will not be judged. Discuss the teaching in I Corinthians 11:30-32.

19. Look up the word *repentance* in the dictionary. How important is repentance when talking about our sin?

20. How fair of a judge will Jesus be? See Hebrews 4:13.

21. What else does the Lord see and do when He is searching the world? See II Chronicles 16:9.

22. Apparently there was a group of believers in this church who did not go along with the teaching of Jezebel in Revelation 2:24-25. From this example, do you think the Lord judges whole churches/denominations or individuals? Discuss.

23. What are the promises for those who overcome in Revelation 2:17 and Revelation 2:26-29?

God gave manna, a flake-like wafer, to the Israelites during their forty years in the wilderness, Exodus 15. This food sustained the Israelites and proved God's faithfulness to them.

24. How do John 6:32-35 and 48-51 amplify the teaching on manna? Discuss what these verses mean to you.

25. Can you think of a time when a word from the Lord has sustained you?

“I will give him a white stone,” Revelation 2:17. No one knows for sure what this refers to. Possibly it means that they will be exonerated. Or this may refer to the custom of giving stones to honor or reward those who rendered some noble service to the Roman Empire. The “new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it” may be a new name for the Lord, a new revelation of the Lord Jesus to the individual. Or it may refer to a new name for the individual.

26. Who is the Morning Star according to Revelation 22:16 and Numbers 24:17-19 and II Peter 1:19?

27. Turn to the chart Section IV. Complete the portion that relates to the Churches of Pergamum and Thyatira.

28. Share the memory verse that you found through this week’s study and why you chose it.

29. From your meditation this week on Revelation 2:12-29, what do you want to remember?

Lecture Notes: