

The Lion and The Lamb

Revelation 2:12-17

- John has spoken directly to two of the seven churches thus far, the church of **Ephesus** and the church of **Smyrna**. At Ephesus they were commended for their doctrine but rebuked for their lack of love toward The Lord. Smyrna was identified as the suffering church, receiving no corrections from The Lord, only encouragement in The Lord, to carry on in the face of the coming persecution headed their way.

V12-17

- **V12-13** last week we saw Satan attacking the church of Smyrna, here we see him inject himself into the teaching in the church of Pergamos. This city was the most northern of the seven cities and once was the capital of the Roman government in Asia, therefore Pergamos absolutely loved Caesar, having built for him the first temple in Asia dedicated to worshipping him.
- Like their brothers and sisters in Smyrna the believers here had also suffered persecution having one of their own a man named Antipas dying for the faith. Its interesting that in addressing this church Jesus is described as He Who has the sharp two edged sword, this is important because the sword is what Rome used to intimidate anyone who would dare not bow down to its rules and customs.
- This is a reminder to all of Jesus worshippers that it is more important for us to fear His sword, (which is His Word) than any sword that man can carry or use against us. The Lord again let's the church know that He is paying attention to us, as he knows **our works**, and where **they dwell**, I know what you're doing and where your heart is. God is watching us, whether we realize it or not > **Prov 15:3, Ps 33:18, Heb 4:13.**
- Seeing all things, He knows exactly where Satan is and what he's up to, and notice where the believers are so is Satan. The enemy of our souls not only wants to influence us to disobey God and His Word, but also think that what I'm doing and saying is not all that bad. Jesus praises only them who didn't deny **His word**, I must be sure that the faith that I'm holding onto is Jesus, and not mine or someone else's.

- **V14-15** in commending them for standing up in the midst of the attacks from without, now Jesus is going to share how they are failing when it comes from the attacks from within. Jesus says this is what He has against them. 1st you have those who hold onto the doctrine of Balaam. What is the doctrine of Balaam?
- Balaam was a prophet of God who sold his gift to the highest bidder for material wealth and position. In the book of Numbers chapters 22-25 multiple times The Lord warned him not to assist the Canaanites and specifically the Moabites in resisting the nation of Israel as they moved into the promised land.
- But he couldn't refuse the amount of wealth Balaak offered him, so instead of cursing them himself, he taught Balaak and the Moabites how to get Israel to curse themselves by participating in idolatrous, false worship that involved sexual sin. 2nd they also had those who taught the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which Jesus had already told the church of Ephesus that He hated this teaching.
- So you had a group that was teaching the people that what God said was sin really wasn't sinful, and to listen not to biblical teaching but to those who want to lord over your life in every detail. We see that today don't we, there are groups who only follow scripture if it lines up with their lifestyle, and don't really care for anything that opposes what they want to do and how they want to live even if it's in the Bible.
- That is the doctrine of Balaam, the goal is to sear or completely remove your spiritual conscience > **1Tim 4:1-2**. Then you have those who want to follow a charismatic personality, a domineering voice, who takes the place of God and His Word, being taught that their blessings flow through pleasing them, that's the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, these two teachings still exist today, only the name and faces change, but comes from the same source (Satan) so the results are the same.
- 3rd finally the rebuke was not only against those who hold the teachings of Balaam and the Nicolaitans, but also those who allowed them to continue. It's like in 1Cor 5 where Paul rebuked not just the person who was committing the sexual sin, but those who were tolerant and accepting of it, it's the same here in Pergamos. God has never called us to be enablers to people who sin, but correctors and exposers of sin in order for those who are caught up in it, to break free from it and be healed of it.

- **V16-17** the solution for all this is to repent, its as simple as that, turn and go in the other direction. If not Jesus says you will face Him Who has the Sword coming out of His mouth > **1Pet 4:17**- judgment must first start at the house of God.
- So he who has an ear let them hear, those who listen and obey these commands a three fold reward is mentioned > **1st** hidden manna- was the heavenly food given to the children of Israel, meaning we will receive heavenly provision insight for living.
- **2nd** A white stone- that was given to a person who received a special invite to a banquet, and to write a persons name on it for an acquittal to a charge laid against them. We received both the invite to The feast of the Lamb, and having been set free from sin and death. **3rd** A new name- we are already called brethren, children of God, saints, and disciples, overcomers, scripture says another name is coming wow!