

2021 Community Groups

WEEKLY GUIDE

October 17

Pastor Aaron continues this week in the Book of Revelation and the 7 churches. But in order to fully understand the book of Revelation, there has to be some understanding of the other 65 books of the Bible, themes, events, characters... much of Revelation has already been mentioned, hinted, or referenced before we even get to this book. Here is another example...think of the use of the "Sword" as a weapon. This week's teaching covers the 3rd church, whose' symbol was the sword, one of the few cities that Rome had given the 'right of the sword' and the power to rule over every area of life, to inflict capital punishment specifically on those who were enemies of the Roman empire.

Community Prayer:

Everlasting Father, open our hearts and minds to your transformative Word today as we study the Church of Pergamum. Help us to see where we may have compromised your grace in certain areas of our lives; and as you reveal this to us individually and collectively let us be quick to confess and repent of our sins knowing that you will forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness; in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Opening Questions

1. What type of idols have you had in your life since becoming a follower of Jesus? (Think of those "strongholds" in your life that prevent you from fully grasping what God has for you).
 - a. How has the Holy Spirit helped you to recognize it and get rid of it?

EXPLORATION

Read the passages below...what can you learn about what it means to follow Jesus from these passages? (Have someone read from their bible)

Just a few reminder facts on Pergamum

- Capital of Asia
- Considered to be Asia's greatest city
- Located on an elevated plain some 1000 feet above sea level
- Had a huge library (20,000 parchments); legend had it they invented a type of parchment after supply was cut off from Egypt.

Revelation 2:12

1. What does this identification of Christ suggest to you?



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Revelation 1: 16

2. What is the significance of this sword coming out of Christ's mouth?
3. In what ways are we seeing this played out in our society today?

****Note there are 66 different passages throughout Scripture that talk about the power of a double-edged sword...IT HAS SIGNIFICANCE**

"Here a pitched battle was being fought, in which the soldiers were not men but ideas." **John R.W. Stott**

This Pitched battle was taking place on two 2 fronts:

- From the outside there was pressure and persecution. (**Overt attacks**)
- From the inside there was conflicting teachings, compromised lifestyle following Christ. (**Covert attacks**)

Revelation 2:13

4. What types of things go on in your life that allows Satan to demand your allegiance? (Overtly or Covertly?)
 - a. How do you remain true to God's Name?
5. What are some ways we as a nation have compromised our motto: "In God we Trust"?
 - a. What can you do to make a difference?

Revelation 2:14-15

6. What is the best way to detect false teaching as a follower of Jesus?
7. Why is false teaching so destructive to any church?
8. What is the best way to confront false teaching from a Biblical perspective? (**Titus 1:10-16**)

3 Battlefields we Fight

- **IDEAS:** philosophies, worldviews, mindsets, what is true? What captures our minds?
 - We have access to more information, but know less; but have stronger opinions than ever before.
- **IDEALS:**
 - Values, desires



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- Want to live so bad in community that you will do just about anything.
- Preferences, desire for pleasure, just want to be happy, just want safety, health.
- What we value. What desires we cultivate. The device in our hand, the images we long to be true of us.
- **IDOLS:**
 - The warnings to be aware of idolatry are found throughout the Bible from beginning to end. In cities like Pergamum they seem to be obvious. In our world there is an ongoing battle for idolatry.
 - **What is an idol?** - "It is anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give.." --- **Tim Keller**

Revelation 2:16

9. What does the word "Repent" mean to you?
10. God always seeks repentance before carrying out His judgment; what does this say about Him?

Hebrews 4:12

11. According to this verse, why is it impossible for us to hide anything from God?

Revelation 2:17

12. In what ways does God show how gracious He is with those of us who are part of His family?

THE TAKEAWAY

- **Can't have the words of Jesus guiding us, and it not impact our lives, decisions, lifestyles.**
- **Be wary of anything that competes with Jesus as the priority of our lives.**

Jesus is the purpose of Revelation!

The moment we lose that overarching purpose the heart that Revelation is about is a moment we can get off base, off centered, wrong ideas,



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wrong ideals, bordering on idolatry; it's that important to get back to Jesus.

Look to Jesus and His Word, fall back in love with Him, Pray to Him, look to Jesus in community, find others who help strengthen your faith, look to Jesus in serving and putting others ahead of ourselves.

LOOK TO JESUS IN EVERYTHING!

Parents' Corner

It can be discouraging to raise kids in a world that is so contrary to biblical values. In fact, many young adults are considering not having children because they are so concerned about the world their kids would grow up in. Pergamum would have been an incredibly challenging place to raise a child, however, the believers were able to remain true to their faith in Jesus (Rev. 2:13).

13. How do we instill a strong faith in our children? Read Deut. 6:4-9.
14. A few descriptions are used to express the importance of instilling a love for God's Word in our children. What are they, and how does each emphasize this?
15. What are some practical ways that have been helpful for you to do this? How would you like to improve this in your household?

Pastor Aaron also addressed the fact that the church in Pergamum was facing pressures from without and from within. We can relate to this for both us and our kids.

What are some ways that you, as a parent, strengthen your faith?

16. How can you help your kids develop a strong faith as they grow up?

Even when we try to have a strong faith, there are times we falter. Revelation 2:16 commands believers to "repent" (a change of mind that results in a change of direction). How can we make sure our kids know they can come to the Lord, and to us, to find grace when they turn back from wrongs?



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PRAYER REQUESTS

