

Stopping the Trends

Sermon on Revelation 2:12–29

Introduction

Trends are everywhere — in fashion, technology, social media, and even in morality. Trends often move quickly, but they don't always move in the right direction. Spiritually, churches and believers can get caught in dangerous trends — patterns of thinking and living that pull us away from God's Word.

In Revelation 2:12–29, Jesus addresses two churches — Pergamum and Thyatira — that were in danger because they were following destructive trends. Both faced pressure to compromise the truth, and both had to make a choice: go with the flow or stand firm in the faith.

Background

Pergamum (2:12–17):

- Known as the “throne of Satan” — a city full of pagan worship and emperor worship.
- The church remained faithful even under persecution, but some were following false teaching (the teaching of Balaam and the Nicolaitans).

Thyatira (2:18–29):

- A smaller, trade-centered city.
- The church was strong in love, faith, service, and perseverance, but they tolerated a false prophetess (symbolically called “Jezebel”) who led people into sexual immorality and idolatry.

Main Idea

To stop the trends that pull us away from Christ, we must cling to truth, resist compromise, and live in obedience.

1. Recognize the Source of the Trend (2:13–14, 20)

- Not every trend is harmless. Some have a spiritual source that is meant to draw us away from God.
- In Pergamum, the false teaching of Balaam encouraged compromise for the sake of fitting in.
- In Thyatira, “Jezebel” encouraged believers to mix pagan practices with Christian faith.

Application: Before we follow a movement, teaching, or cultural pattern, we must ask:

- Where does this come from?
- Does it align with the truth of God's Word?

Cross-reference: 1 John 4:1 — “Test the spirits to see whether they are from God.”

2. Resist the Pull of Compromise (2:14–15, 20–21)

- Compromise starts small: “Just a little adjustment to fit in... just a small tolerance of sin...”
- Jesus warns that a little tolerance of false teaching leads to spiritual corruption.
- Some in these churches were doing well but were letting sin slip in the side door.

Illustration: Like a small leak in a boat — you can ignore it for a while, but eventually it will sink you if you don’t deal with it.

Application: We resist compromise by:

- Staying rooted in Scripture (Psalm 119:11)
- Being accountable to other believers
- Confronting sin quickly and humbly

3. Hold Fast to the Truth Until the End (2:25–26)

- Jesus says, “Only hold fast what you have until I come.”
- We stop destructive trends by being consistent, not just momentary.
- The promise to the overcomer is authority with Christ and the “morning star” — eternal life and fellowship with Him.

Cross-reference: Galatians 6:9 — “Let us not become weary in doing good...”

Rewards for Stopping the Trend

- Hidden manna (spiritual nourishment in Christ) – v. 17
- A white stone with a new name (identity and acceptance from God) – v. 17
- Authority to reign with Christ – v. 26–27
- The morning star — Jesus Himself – v. 28

Conclusion

Trends will come and go, but the truth of God’s Word is eternal. We stop the wrong trends when we:

- Recognize where they come from
- Resist the pressure to compromise
- Remain faithful to the end

Closing Illustration

A river always flows in one direction. If you drop a stick into it, it will drift with the current. But a living fish can swim against the current. The world’s trends will always move away from God, but a living, Spirit-filled believer will swim against the current — toward Christ.

Invitation

Where have you been drifting with the trends instead of standing with the truth? Today, Jesus calls us to repent, hold fast, and overcome. The reward is worth it.