

HANDOUT PART 4 Rev. 2: 12-17: “The Letter to the Church of Pergamos or Pergamum”

The Church of Pergamum was the Roman Capital of Asia. It was one of the most prominent and wealthy cities in Asia...Located 50 miles North of Smyrna and about 20 miles from the Mediterranean Sea.

- Many Temples Devoted to “Idol Worship”, we’re Filled with Statues, Alters & Sacred Groves.
- Pergamum had a major university and a large library of 200,000 volumes. It’s believed Parchment originated here. Only a nominal Christian testimony continues today in the small village of Bergama just below the old city. Their Compromise...Removed Gods Hand of Protection, Presence and Power!
- This causes us to consider the church in America. The change in our Culture’s Morals & what is deemed acceptable has Infiltrated How the Church Stands on God’s Word.

The Question I want Each of Us to Consider Today is...Do Our Priorities, Practices and Principles follow Culture Or...Are You Standing Firm on God’s Word? READ Rev 2:12-17

Vs 13: Jesus commends the Church for Holding Fast to the Faith! They were dwelling where Satan has a Stronghold...Yet, They did Not Renounce their Faith in Christ.

- However, the Evil and Adversity they Faced Outside of the Church...Had Permeated those Inside the Church...*Leading it to “Compromise” and Eventually to “Apostasy”.*

Vs 14-15: Christ Rebukes the Church for Compromise! The Church of Pergamum allowed the Doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitans that did Not Coincide with God’s Word. **READ Numbers 31**

- The Nicolaitans "Doctrine" was that it was Alright to have One foot in Both Worlds and that one Needn't be so Strict about Separation from the World in Order to be a Christian.
- **This group of Christians believed that if You were Saved through the Grace of God... You could Do Whatever You Wanted and IGNORE what Christ said about Obedience!**
- This led to a weak version of Christianity that was Without Power and Without Conviction.
- **KEY: When Believers Allow Sin and Compromise In their lives, it Drains Away the Power in the Work of the Cross & the Power of the Spirit Residing in a believer's life.**

God wants to make sure We Understand the Doctrine that the Nicolaitans taught, So Balaam's Actions are Given here as an Example of their Doctrine and Actions. **Revelation 2:14,15; Numbers 25:1-3**

- When Balaam could not cause God’s people to directly walk away from Him, he used another method to destroy them. He Seduced them into Unbridled, Sensual Living with the Prostitutes of Moab.
- **Just as the men of Israel Compromised Themselves with the World and False Religions, Now the "Doctrine" of the Nicolaitans was Encouraging Compromise.**
- Compromise with the World Always Results in a Weakened and Powerless Form of Christianity. *That’s why Jesus "Hated" the "Doctrine & the Deeds" of the Nicolaitans.*

Compromise Always Leads to Apostasy! Hebrews 5 Outlines the Process: When One Begins to Drift from the Word—It Leads to Doubt—Then God’s Word Becomes Dull—Then a Person Begins to Despise God’s Word and Finally Defies God! And In The End...*We Fail to Love or Hate what God Loves and Hates!*

- **Question We Need to Ask: “Do I Hate What God Hates & Love what God Loves?!”**

Compromise Always Receives God’s Greatest Warning...To both the Church of Pergamum... And to US Today! God said, Be Holy as I am Holy! Holiness is Choosing to be Separate from the World!

- **Satan seeks to “Blur Our Thinking” about what God said in His Word...We Must Guard Ourselves with God’s Word. Truth, Out of Focus, is Heresy!**

Roman’s 12:1-2 is the Solution: *Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

YOU SEE...When God’s Word Fills Our Minds...It Transforms Our Hearts!

NOTE: When People Stop Heeding “Literal Truth” They lose Hope of Christ’s Soon Return & “the Church as a Living Organism” Becomes a Dead “Church Organization!”

Vs 16: “Christ Warns the Church to Repent or Else!” *The Evil Character of what was Invading the Church was so serious...that it Involved Christ Fighting Against them with the Sword of His Mouth.*

- The Only Alternative to Impurity and Compromise of Truth is Divine Judgment! And I am Afraid that This Apostasy is Being Integrated into the Church of America...and World-Wide!
- **Many in America’s Church’s Believe it is OK to Live with One Foot in the World and One Foot with Christ! Happy to Live a Life of Compromise.**
- They Want to Go to Church when Convenient— And they want to go to Heaven! But they still want to live in Sin...**Wanting to Do what They Want to Do!** Some Believe it is OK to Lie when necessary. OK to Cheat When it Suits them and Get Revenge when Someone Crosses them.
- **The Result in the Christians Life>>They Believe they can Compromise God’s Word and Sin to Their Heart’s Content...Telling Themselves God Will Understand. Rom 6:1-2**

If you think you can sin to your heart's content without repercussions... *You Are Deceiving Yourself.*

- We All Sin! 1 John 1:8, *"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us".*

Point: *There is a Big Difference Between the Person who Sins, Confesses it, and Doesn't Want to Keep Doing it...Versus the person who Continually, Willfully, Habitually Sins Over and Over and says, "It's Okay. God Will Forgive Me." And as Compromise Finds its Way into the Church, it Weakens Us. We Lose our Effectiveness in this World. We Lose Our Effectiveness as Individuals as Well.*

- Compromise begins with leaving your First Love for Jesus Christ, which leads to compromise, which leads ultimately to immorality, idolatry, and other sins.

KEY: The Only Antidote to the Allurements and Temptations of this World is a Passionate Love Relationship with Jesus Christ.

- Stay Close to Jesus, let the fire of the First Love Burn Brightly, and you will be strong. *OH...You'll Never Be Sin-FREE...But God Will Give You the Power and Resolve To Live a Life that Pleases HIM!*

God Loves You More than You Know...And His Greatest Desire is for YOU to Choose to Love Him back! He has Given You His Word {TRUTH} to Guard Your Heart and Mind!

- Christ said, If You Love Me You will Keep My Commandments!

POINT: Loving God is Obedience without Compromise! When You Choose Faithfulness Instead of Compromise God Promises You Incredible Joy in this Life and Eternal Joy with Him forever!

In Vs 17 Jesus Concludes with a Wonderful Promise to the Believer who Remains Faithful!

- It Highlights A Personal, Victorious Relationship with Christ that Offers An Eternal, Soul-Satisfying Reward, Signifying a "Not Guilty" Verdict for the Faithful

Vs 17 Gives 3 Promises to Those Who Hear and Choose to be Faithful to Gods Word”

1. Eat the hidden manna...Spiritual Food! {Fellowship with Christ and Spiritual Strength}
2. White Stone...Courts of Law-Represents “Acquittal” {Righteous before God! Versus a Black Stone of Judgment}.
3. New Name Written on the Stone...The Recipients “title” to Eternal Joy! {Proof of our acceptance from Christ}

LIFE POINT: When God’s Word Fills Our Minds...It Transforms Our Hearts!