

Revelation 2:12-17

Pergamum

1. History

1. In the Roman period,

2. The religious life of Pergamum

1. It was a center of worship to various so-called deities.

2. The second the worship of Hellenistic deities - Zeus and the goddess Athene.

3. Finally, the Imperial Cult flourished in the city, making it a neokoros or temple guardian for the Roman Imperial cult.

2. The description of Jesus: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this:

1. Jesus accentuates the power of His word used as a weapon of war - and he plans to use it - if the church does not listen and repent.
2. When Jesus wages war, He need only speak! Heb. 1:3, Ps. 33:16, Is. 11:4, 55:11, 2 Thess. 2:8, Rev. 19:15, 21

3. Commendation: Rev. 2:13

1. Jesus knows they live where Satan has seated himself as ruler in the hearts and minds of the residents of Pergamum.
2. It could also be a reference to Pergamum as the seat of authority for Rome.
3. Satan's goal has always been and will always be to lure believers in Jesus Christ to deny/compromise their allegiance to Him by entering into the values and lifestyles of unbelievers. Matt. 16:23

1. To "hold fast My name" means

2. To not "deny My faith" (he doesn't say "deny *your* faith") indicates that Jesus sees their faithfulness as *His faithfulness*. Gal. 2:20

3. Jesus specifies a time when perhaps the pressure was the greatest - when Antipas was killed for holding fast Jesus' name. Even in the face of such opposition—even at the risk of losing life—the Pergamene Christians held fast.

4. What can we learn from this commendation?

1. This kind of pressure and persecution occurs today.

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2. When Satan's agenda has been sanctioned by the laws of the state, Satan has a throne.

5. The criticism: Rev. 2:14-15
 1. Those who hold to the teachings of Balaam and the Nicolaitians.
 1. The teaching of Balaam was that faith in Jesus could exist alongside the worship of other deities with their immoral practices.

 2. The teaching of the Nicolaitians was that the grace of God is applied to the spirit and as long as you are in the body, your body is expected to satisfy its lusts.
 2. The point is this: Faith in Jesus excludes all other allegiances and our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit.
6. The admonition: Rev. 2:16
 1. Repent: have a change of mind and action or else I will attack those in your midst who don't repent.
 2. He doesn't say He'll make war with the angel of the church or those church members who are holding fast their faith.
 3. He does say He'll speak destruction into the lives of those they love who hold to these false teachings. This is the same message given to the church in Corinth by the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 5:1-11).
 4. This admonition emphasizes the importance of loving Jesus and the truth and not confusing tolerance as love.
7. The call to hear: Rev. 2:17
8. The Promise: To him who overcomes his tolerance of evil and holds fast to Jesus' name, Jesus offers Himself.
 1. Jesus' name represents all that He is.
 2. The hidden manna is a promise of Jesus Himself.
 1. The manna in the wilderness was a shadow of Jesus as the bread of Life (John 6:35)
 2. This manna is hidden and can only be found by each one who overcomes and holds fast to Jesus. Col. 3:3
 3. The new name written on the white stone is a promise of Jesus Himself.
 1. He was promising a new name, Jesus makes a name for them! His name becomes their name.

 2. He was promising acquittal based on the work/name of Jesus Christ and thus they have a new life and existence awaiting them which can only be known when it is experienced, so therefore no one can know it now.
 4. Jesus has prayed to His Father that we would be kept in His name. (John 17:11-13)