

Revelation 2:12-17—Message to the Church in Pergamum

I. Context

- a. John is in the heavenly realms; seeing Jesus the risen Lord; message for 7 churches
- b. Pergamum is 3rd church; different challenge than first 2
 - i. Ephesus- lost first love- return to your first love
 - ii. Smyrna- persecuted- stay faithful
- c. Pergamum has strong attachment to pagan worship—temple of Zeus
- d. Description of Jesus—sharp, double-edged sword; from *Rev. 1*- He is judge

II. V. 13— *I know where you live... (Jesus is aware of their challenges, he understands)*

- a. *Where Satan has his throne ...* Shrine of god Asclepius- symbol=serpent
- b. Spiritual forces are real; there is a real Satan (c.f. *Eph. 6*); believers must be ready for attacks
- c. Jesus affirms that they have stayed faithful
- d. Antipas- details unknown; witness in Greek= martyr; are you willing to be faithful even when there is a cost

III. V. 14-15—*I have a few things against you...*

- a. The Teaching of Balaam (*Numbers 25:1-3*)- gave advice to Moab to have women entice Israelite men to lead them astray; teachers in Pergamum who said it's okay to go along with pagan society to engage in sex and idol worship in contrast to God's plan for sex within boundaries of marriage; Jesus not condemning sinners who mess up but rather those who sought to change the boundary lines of God's limits for sex and sexuality
- b. Hold to teachings of Nicolaitans—also teachers; some sort of theological heresy; God does care about us seeking him in truth
- c. Compromising theological truth and moral standards often go hand in hand

IV. V. 16—*Repent therefore... fight against them with the sword of my mouth*

- a. When we stray in significant areas, repentance is necessary (turn away from those things)
- b. Sword from his mouth—His Word- Scripture; we need to analyze and evaluate teachings from this world through the lens of Scripture; We need to know Jesus better

V. V. 17—*Whoever has ears...will give hidden manna...white stone: 2 Promises*

- a. Hidden Manna—'my food is to do the will of the one who sent me'; inner satisfaction and contentment, even joy for those who stay true and not compromise
- b. White stone with a new name: Jesus gives us a new name—new identity and purpose; Jesus knows the potential in you as no one else does; he desires you to stay faithful, not to ruin your fun, but to help you maximize your effectiveness for his Kingdom; you may mess up; what Jesus is condemning is taking light his teachings and who he is
- c. What are your areas of vulnerability where Satan can ruin you?