

REPENT of Your Worldliness

Revelation 2:12-17

Hebrews 4:1-13

Revelation 19:11-18

Growing As Real Disciples

To the Church at Pergamos write:

Pergamos: The City

- Pergamos is Πέργαμος which literally means “height or elevation”
- Pergamos is composed of two words, περ “thoroughly or completely” and γάμος “marriage”.
- Known for first temple built for Caesar **worship**. (29 B.C.)
- Large altar to **ZEUS**.
 - Albert Speer, Nazi architect, use it to design Nurmberg’s Rally Parade Field.
- Temple of Aesculapius, the god of **healing and medicine**.
- When the Babylonian cult of the Magians was driven out of Babylon they came to Pergamos.
 - The title of the Magian high priest was “Chief Bridge Builder” because he was thought to span the gap between mortals and Satan and his hosts.
 - In Latin this title is “**PONTIFEX MAXIMUS**”, the title now used by the **POPE!**
 - Julius Caesar was elected “Pontifex Maximus” and when he became Emperor, he became the **supreme** civil and religious ruler and head of Rome politically and religiously.
- Pergamos was also known for its university with its library of 200,000 volumes that were given as a gift from Anthony to Cleopatra.



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The Master’s Title (v. 12)

- The One who has the **sharp** sword with **two** edges.
- **Hebrews 4:12**; Revelation 19:15; Isaiah 11:4
- The sword is a symbol of **authority** and **power**.
 - The Master’s word is **authoritative**. We declare that the Bible is our **final** word faith and practice.
 - The Master’s word is **powerful**.
 - The Master’s word cuts in **ALL** directions.
- **EVERYONE HAS A FINAL AUTHORITY FOR WHICH THEY DETERMINE RIGHT and WRONG. BUT ALL FALL SHORT IF THEY DO NOT HAVE THE AUTHORITY OF THE SUPREME BEING OF THE UNIVERSE.**
- Christ is pictured as **Judge** and **Executioner**. (Revelation 19:15)
- From John 5:24ff and 12:48 we see that Christ’s judgments are based on His Word.
- God’s Word guarantees judgment to the world on the basis of **absolute truth**.

“I know your works . . .”

The Master’s Commendation (v. 13)

- He **knows** where they dwell! (Isaiah 29:15; Jer 23:24; Psa 139:1-3; Acts 17:26)
- “where you dwell” is κατοικέω katoikeo {kat-oy-keh'-o} - “to settle down”; “to dwell permanently”; “to be at home”
- This may be a warning to our attitude toward this life.
 - “those who dwell on the earth” is a technical term used in the Book of Revelation for those who are unbelievers and who are comfortable with this world. (3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 14; 17:8) These **will** worship the “**beast**”.
 - Christians, on the other hand, are to see themselves as **sojourners, pilgrims, aliens, and ambassadors** with our citizenship (and home) in heaven. (John 15:18-19; 17:14-15, 16, 18; Philip 3:20-21; 1 Peter 1:17; 2:11; 2 Cor 5:19-20; Rev 3:10; Heb 11:13-16; see also Genesis 23:4; 47:9; Lev 25:23; 1 Chron 29:15; Psalm 39:12; 119:19, 54)
 - ★ We are called to be **OVERCOMERS!** (John 16:33; Romans 8:37; 1 John 4:4; 5:4-5; Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 21:7)
 - **WHERE IS YOUR HOME?**
- **SATAN’s SEAT** (literally “**throne**”). (Zeus’ Temple; Caesar Worship)
 - Pergamos also became the new home of the “mother-child” cult of Babylon which was moved from Babylon after the death of Belshazzar. It later moved to Rome! (See Handout)
 - ☞ Secular history and tradition tells us that Nimrod married a woman whose name was “Semerimus” who had a child by the name of

Tammuz. She proclaimed that Tammuz was the “promised Saviour”.

- ☞ A religious system was built around Sererimus and her child as the center of worship.
 - ☞ From Babylon, this “mother-child cult” spread to Phoenicia and was known by the name “Ashteroth and Tammuz”
 - ☞ From Phoenicia it moved to Pergamos.
 - ☞ In Egypt it was known as “Isis and Horus”.
 - ☞ In Greece it became known as “Aphrodite and Eros”.
 - ☞ In Rome they were known as “Venus and Cupid”.
 - ☞ In China they were known as “Shing Moo and her child”.
 - ☞ In Mexico the image was known 200 years before Christ.
- Ezekiel and Jeremiah warn us about this cult – see Ezekiel 8:14; Jeremiah 7:18; 44:25.

- Yet, they hold fast to His **name**. What is a name?
 - “to hold fast” is κρατέω krateo {krat-eh'-o} – “to hold fast”; “to keep carefully and faithfully”; “to continue to hold, to retain”; “to cling to”
 - ★ Hebrews 4:14; Deuteronomy 13:1-4
 - ★ See Matthew 13:20-22; 24:13; John 8:51; 1 Corinthians 15:2; Colossians 1:23; Hebrews 3:6, 14.
- They have not **denied HIS** faith. READ Matthew 10:32-33.
 - How does one deny **the** faith?
- Antipas would rather DIE than **compromise**.

The Master’s Criticism (vv. 14-15)

- The story of Balaam: Numbers 22-25; Joshua 13:22.
- **A Quick Look at BALAAM:**
 - ☆ Balaam is mentioned in **seven** books. (4 OT; 3 NT)
 - ☆ He had personal contact with **GOD**. (22:9-12)
 - ☆ He had acknowledged **GOD** before men. (22:38)
 - ☆ He had God’s Word put into his mouth. (23:5)
 - ☆ He declared his **loyalty** to God. (24:3, 4)
 - ☆ At times, he was led by the **SPIRIT** of God. (24:13)
 - ☆ He had a desire to **DIE** the death of the righteous. (24:2)
- BUT**
 - ★ He sought to **change** God’s word. (Joshua 24:9, 10)
 - ★ He **loved** the wages of **un**righteousness. (2 Peter 2:15)
 - ★ He sought a **different** answer from God. (22:12-20)
 - ★ He **seduced** God’s people to sin. (Numbers 31:16; **Matthew 18:6**)
 - ★ In order to **die** the death of the righteous one must **live** the life of the righteous!
 - ★ He died among God’s **enemies**. (Joshua 13:22)

• **Doctrine** of BALAAM: **Worldly Compromise** (Revelation 2:14)

- Balaam knew he could not curse Israel so he taught or advised Balak, king of the Moabites, to tempt Israel to marry the daughters of Moab.
 - ☞ This was in direct opposition to God’s commandments. (Deuteronomy 7:1-6; 1 Corinthians 7:39)
- The world says **COMPROMISE** but truth says **NO COMPROMISE**. Once you compromise the TRUTH you no longer have TRUTH but a LIE.
- The **Error** of BALAAM: **Believing GOD is not faithful to His promises**. (Jude 11)
- The **Way** of BALAAM: **Covetousness; Personal Gain** (2 Peter 2:15)
- **EDICT of MILAN** (AD 313) - when government and religion married each other.
 - Edict of Tolerance (AD 311); Edict of Thessalonica (AD 380)
 - Birth of ecumenicalism.
 - Mother-Child Cult entered into the church.
 - Pagan/Christian holidays.
 - Government and Church were married.
- The Church at Pergamos was becoming more and more “married” to the world. They were losing their “pilgrim” character. They were beginning to look like the world. They were no longer SEPARATED.
- The teachings of Nicolaitians:
 - ☞ The teaching of **COMPROMISE**.
 - ☞ The teaching of using worldly methods and ideas within the Church.
 - ☞ See handout: Seven Subtle Snares of Worldliness

The Master’s Instructions (v. 16)

- **REPENT** – This is an **urgent** command to the Church.
 - “to repent” is μετανοέω metanoeo {met-an-o-eh'-o} which literally means “to change one’s mind”.
 - **TRUE REPENTANCE**: Stop doing things as we see to be right and doing everything in accordance with God’s **written** Word. Anything less is **not** repentance.
- Christ will use HIS SWORD to separate saints and “pretend” saints. **His** “sheep” from other sheep. (John 10:11, 14-15, 26-30; Hebrews 4:12-13)
- Worldliness in the church must be quickly dealt with or it will spread like cancer. (See 1 Corinthians 5:7-13)

The Master’s Promise (v. 17)

- ALL Christians are **OVERCOMERS**. (1 John 5:4-5; 2:13-17; John 16:33; Romans 8:35-27; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 15:57; 2 Peter 1:3)
- “I will give” – a statement of GRACE.
- **HIDDEN MANNA**: A portion of God’s manna was “hidden” in the Ark as a memorial.

- ☞ The “manna” was a picture of God’s faithfulness to sustain and provide for His people in the Wilderness in place of the leeks, melons, garlic, and onions of Egypt (a picture of the world).
- ☞ “Manna” is also called “food or bread from heaven” (Psalm 78:24).
- ☞ In John 6:48-51, Christ speaks of Himself as being the bread from heaven. Christ is God’s “manna” that sustains our promised abundant and eternal life. (John 10:10)

• **WHITE STONE:**

- There were several uses of “white” stones during these times.
- BUT the one that seems most appropriate is the custom of giving a “white” or “precious” stone to the winner of athletic contests.
 - ☞ This would be like Christ saying, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” • A **NEW** name.
- ★ One gets a NEW NAME when one:
 - **BIRTH:** (John 1:13; 3:1-8; James 1:18)
 - **MARRIES.** (Romans 7:3-6; Ephesians 5:23-27, 30-32; Revelation 19:7-9; 21:2, 9; 22:17)
 - **IS ADOPTED.** (Romans 8:15, 23; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5)
- ★ A new name suggests new **status** and **responsibility**. (Consider Luke 12:48)
- ★ The “new” and “secret” name would also shows the intimacy of God’s personal care and love for His own.

- Either we are conformed to the image of Christ or we are conformed to the world. It is EITHER OR. If we do nothing we **are** being conformed to the world.
- He does not lose his salvation but he loses his testimony and usefulness.

→ **“BE SEPARATE”** – 2 Corinthians 6:14-17; 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

→ No one can **SERVE** two masters. Either we **serve** God or we **serve** the world. (Jesus Christ, Matthew 6:24)

He Who Has an EAR, Let Him HEAR!

- “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches (IBC Celle and HIBC). . .” **DO WE HAVE EARS TO HEAR?**
- Are you a Christian? Christians, by definition, are “called OUT ones”; “separated ones”. We have been called to be SEPARATED! (2 Cor 6:14-17)
- **LESSON for US:** The Gradual Process of Worldliness:
 - ① **FRIENDSHIP** of the world. (James 4:4)
 - By nature we are to be “**enemies**” of the world. (1 John 3:13)
 - The world lies under the influence of Satan. (1 John 5:19; John 12:31)
 - ★ A friend of the world is an **enemy** of God.
 - ② **SPOTTED** by the world. (James 1:27)
 - The world leave its dirty marks on us.
 - Lessons from the Laver in the Tabernacle.
 - ③ **LOVE** of the world. (1 John 2:15-17)
 - ④ **CONFORMED** to the world. (Romans 12:2)
 - You cannot tell the difference any more.
 - All this will lead to the chastening of the LORD. (1 Corinthians 11:32)