

THE REVELATION

LESSON 7: THE CHURCH IN PERGAMUM: TRUTH MATTERS!

Intro:

BIG IDEA: Gospel _____ leads to gospel _____!

Background on Pergamum

- Pergamum means “ _____ ”, a fortress for defending a city or region.
- _____ city of Asia.
- One of the great _____ centers of the Hellenistic Period- theaters, libraries (2nd only to Alexandria) etc..
- It is surrounded by the richest _____ land in Mysia (eastern Turkey).
- 20 miles inland, 3 miles from the Caicus River on a 1,000 foot high hill.
- It had temples for _____, Athena, Dionysus and Asclepius (serpent-god of _____).
- All this made for a strong commercial city that accumulated and stored wealth.
- It has a famous school of _____.
- The strong Attalic Dynasty helped Rome defeat the Seleucid kingdom (Syria), and received large land grants.
- 55 miles due north of _____.
- 29 B.C.: granted permission to build a temple to Augustus. 1st provincial temple for a _____ emperor. It was the center of _____ worship.

Jesus' Self-Revelation

¹²"And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: 'The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword.

- Jesus has the 2-edged sword. He is a _____. He is also an executioner (**Romans 13**).
- Jesus can wield the sword to _____ His people.
- Jesus can wield the sword to _____ His people (**Hebrews 4:12-13**).

The Good

¹³"I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

- Jesus knows they live in _____ territory, _____ by false gods.

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- They “*hold fast*” or “*cling to*” Jesus’ name.
- They had a solid _____ and understanding of the core doctrines of the faith.
- They exercised _____ in Christ despite being forced to _____ Christ.
- Antipas refused to offer some incense & say “_____ is Lord”.
- Caesar’s authority is limited; he cannot demand worship for that is God’s alone.
- Resisted direct assaults on Christianity.

“Love becomes sentimental if it is not strengthened by truth, and truth becomes hard if it is not softened by love.” **John Stott**¹⁵

The Bad

¹⁴But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality. ¹⁵So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

- They are not Christians, they did not hold to Christ, but the teaching of _____.
- If you can’t threaten them, _____ them! They brought corruption into the church.
- False teachers were advocating moral compromise. Bad _____ => bad _____!
- Go to the parties, eat, drink & enjoy (to keep your job?). Just don’t mean it.

“Seduction, or persecution- a choice of evils which the world offers the church. For a soft-centered permissive society can be curiously hard on those who refuse to go along with it.” **Michael Wilcock**¹⁶

What stumbling blocks can be put up before us in our society?

The Warning

¹⁶Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth. ¹⁷ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

- There must be repentance. This repentance is produced by clear gospel _____.
- The church should _____ these erring members before it is too late.
- If we will not be disciplined by the truth, Jesus will make war against false teachers.

¹⁵ Stott, pp. 44.

¹⁶ Wilcock, pp. 48.

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“The very gospel of Christ which saves those who obey it destroys those who disobey it.” **John Stott**¹⁷

The Promise

To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.'

What are the 2 gifts Jesus promises to those who conquer or overcome?

- _____ fed the people of Israel in the wilderness. It _____ them.
- Jesus is the true manna, offering _____ to sustain His people in the “_____” (**Jn. 6**).
- He’s hid from _____ eyes, though we’re not hid from _____.
- This looks past this life- we will forever “_____” on Christ.
- Stones had many purposes: tickets, amulets, ballots etc.
- **Option 1:** white stone indicating the judge _____ a prisoner. Not guilty!
- **Option 2:** winners of the games given access to free _____.
- **Option 3:** Urim may have been white. Privileges of the _____.
- **Option 4:** Local _____ granite was used in buildings there. Imported _____ stones were used for inscriptions. They were quite valuable. Despised now, _____ later!
- A new name is written on it: ours or Christ’s (**3:12**)?

³²Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." **John 6**

³⁵Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. ³⁶But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. ³⁷ All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. **John 6**

Application: What should we take away from the letter to Pergamum?

Conclusion:

¹⁷ Stott, pp. 54.