



The Church of “Pergamos” “THE COMPROMISING CHURCH”

March 25, 2019

REVELATION 2:12-17 NKJV – (12) “And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, ‘These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: (13) “I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne *is*. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. (14) But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. (15) Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. (16) Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth. (17) “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it.*” ’

This is the third of seven messages to the churches of Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). They’re also lessons applicable to the lives of believers today. This third letter is to the believers in Pergamum (or Pergamos), which was a beautiful and art-filled city in the province of Asia built along two tributaries of the Caicus River. Pergamum was a center for the worship of Dionysus, Zeus, and other pagan gods.

The message to the Pergamene church was from the Lord Jesus Christ, specifically addressed to the “angel”, pastor (or “messenger”) of the church: ‘These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword” (**REVELATION 2:12**). The depiction of Jesus holding a sharp, two-edged sword refers to the Lord’s readiness to bring judgment (**REVELATION 1:16**). First, Jesus affirms the church’s positive actions in **REVELATION 2:12-13**. Then in **REVELATION 2:14-15** He acknowledges, “I have a few things against you.” Notice if you will, He said, “Few.” Jesus took note of their sin. So what is the problem in detail?

You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality. Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans” (**REVELATION 2:14-15**). The “teaching of Balaam” is explained in the context, as Christians were eating food that had been sacrificed to idols (religious compromise) and committing sexual immorality (moral compromise). The original Balaam’s deceitful work is described in **NUMBERS 25:1-3** and **NUMBERS 31:15-16**. The Nicolaitans are mentioned only in this letter and in the letter to the Ephesian church (**REVELATION 2:6**). They were likely a group similar to those who held the teachings of Balaam, though the exact nature of their doctrine and practice is unknown.

How does this look today. Living as Satan, but claiming to be a child of God (**2 TIMOTHY 3:5**). Saying you’re not doing what they are doing, but not only you are an accessory, but you are not standing up for righteousness (**ROMANS 1:32**). God knows the heart (**JEREMIAH 17:9**). Therefore, what is the remedy according to Christ? (16) Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth. Who is them? Those committing these sins and that includes the one who is an accessory. “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 JOHN 2:15

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: The essence of worldliness is exclusion of God.