SERMON NOTES:



WESTERN MEADOWS BAPTIST CHURCH SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

REVELATION 2:12-17

OPENING THOUGHT

We have now explored two of the seven letters that Jesus gave to the churches in Asia. The church of Ephesus was strong in action and doctrine but lacking of love. The Christians in Smyrna were facing near constant persecution for their faith in Jesus as lord, yet they remained faithful, even though some of them were killed. Over the years, Christ removed the church from Ephesus and city fell into ruin, but the church in Smyrna persevered and is still striving for the faith today.

We travel now to the third church, located in Pergamum. The Christians of Pergamum receive a message of great encouragement and severe warning. Like their brothers in Smyrna, Pergamum's church suffered greatly for following Christ as lord. Jesus even goes so far as to say that they dwell where Satan's throne is; no doubt this is a reference to the great idolatry that existed in Pergamum. They were Christians in a culture that was very much anti-Christian. They were living behind enemy lines.

Though many in Pergamum remained faithful throughout their hardships, Jesus does not withhold His rebuke from them. The Christians of Pergamum appeared to have the opposite problem of those in Ephesus. While the Ephesians held tight to right doctrine but lost their love, the Pergamum church became accepting to the point that some of them were being swept away into false teachings and sinful living. We must avoid both extremes. We can neither separate entirely from the culture around us, nor can we submit to it. Instead, we are not of this world, but we have been sent into the world to expand the kingdom of God.

SUGGESTED VERSES FOR MEMORIZATION & MEDITATION

- 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. (Revelation 2:13)
- Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth. (Revelation 2:16)
- Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promising is faithful. (Hebrews 10:23)

READ VERSES 12-13 AND DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING

1. Though the Christians in Pergamum dwelled where Satan's throne is, Jesus commends that they have held fast to Him and did not deny the faith. How does the Bible instruct us to hold fast to Christ?

READ VERSES 14-15 AND DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING

2. In His rebuke against the church of Pergamum, Christ states that some of them were deviating into false teachings and sinful behavior of the culture around them. What are some false teachings and sinful behaviors of today's culture?

READ VERSES 16-17 AND DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING

3. Christ claims that unless the church at Pergamum repents it will find itself at war against Jesus Himself. Why is repentance so significant in the life of a follower of Christ and to the church community?

ACTIONS TO CONSIDER

 Just as some in Pergamum were being swept away by the sins and false teachings of the society among them, consider areas of your life in which you may be doing the same thing, and repent of them.