

Revelation: Following Our Victorious King

[Revelation 2:12-17](#)

“A Letter From Jesus on Repentance”– February 11, 2024



Introduction

When faced with the hardships, trials and temptations of life, many people rely on themselves. They have courageous resolve and are self-sufficient. This appears to be a trait that we might desire to have in times of trial. We try to be stoic and deal with and fix matters by ourselves. But are we masters of our fate? Are we really the captains of our soul? We can tell ourselves that, but pretending to be God causes many of us to be exhausted, weary, discontent. Discontentment leads us vulnerable to compromises that the enemy brings to us.

One of the marks of a true and living church is love for God and others. As a result of this love for God, a true and living church has a willingness to suffer, refusing to compromise because of Christ.

The attribute of Jesus we see talked about in this passage is the sharpened, two-edged sword. ([vs. 12](#)) Jesus is gentle and lowly. He made time to talk to young children. In His humility, He willingly laid down His life. But He is also the warrior King. Why does Jesus present himself to the church at Pergamum as one going to battle? Because they WERE in a battle. We are also in a battle. It isn't against flesh and blood, but against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realm. ([Ephesians 6:12](#)) How can we win the battle when there are endless opportunities to compromise?

Sermon Outline

1. In persecution, hold fast to Christ. Vs. 13
2. Reject the “Trojan horse” of compromise. Vs. 14-16
3. Learn to be satisfied in Christ. Vs. 17

Read & Discuss

1. Read vs. 13

Pergamum was filled with people who were opposed to God. They were under the sway of Satan and killed those who stood up for God. Even under this persecution, the church held fast to Jesus' name. To be a Christian, it means to accept who Jesus is. He is King and Lord, and we submit to Him as such. It's not just mere mental knowledge - it is trust and faith.

However, Satan is sly and relentless. There was a hidden threat that affected the church in Pergamum.

2. Read vs. 14-16

Here, Jesus gives His critique of the church in Pergamum. They held to the teaching of Balaam which was the same name for the Nicolaitans. Their teaching was a stumbling block or a trap - it looked harmless, but its attraction kills the one who takes the bait.

Following the teaching of Balaam was a small, incremental compromise. It was easy to rationalize. Before long, the Israelites were bowing down the gods of Moab. Some, in the church at Pergamum, were participating in religious rituals at the temple. This is something the Apostle Paul warns the Corinthian church about. Going to the temple was a part of doing business, so they rationalized their choice. If people from the church at Pergamum didn't go to the temple, where everyone hung out, they would lose their jobs, income, and friends. This led to idolatry.

Idolatry stems from our distrust of God. We see this in Genesis 3. When we choose self-rule over God's rule, we are left to care for ourselves. We look elsewhere for care and worth, which seems reasonable and necessary. There are three idols we see in our world today - money, power, sex.

To the world, money seems to provide protection. ([Proverbs 18:11](#)) But it is short-lived. God is our protection. Money is a tool that can be used for good. How do you view money? What is easy for you to

spend your money on? Does your heart rest in God or your bank account? ([Ecclesiastes 5:10](#))

The world's way of looking at power equates it with control. When you look at tomorrow, you don't know what it holds. It's natural for us to look for that which would give us control. How do you deal with the unknowns of tomorrow? Where do you go for help with the fear of life feeling chaotic? ([Psalm 118:8-9](#))

The world thinks that the body is just a mass of cells, and sex is a biological act fulfilling a physical need. God's design for sex is meant to be enjoyed between a man and a woman inside a marriage covenant. Anything outside of God's design is considered sexual immorality. This relationship is a picture to the world of the relationship that God wants to have with His people. ([Ephesians 5:31-32](#)) Biblical instruction about sexual self-control is for our good, for healthy families, and to the glory of God.

Left unchecked, the compromises cause a church to lose its saltiness. It becomes nothing more than a community center. Jesus calls the church to repent. Worldliness makes sin look normal and righteousness looks strange.

Have you excused small compromises at work? Have you made small compromises in your marriage or private life? Have you made compromises in what you watch, listen to, speak, or think? Is sin beginning to look normal and righteousness looks strange? Repentance is essential, yet repentance is not enough. Repentance and rejoicing must go together.

Additional Reading: Numbers 22-25; Matthew 19; 1 Corinthians 6, 10

3. Read vs. 17

There are three images here: the manna, the stone, and the name.

The hidden manna refers to the jar of manna in the ark of the covenant. This sustained the children of Israel on their trip to the Promised land. Jesus is the Bread of life Who sustains us as we make our way to the Promised Land - Heaven. The white stone refers to an acquittal of a charge and an invitation. Jesus took our place and redeemed us from sin and the charge against us. He invites us into a relationship with Him. The new name is Jesus' name. The name of Jesus given to His people reminds them that they have a new identity. He has redeemed you. You belong to Him.

While the world indulges their desires, we are reminded that we have food to eat that the world knows not of. As we gather to read, study, and learn from His word and fellowship with His people, we feast on Christ who gives us life. It is hard to fight for faith, but we must fight. Is Christ the Master of your fate, the Captain of your soul? Are you searching for satisfaction in this world? We were made to know, love and trust God. That is the only way we will be satisfied. Sin separates us from God. We deserve death and Hell. Jesus came and took the penalty for sin. He offers forgiveness and reconciliation. We become conquerors by being conquered by Christ. Is there anything keeping you from trusting Christ?

Additional Reading: Exodus 16; Hebrews 9

Prayer of Response

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand*, *believe*, *desire*, or *do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come. If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at fbcum.org

Next week's sermon text: we turn to [Revelation 2:18-29](#) "A Letter From Jesus on Tolerance"