



## The Church A Need to Repent Pergamum

### A Quick Review

1. The Letter to the church of Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-7) – losing your best love
2. The Letter to the church of Smyrna (Revelation 2:8-11) – faith in the time of trouble

### Pergamum the City

1. Pergamum was a city 70 miles north of Smyrna
  - a. Ephesus was the great political center
  - b. Smyrna was the great commercial center
  - c. Pergamum was the great religious center
2. It was a small city until it aligned with Rome and as a result became a large and wealthy metropolis.
3. It was said that Zeus, the father of the gods, was born in Pergamum. The city had a gigantic altar dedicated to Zeus. It stood on a foundation that was 125' long x 115' deep x 50' high.
4. Pergamum was famous for the practice of Asclepius; what we now know as a hospital.
  - a. The medical practice was based mostly on psychiatry, a lot of sleep-induced suggestion, dream interpretation, etc.
5. Asclepius was considered a god and was the son of Apollo. He was called Asclepius the savior.
  - a. The claim made of him was that he could avert death.
  - b. His symbol was a staff with a serpent wrapped around it, that over time became a staff with two serpents – which, by the way, is a current symbol used for medical identification.
    - i. One serpent is Asclepius, the other serpent is Hermes, and the symbol is called the caduceus. It's interesting that Hermes is the god of commerce.
  - c. It's very much like the symbol for healing from Numbers 21 that Jesus referred to in John 3:14.
6. The first temple to Asclepius was erected around 27BC. He was known also as Nimrod. Genesis 10 associates Nimrod with Babel... the tower and the beginning of false religion.

### Pergamum the Church

1. The Word Pergamum or Pergamos is a combined word that can be translated as:
  - a. Per – mixed, combining = pervert, perturbation etc.
  - b. Gamos – marriage = bigamy, monogamy, polygamy
  - c. Pergamos or Pergamum – “mixed marriage”
2. Pergamum was a church of compromise; some were mixing the Gospel with pagan doctrines.

3. **Revelation 2:12 – 17 (ESV)** And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword. <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> But 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. <sup>15</sup> So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. <sup>16</sup> Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth. <sup>17</sup> He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. 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.

1. Jesus Compliments The Church
  - a. Jesus is the one with the sharp two-edged sword
  - b. I know where **YOU DWELL**
  - c. You've not **DENIED THE FAITH** even during times of **PERSECUTION**
2. Jesus Criticizes The Church
  - a. Some follow the **TEACHING OF BALAAM**
    - i. Numbers 22 – 25, 31:6
  - b. Some hold the **DOCTRINE OF THE NICOLAITANS**
    - i. Untranslated word that could refer to a sect of “worldly” Christians
      - ii. Combined word made up of:
        1. Nikeao = rule over
        2. Laos = laity = people
        3. A class of special priests or bishops or church leaders with special status, or rights or powers
3. Jesus Commands The Church
  - a. **REPENT** or I will come and **WAR AGAINST THEM**
4. Jesus Promises Those Who Overcome
  - a. **HIDDEN MANNA** and a **WHITE STONE** with a **NEW NAME**

### Personal Application...

Are you longing for something other than Jesus?  
Are you looking for intimacy in someone other than Him?  
Are you mixing your faith with worldly beliefs?  
He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the church!