

REVELATION SERIES - LESSON 5

REVELATION 2:12-17

PERGAMOS

We have learned that we are living in the church age.

In chapters 2 & 3, Jesus is dictating specific letters to specific churches.

7 letters to 7 churches.

1) Literal in Existence - located in Turkey

2) Spiritual in relevance - each has spiritual relevance to us and the church today.

Commendation - Complaint - Command

Out of the 7, he has 2 that he has nothing bad to say.

It was the church at:

1. Smyrna - suffering church
2. Philadelphia - evangelistic church
3. Historical significance

Each church has a historical meaning as it relates to church history.

33 - 100 AD - Apostolic Death & Ascension until last apostle John died 100 AD.

100 - 312 AD - Smyrna

Constantine the Emperor declared Christianity the state religion.

Elevated protected status in Roman Empire.

312 - 606 AD - Pergamos, it morphs into the Roman Catholic Church.

606 - 1517 AD - Thyatira - 1517 Protestant Reformation
Martin Luther, a catholic monk rejects some of the doctrine of Roman Catholic Church. Nails his 95 thesis to door of church Wittenburg, Germany.

1517 - 1750 - Sardis

1750 - Great Awakening. Revival sweeps through America.

1750 - Rapture - (Philadelphia). Starts at great awakening. I believe it's the Evangelical Christian Church. It's one of the churches Jesus doesn't have negatives.

1900 - Tribulation - (Laodicea). There was a split with the Evangelical Church and Modern Liberalism.

Let's look at Pergamos.

Rev. 2:12-17

Pergamos is about 50 miles north of Smyrna. 20 miles inland of Aegean Sea.

It was a wealthy city and its wealth came largely from industry of paper.

Umanes II discovered that you could take pulp from wood and manufacture paper. So paper was first manufactured in Pergamos and it produced lots of wealth.

Spiritual climate was very poly theistic.

Church of Pergamos is the state church.

312 AD - Constantine declared Christianity the state religion but permeated it with pagan practices and it came out looking very Roman.

606 AD - Beginning of Roman Catholic Church.

Constantine claims to have had a personal epiphany where he saw a cross on fire marching out to war, and heard words "In this sign conquer".

He started advancing Christinity in a way that you don't really want to do.

It's never a good idea to advance a religion by a sword.

State of this Church

"Two edged sword" = Judgement

Antipas - no other reference in Bible, yet Jesus calls him out as an example and model of someone who did not renounce his faith.

It's a great reminder that God sees you and knows you by name.

Complaint = Marriage of the church and the world.

Pergomos = has the word “gamos” as it’s root.

“Gmos” is the greek word for marriage.

We talk about being faithful to one person as “monogomy” =
“Monogamos”

Being married to multiple people that “polygomy” or “polygamos”.

So God’s complaint is that the church had married itself to the culture.

Same issue we’re having today.

Someone thought if church would look like world, act like world, we could win the world.

The church needs and must remain distinct in order to be unique and distinct, and to offer the world an alternative.

So he calls out 2 distinct doctrines:

Vs. 14 - Balaam

Vs. 15 - Nicolaitans

Doctrine - "Didakee" - "Correct Teachings"

Balaam = Numbers 22 - contains his story.

Balaak (king of Moabites) hires Balaam to get him to curse God's people.

Doctrine of Balaam is doctrine of immorality, seduction and greed.

For a profit Balaam had Balaak introduce sexual immorality into army of Israelites.

Doctrine of Balaam is really moral compromise, idolatry and greed.

Doctrine of Nicolaitans (vs 15)

Nicolaitans - (split view)

Some think it comes from Nicholas one of original deacons in Acts 6:5.

Church tradition says he perverted grace. He basically taught that grace was a license to sin.

More likely - Nicolaitans doctrine plays into whats going on in church history.

“Nicao” = “to Conquer”

“Laos” = “the Laity”

So it means to “Conquer the Laity”

It's when church leadership begins to Lord authority over the Laity.

Matt 20:25-28

Still to this day the Papal authority is very much held and practiced.

The Papal authority set it self up equal to scripture and that is usurping the Authority of God.

Now He does mention 2 Rewards:

1 - "Hidden Manna"

2 - "White Stone with New Name"

Hidden Manna = Jesus is the Bread of Life

John 6 - "I am bread of life"

"White stone with new name written on it"

So “white stone with name on it” = It’s the idea God is saying yes to you and you are accepted.

Eph 1:6

One day God is going to give us a new name and that is presently only known by Jesus.

He wants us to know he loves us so much He will give us a new name in a way He sees us.

So you’ll get a brand new name affectionately given by Jesus.