



Sermon Series: VII — The Last VII Letters

Message Title: PERGAMUM: REPENT!

This morning we continue our journey into the **Word of God** focusing on **Jesus' Last VII Letters** to **His Churches** in Book of Revelation.

Ephesus — **Abandoned Love**

Thyatira — False Prophets

Laodicea — Lukewarm

Smyrna — **Persecution Coming**

Sardis — Asleep

Pergamum — **Repent**

Philadelphia — Persevered

The Book of Revelation has a 3-Part PURPOSE

P#1. The letters to the **7 churches (chs. 2–3)** reveal that many of the congregations throughout Asia had **seriously strayed** from the original standards of **truth, faith & practice Jesus** and His disciples taught.

P#2. In view of, **opposition & persecution**, Revelation was given to the churches to strengthen **their faith, spiritual determination & loyalty to Jesus Christ**. The Book is also aimed at **inspiring** Christians to be **overcomers** & to **remain faithful** to Christ, **even to the point of death**.

P#3. Finally, it was written to provide Christians, of all generations, with **God's perspective** on:

(a) our fierce conflict with the **forces of Satan**

(b) our intense **opposition from the world**

(c) & the **indisputable fulfillment of HIS PROMISES** to the CHURCH!

The GOAL, of JESUS'S Letters, to SEVEN first-century churches was to **challenge, encourage, warn & build up** both believers & churches **throughout** church HISTORY, even to TODAY (**Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22**).

****OUR GOAL** with the **VII SERIES**, is to **CHALLENGE, ENCOURAGE, WARN & BUILD UP, ABUNDANT LIFE!**

We are ENTERING our THIRD WEEK — of exploring the **VII LETTERS**, of Jesus to the 7 Churches in REVELATION.

The **1st Church** we visited was **EPHESUS**. It was **commended** for everything it was **DOING** but **REBUKED** for **ABANDONING** their **1st LOVE, JESUS!** Jesus reminds us everything must flow out of **His love** & our most important activity is **abiding in Him (FOR vs. FROM = On our own/"filthy rags" vs. WITH HIM)**.

Jesus' 2nd letter brought us to the Church in **SMYRNA**, to whom **Jesus wrote**, "The words of the **first and the last, who died and came to life**." Reminding them immediately **He knew** the **trials & tribulations** being experienced by His beloved & precious church. He understood **the suffering, pain, & rejection** they were enduring.

READ: REVELATION 2:12-17

12 “To the angel of the church in **PERGAMUM** write:

These are the words of Him who has **the sharp, double-edged sword**. **13** I know where you live—**where Satan has his throne**. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, not even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city—**where Satan lives**.

14 NEVERTHELESS, I have a few things against you: There are **some among you** who hold to the **teaching of Balaam**, who taught Balak to **entice the Israelites to sin** so that they **ate food sacrificed to idols** and **committed sexual immorality (participated in Idol Worship)**.

15 Likewise, you also have those who hold to the teaching of the **Nicolaitans**. **16 REPENT** therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against **them** with the sword of my mouth.

17 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **To the one who is victorious**, I will give some of the **hidden manna**. I will also give that person a **white stone** with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.

VERSE BY VERSE

12 “To the angel of the church in **Pergamum** write: These are the words of Him who has **the sharp, double-edged sword**.

Jesus opens his letter proclaiming He is the one who has the sharp, **double-edged sword**. This may be a reference His ability & **power to win victories over His enemies**.

This is also biblical metaphor from **Hebrews 4:12** that signifies His WORD has the power to both **reveal truth & expose hidden thoughts**, penetrating to the deepest parts of a **person's being**. It's double-edged nature also refers to Christ's commitment to test, judge, correct, rebuke, & discipline **His church**. This is **not to destroy** the church but to **purify, strengthen, & lead** her to victory.

13 **I know where you live—where Satan has his throne.**

Founded in the 3rd century BC, Pergamum became the capital of a prosperous kingdom ruled by the Attalid dynasty after the death of Alexander the Great. **Transition to Rome:** The city was peacefully given to the Roman Empire in **133 BC** and served as the initial capital of the Roman province of Asia.

Pergamum was a center for the **Roman Imperial Cult**, where the first temple dedicated to a living emperor, Caesar Augustus, was built in the province. This created a **hostile environment for Christians** who refused to worship the emperor.

"Satan's Throne": This phrase likely refers to the city's status as a major center of **pagan worship**. Pergamum featured a **massive altar to Zeus**, as well as prominent temples for the gods **Asclepius** (the god of medicine) & **Dionysus** (Greek god of wine, festivals, madness, and religious ecstasy, he

could bring both ecstatic joy & brutal madness, and his worship was often characterized by **wild, frenzied celebrations**).

The Church, in spite of the **satanic opposition** all around them, was commended by Jesus for refusing to **water down** or **compromise** the truths of the gospel. As persecution became more severe, even to the point of facing death as did **Antipas**, the church held on to the Lord. They chose to **bear witness** to His character, promises, & salvation, a willingly surrender their lives for the sake of the gospel.

***I've heard it said, when it comes to ships:*

*It's not the water **outside** of the ship that sinks it, it's the water that **gets in!*****

14 NEVERTHELESS, I have a few things against **YOU (INSIDE THE SHIP!)**:

There are **SOME among you** who hold to the **teaching of Balaam**, who taught Balak to **entice the Israelites to sin** so that they **ate food sacrificed to idols** and **committed sexual immorality** (**actually participated in worldly idolatry worship!!!—vs. PAUL eat the meat?**)

15 Likewise, you also have those who hold to the teaching of the **Nicolaitans**. (encouraged **unrestrained indulgence** without being involved in idolatry)

It is clear that BOTH groups take a perverted view of Christ's LOVE & Christian LIBERTY & leads to the **compromising** of His principles & acceptance of **moral depravity**. We must be careful of swallowing **candy-coated hand grenades**, **defending our right** to do so, & even **encouraging others** down the **wrong path**.

Jesus hated the doctrines of **Nicolaitans**, because they promoted a **SOFT ATTITUDE** toward SIN & DISCOURAGED **Holy Living**.

16 REPENT therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against **them** with the sword of my mouth.

The level to which Jesus hates **the encouragement to SIN** instead of **HOLINESS, is seen** in the **severity** of His call for the CHURCH to **repent!** Unless those who embraced this doctrine changed their attitudes toward **God, His Truth, & Holiness**, Jesus promised to **fight against them** with the sword of His mouth. Even though they claimed to be a part of His body, their compromising, self-justifying, spirit was **aligning them with the enemies of Christ** who He will come to destroy.

Unless they REPENTED, they would meet the same fate as the AntiChrist and his false prophet who will be defeated & cast into the lake of fire prepared for the devil & his angels. Strong response indeed.

17 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. *To the one who is victorious*, I will give some of the *hidden manna*. I will also give that person a *white stone* with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.

In light of the warning given to the church in Pergamum, every follower of Jesus must learn to LISTEN to the HOLY SPIRIT as He *guides, counsels, & reminds* them of God's **Word**, God's **Will**, God's **Way**, & God's **Timing**. The Holy Spirit was speaking to the Church **then**, is speaking to the Church **now**, & will continue to speak to the Church in the **future**.

For the VICTORIOUS CHURCH our *hidden manna* is the *BREAD of LIFE*, in Him we share the **LIFE** only HE can give! This is the message & essence of **COMMUNION**! NOW we are sustained receiving our *DAILY BREAD*, enabling us to abide in Him, THEN we will enjoy together forever the **MANNA** of Heaven WITH Him, like He promised.

Instead of *feeding on the immorality, lusts, & desires* of the world, those who are VICTORIOUS in Christ will receive from Him the *WHITE STONE* of forgiveness & acquittal. In the time Jesus wrote to the Church in Pergamum, a *white pebble* was used to cast a vote call for a verdict of **"not guilty"**. Through Christ our sins are blotted out, & cast as far as the east is from the west. In Him, we will also receive a *NEW NAME* which represents our *new nature* & the *full inheritance* of a child of God.

There is a beautiful exchange in *SALVATION*?

1. All of our *sinfulness & brokenness* is EXCHANGED for *His Holiness & Eternal Life*
2. The *corruptible pleasures* of this world are EXCHANGED for *His eternal rewards*
3. Hearts obsessed with *fulfilling their lusts* are EXCHANGED for *Hearts desiring to do His will*

THIS IS...

OUR NEW **HEART**
OUR NEW **NATURE**
OUR NEW **LIFE**
IN HIM!!!

LET US...

CONTINUE to WALK by faith, in step, with the HOLY SPIRIT
REFUSE to COMPROMISE & A choose instead to OBEY HIS WORD
(May we humbly teach, rebuke, correct, & train one another with His WORD,
which is sharper than any double-edged sword)
RECEIVE ALL He has for us now & in the FUTURE

ALTAR CALL: **New “Progressive” BIBLE for Children! (Satan - Compromise/pervert)

NEXT STEPS