Introduction: Earlier we studied the church at Smyrna. A place of Emperor Worship and persecution. Jesus gives them encouragement, speaks of their spiritual wealth and the crown of life. Now we turn our attention to the church at Pergamos, Revelation 2.12-17

**I) Pergamos**

**A) “Where Satan’s throne is . . . where Satan dwells” (13)**

1. 3 temples to emperor worship,

a. The worship of Asclepius, (its symbol was the serpent)

b. The great altar to Zeus which resembled a throne

2. The seat of Rome’s authority.

3. Paganism ran deep …

**B) ““And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith” (13)**

1. They refused to deny Christ’s identity & authority

**Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.**

2. Refused to deny His teachings

**2 John 1:9 Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.**

3. Even under enormous pressure to honor paganism & to confess the Emperor as “lord & god.” - for this reason Antipas was put to death …

**C) “you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam” (14)**

1. Spoken to those who held to the truth but yet continued to fellowship those in error.

2. Seduced Israel with harlots so they might sin & therefore not be blessed. Num 25:1-8; 31:16

3. Sought after the “wages of unrighteousness” –

**2 Peter 2:15 They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness**;

4. Error for profit –

**Jude 1:11 Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.**

5. The doctrine of compromise

6. Some ate things sacrificed to idols, practiced immorality and taught others it was OK to do so to avoid persecution & hardship.

**D) “Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans,” (15)**

1. Ephesus hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans, but those in Pergamos tolerated them.

2. Probably early forms of gnosticism refuted in 1 John - Christ hated this doctrine - 2:6

**Revelation 2:6 "But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.**

3. Taught grace gives us license to do what we want. 1 John

4. William Barclay

“The fault of the Nicolaitans was that they were seeking to adjust Christianity to the level of the world rather than lift the world to the level of Christianity. In other words, they were following a policy of compromise simply and solely to save themselves from trouble they were afraid and unwilling to face.”

**E) Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth. V. 16**

1. The only way to deal with religious error is to go back to the truth.

2. Cast off the false doctrine, don’t try to incorporate it into your religion.

**F) To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives**

1. Manna is what God gave the children of Israel to eat in the wilderness for 40 years.

2. White stone was used at a trial to announce a verdict of innocence, purity.

**II) Application**

**A) Be faithful where you are:**

1. Is it easier to live a Christian life and talk about spiritual matters when we are surrounded by people who believe and follow the Bible (Acts 11:26; Heb 10:24,25),

2. What would we do if we were citizens of Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Africa, China, Russia, etc…?

3. Would we suffer for Christ?

**B) Compromise is a prevalent disposition today –**

1. Radical extremist is used to describe some dedicated religious people today.

2. While we must seek to live peaceably with all men - we cannot compromise the truth by compromising with evil -

**1 Corinthians 5:6 Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?**

3. The compromise of spiritual principles is how we slowly become conformed to this world - Rom 12:1-3; Eph 5:1-15; 1 Jn 2:15-17

4. What fellowship has light with darkness - 2 Cor 6:14

5. No fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Eph. 5:11

**Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God . . . do not bid God-speed. 2 John 9, 10**

* + - Homosexuality / Same sex marriage / Adultery
    - Fornication / Abortion
    - Divorce for any cause
    - Drunkenness / Revelries / Drinking Socially
    - Lasciviousness / Immodesty.
    - Denominationalism / Error / Unscriptural practices …

**C) TEST: Are we standing for the truth where we ARE? …**

1. Taking a stand for the Lord’s church? — **Romans 16:16**.

2. Telling others what they must do to be saved — **Mark 16:16**

3. Standing in opposition to false worship? — **John 4:24; Mat 15:7-9**

4. Refusing to participate in the social gospel?

**D) Jesus DEMANDS we stand with Him & AGAINST SIN! — 2:16**

1. How can we stand strong against the ever present culture of our day?

a. Reverence For God

b. See The Seriousness of Sin

c. Resolve To Please God

d. Trust The Lord

e. Strengthened By Each Victory

**E) Invitation & Promise — 2:17**

1. Remaining loyal in the midst of hardship can be done through Christ - (Phili 4:13)

2. True riches ONLY gained by faithfully serving Jesus - A wonderful reward awaits

3. Is serving Christ & receiving the salvation He offers worth whatever pain & suffering this life may bring for you?