

THE CHURCH AT PERGAMOS

Rev. 2:12-17

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Already noticed two churches - one had a grievous fault (Ephesus) one had no fault listed against it (Smyrna) and when visited in 1889 still existed and was said to have 70,000 professing Christians
- B. Pergamos was sixty miles northeast of Smyrna
- C. It once served as capital of one of the small kingdoms which arose after the breakup of Alexander's
- D. Pergamos was also an idolatrous city with a great altar of Zeus which stood nearly 50 ft. high more than 100 feet square at its base (see slides of map and ruins)
- E. This city (modern Bergama) still exists (when book was published from which research was done several years ago – approx. 14,000 population and 3,000 professing Christianity - more recent sources says 63,000 population. with a few known believers but no churches, it is primarily Muslim – closest faithful church I could find would be Athens, Greece) Now look at text and lessons.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE POWER OF WORD SPOKEN BY CHRIST

- A. A sharp sword with two edges
 - 1. Sword of the spirit, the word of God Eph 6:17
 - 2. Quick and powerful Heb 4:12
 - 3. Smite the nations with it Rev 19:15
- B. Has the power to convict the sinner
 - 1. Pentecost Acts 2:38
 - 2. Paul chief of sinners 1Tim 1:15
 - 3. Word convicted Paul Acts 9:6

II. COMMENDATIONS OF CHRIST

- A. Dwellest where Satan's seat is v.13
 - 1. Possible referred to the great altar of Zeus
 - 2. In any case it was a great center of idolatry
- B. Hold fast my name v.13
 - 1. Even in this idolatrous place they remained true to the name of Christ (shows it is possible)
 - 2. Many today are not satisfied with His name
 - 3. Suffer as a Christian 1Pet 4:16
- C. Not denied my faith v.13
 - 1. Cannot please God without faith Heb 11:6
 - 2. Must be faithful Rev 2:10
 - 3. If deny Christ he will deny us Matt 10:32,33
- D. Remained faithful even in the face of some of them being slain (Antipas) v.13

III. REBUKES OF THE LORD (things held against them)

- A. Hold the doctrines of Balaam v.14
 - 1. Balaam showed Balac how to lead the children of Israel astray Num 31:16; 25:1-5
 - 2. Caused them to commit fornication and worship idols
- B. Also, them which hold doctrine of Nicolaitanes v.15
 - 1. According to two early writers this sect was founded by Nicolaus, one of the seven chosen in Acts 6:5
 - 2. Doctrine of fleshly indulgences as well as possibly Gnosticism (superior knowledge)
- C. We are taught to avoid false teachers Rom 16:17
 - 1. We must prove all things 1Thess 5:21
 - 2. Peter said there shall be false teachers 2Pet 2:1
 - 3. Paul predicted false teachers Acts 20:29,30
 - 4. Paul warned Galatia not to accept any other Gospel Gal 1:8,9

IV. EXHORTATIONS FROM THE LORD

- A. They were told to repent v.16
 - 1. Else he would use the sword on them
 - 2. Repent or perish
- B. Also told to hear (take heed) v.17
 - 1. Hear and do: like wise man Matt 7:24
 - 2. Hear and do not: like foolish man Matt 7:26

V. PROMISES MADE TO ONE WHO OVERCOMES v.17

- A. Give hidden manna, a white stone, and new name
- B. Eternal life and recognition as God's child

CONCLUSION:

- A. Here is a congregation standing for Christ in face of being put to death
- B. Yet they were tolerating false teachers
- C. Paul said a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump 1Cor 5:6
- D. Make sure that we never tolerate false teachers
- E. True, we work with weak members and tolerate some things, but we can never tolerate false teaching or else like Pergamos we will stand condemned by the word of God