

Series: You Got Mail (5/26/19)

Title: Pergamos: The Lenient Church

Text: (Rev 2:12-17)

John dictates the next letter to the 7 churches.

Some believe these 7 churches depict different era's
of the what is referred to as the Church Age.

Typifying Constantine & the Roman Catholic Church
(313AD - 590AD)

I believe that these 7 churches.

7 is God's number of perfection/completion.
Are Typical of church throughout the last 2000yrs.

Typifies the Marriage of the Church and the World.

Typified in the Mustard Seed Parable (Matt 13:31-32)
Birds: A Mixed Multitude: (Matt 14:4, 19)

Here Satan quits fighting the church and joins it:
"If you can't beat 'um, Join 'um"

Our duty is not to defeat Satan, because we can't.
We Are only Called to resist Him.

(1 Pet 5:9) *Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing
that the same afflictions are accomplished in your
brethren that are in the world.*

I. The Assembly of the Lord Jesus:

A Church with Bad Surroundings:

Pergamos: the name means *Marriage*.

A Union of the church and the world.

Pergamos was the center of 4 pagan cults.

(Dionysus, Esclepurs, Zeus, Athena)

Pergamos was known for their Emperor Worship.

A Church of the True & Living God:

In the world, but not of the World: (Jn 17:11,14)

In the World shall have tribulation: (Jn 16:33)

Fear Not, Our Lord has overcome the World:

II. The Author: The Lord Jesus

**Jesus Identifies Himself specifically to the Church
of Pergamos:**

*(Rev 2:12) And to the angel of the church in
Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath
the sharp sword with two edges;*

(Heb 4:12)(Eph 6:17) *sword of the spirit.*

Also described this way in (Rev 1:16)

III. The Approval of the Lord Jesus:

Jesus Commends the Church of Pergamos:

(Rev 2:13) I know thy works,

"I Know thy Works"

*(1 Sam 2:3) Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let
not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD
is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are
weighed.*

God knows our Doings and Our Intensions.

God Sees Our Works: He takes note of them.
Many people feel that the good they do is overlooked.
NOT TRUE!

(Dan 2:22) *He revealeth the deep and secret things:
he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light
dwelleth with him.*

**“and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat
is:”**

I know you are serving in a tough place.
It was an international city.
It was a religious city.
It had 5 cults +Emperor Worship.
Sound like our neighborhood.
We are in an International city.
Every religion you can think of is represented here.
Even the Worship of Government & Ideology.

Pergamos was a Sinful City

Satan felt right at home there.
Historically, More Idols per capita than any other city.

**Tis is how We Make Satan feel at home at our
house.**

How many Idols do you have?
What do you possess that you would not get rid of for
God?

That new 75” Hell - O - Vision?

Illus: *We went without a TV for an entire year.*

“Satan Seat” - Satan is not in Hell:

(1 Pet 5:8) *Be sober, be vigilant; because your
adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about,
seeking whom he may devour:*

Satan is not a Beast with a Tale & Horns:

He is the Prince of this world (Jn 12:31; 14:30; 16:11)
He is the most beautiful Creature:
(Ezek 28:12-13) *Thou sealest up the sum, full of
wisdom, and perfect in beauty. 13 Thou hast been in
Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy
covering,*

Satan is alive & well in NoVA!

Actually, he is quite Comfortable & Active here.

(1 Tim 3:7), (1 Tim 6:9), (2 Tim 2:26)

All speak of falling prey to the ***Snare of the Devil.***
We are trapped by Satan, he uses our pride against us.

Satan is quite successful in our area as the worship of
Power, Public Education, & Prosperity are ends in
themselves.

“thou holdest fast my name,”

Steadfastness amidst evil surroundings.

Not ashamed to be called by His name.

(Mark 8:38) *Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of
me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful*

generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

Even in the face of where they lived.

“Satan’s Seat” - “Thrown”

Center of his governmental power. ie. *County Seat.*

Where Satan’s Power is Concentrated & greatest.

“and hast not denied my faith,

Christianity is not determined by locality, but by our character.

How do we deny Christ’s Name & Truth?

1. We never mention Him to anyone.
2. By Allowing False Doctrine to stand unchallenged.
3. By Unholy Living.

Christ is to be obeyed as a Master, as well as to be believed as a Teacher.

4. By Forsaking Christ, quitting the church of God, quitting the people of God, & the Service of God.

“Used to” Christians.

“I “Used to” go to church” - has denied Jesus.

It IS Possible to live the Christian Life Anywhere and Everywhere - Even in Satan’s Backyard.

There are plants which will bloom in some latitudes and die in others.

Tropical shrubs will not flourish in the Arctic

Alpine flora are not found on low-lying plains.

BUT Christianity can live wherever a man can live.

B/c it is a matter of personal character, and that is a matter of choice, and a man is always what he chooses to be.

He may be a Christian who chooses, in any circumstances, or in any place, to Honor Christ in his choices.

Obadiah kept his conscience clear in Ahab’s house.

Daniel preserved his integrity amid the corruption of the court of Babylon;

Nehemiah maintained his piety in the palace of the Persian emperor.

Paul maintained his testimony & service in the Mamertine prison.

God is more interested in the Character of a person than He is the circumstances where they are found.

Its true that some places are easier than others.

Bible verses on T shirts, trucks, walls of restaurants in Arkansas.

A simple flower in the window of shack is of greater beauty than a prize rose in a window of a mansion.

And what is true of geographic places is equally true of occupations,

We Can serve Christ in Any profession or trade.

They Did Not deny the “Faith” (the Truth of Christ) even in face of real persecution,

(Mark 8:34-37) *Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 35 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. 36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? 37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

“even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.”

There was a day when Satan called his name.

“Antipas was my faithful martyr”

Oh to be referred to by Jesus as *“My Faithful Martyr”*
How would you like to be remembered for eternity?
Faithful, Holy, even though they live in Sin City.
We like telling stories when we relate to each other.
Some people like Fish Stories, or

Stories about Heath Issues.

Stories about experiences we had.

When ever the topic of Tornadoes comes up Sara tells the story of how her and Josh survived a Tornado.

You would have enjoyed it better had you known you were going to live through it. Right!

I think we are going to be fellowshiping in heaven telling our stories.

Imagine Antipas’ story.

“On the day Satan called my name, I did it for Jesus”
Jesus refers to Antipas as HIS Faithful Martyr.

Antipas Might have enjoyed it more had he known the reward he was about to receive!

Remember When Satan Called for Peter?

(Lk 22:31-32) *And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: 32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*

How would you like it of Satan called your name?

“Can _____ come out and play?”

There are days when Satan calls your name.

“But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not:”
YOU CAN be faithful.

YOU CAN receive His strength.

Its Called GRACE!

you might even find it easier to endure if you would remember the Reward that is waiting for you.

“My Faithful Martyr”

There are days when Satan calls your name.

By Faith, through the Grace of God, you can be faithful unto death.

Satan probably wont be calling for your physical death, but the death of your testimony.

Satan doesn't want to take away your life.

Satan wants to take away your testimony.

You switch teams when that happens.

Oh your heaven bound, but NO Earthly Good.

Faithfulness is our only Option.

Don't Deny Jesus when your faith is tried.

When persecution raged with greatest violence in Pergamon, they had maintained the greatest Faithfulness for Christ.

IV. The Admonition of the Lord Jesus:

Jesus Condemns the Church of Pergamos:

(Rev 2:14-15) But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat

things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

Talking about A Philosophy of Compromise:

“Thou hast there”

You compromised and let them in.

The Purpose of Baptism is to protect the church from this mess.

When you found out what they believed, you didn't correct it!

They had allowed people to teach False Doctrine.

“the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.”

Ref to (Num 25:1-3 and 31:15-16)

Balam counseled Balak to introduce sin into the camp of Israel, thus compromising them and taking away the blessings & protection of God.

This included both the infiltration of immorality through loose women and the idolatry they advocated.

Compromise with the world and the breaking down of barriers of separation from the World.

1. They were avoiding preaching against popular sins.

*John R. Rice preaching against Tobacco in W/S in NC
“We have to make a living...So does the Whore’s in
the Redlight district, but you don’t condone their sin.”*

I don’t want to offend my family member.
Truth can be offensive to Sinful Flesh.

2. Had accepted False Doctrine & False Teachers (Committed Spiritual Fornication)

They had allowed these people to join and to lead
others into their sin with out being rebuked for it.

The Secondary Benefits.

It feeds my curiosity for Hidden Knowledge.

I like the person who is peddling Satan’s Garbage.
*I don’t want to offend my Momma who likes that
heretic.*

*They have a great children’s program that I use for
Free babysitting.*

False Doctrine of Baalim: *“Its OK If it Prospers You.”*
*“Its OK to Steal, Cheat, Lie, Betray Trust, Etc as long
as it benefits you.”*

They have been Tolerant of corrupt Doctrine, Heretics
It destroys our Testimony.

The World knows how Christians are supposed to Act.
“eat things sacrificed unto idols”

This was not actually sinful, it just looked bad in the
eyes of the Lost World.

It hurt their Testimony.

(1 Thes 5:22) *Abstain from all appearance of evil.*

The Apostles had encouraged the gentile believers to
avoid this to maintain a good testimony in the eyes of
the lost. (Acts 15:20,29)

The more we imitate the Lost World, the less credible
we are to the Lost World.

LOST People are not expecting us to act like them,
that why they mock us in the NEWS when one of us
messes up!

CARNAL Christians want us to imitate the World so
they can fulfill their flesh.

I am not interested in pleasing Carnal Christians.

I am trying to Reach those in Darkness.

*Illus: When the Lost want help, they turn to Christian
Radio & TV, not Rock 102.*

The World knows that they don’t have the answer, but
our sinful testimony drives them away from the Truth!

**Satan Cannot Defeat us from without, so He wants
to Join us & destroy us from within.**

Compromise Salvation, Baptism, Church Membership

People never ask me to compromise because it challenges them to be more holy.

The Temptation to Compromise:

Popularity: Draw a Crowd.

Praise: To be lauded by the Crowd.

Preeminence: Center of Attention

15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

False Doctrine of the Nicolaitans: They taught that...

Pleasure/Prosperity are the marks of a the blessed life.

The Prosperity Gospel is not a NEW thing.

(Rev 2:6) But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

God Hates It!

God hates things that are against His Word.

Satan relentlessly seeks to infiltrate the Church and influence God's people in the church with the things of the world.

Satan uses the Fleshly desire for Prosperity to infiltrate the church.

It continues as a problem to this day.

V. The Appeal of the Lord Jesus:

Jesus Councils the Church of Pergamos:

(Rev 2:16) “Repent;”

Commanded to Repent: Return to the highest level.

Highest level of Separation from the World.

(2 Cor 6:14-18)

“or else I will come unto thee quickly,”

“thee” ? That is the Pergamons.

Your testimony is So Compromised, So Awful, So Unbelievable that people will not believe because of it and not get saved.

To keep from needlessly sending lost people to hell, who would have gotten saved if they saw a better testimony of Christianity, I will remove you.

I will take you out of the way as a hinderance to lost people.

“and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.”

“Them”? Those that will not repent!

The lost world will also face Jesus; fighting them with the sword of His Mouth.

The Lost people who would have otherwise had been saved, but your testimony stunk up the whole process.

They will needlessly die & go to hell.
Because you compromised the gospel.

God's Own Word will defeat them.

(Rev 19:15) *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations:*

(Rev 19:21) *And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.*

God Did Not Say...

When I see the liquor crowd get right... I'll save lost.
When I see the Abortion crowd get right, I'll save lost
When I see the Gambling crowd get right I'll save lost

(2 Chron 7:14) **If my people, which are called by my name**, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

Revival is about God's People Get right.
Revival is when God's people Confess & Repent.
Revival is when Sin is expelled from the Lives of God's people.

The By-Product of that is that the Lost are drawn to Jesus and are saved.

I want my MOM saved,
I want my DAD saved,
I want my HUSBAND saved,
I want my Prodigal, Rebellious CHILD to come back to God.

Then YOU, The CHRISTIAN REPENT!
Surrender ALL OF YOU to GOD!
Let the Power of God REVIVE you!
Then the MIRACLE will come.

V. The Assurance of the Lord Jesus:

Jesus Challenges the Church of Pergamos:

(Rev 2:17) *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches;*

“To him that overcometh”

Overcome the desire to Fulfill the Lusts of our Flesh with our favorite Sins!

Overcome the Lust of the Flesh to Live to fulfill our Flesh!

Walking with God in not Convenient!
Being Spirit Filled is not easy, because we have to crucify our Flesh, & Our Pride!

Christ's Promise to Us if we will:

will I give to eat of the hidden manna,

Speaks of Hidden Spiritual Blessings.

Jesus said *“I am the bread that came down from heaven”*

If we will give ourselves to Him, over earthly treasure, fleshly pleasure, and Personal accolades; He will give Himself fully to us.

and will give him a white stone, (Divine Distinction)

When acquitted of all wrong doing or crimes, the accused was given a white stone to show their innocence to all.

The guilty was given a black stone.

If we Repent and cling to Christ in Faithfulness, Our righteousness will evidenced for eternity to all.

and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

Explain the Tessera: A small tile, stone, or bone.

When 2 men meet on their travels & become friends, they write their names on a Tessera.

It was a token of Friendship & guarantee of reception into their home, Hospitality & Protection.

(Prov 27:10) *Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not;*

Even if the Father died, the son would honor his father's promise.

If you think you want this!

You want God's Blessings.

You want God's Praise.

Its starts with Salvation in Christ:

Give the Gospel

(1) We must become more familiar with God's Word.

(Read it)

(2) Memorize it so we Meditate on it:

(3) We must be in prayer while we Meditate on the Word in our hearts.

(Ask God to Apply it to you personally)

(4) We must cultivate the habit of submission to God's Word. (By Faith Obeying & Living it)

The Lessons of Pergamos is:

In Our Zeal to do God's work,

We can be Tempted to Compromise.

We must Repent when we do.

We must Rebuke False Doctrine & False Teachers.

We Must be Faithful to hold fast Christ's Name in our Testimony, and Not Compromise His Truth in our Teaching.

Christ Promises to Give Himself to us fully, 7 yo give us a Token that guarantees entrance & Hospitality.