

What God Expects of the Church | Part 3

Lesson 8

Revelation 2:12-17

January 22, 2023

Remaining Faithful

INTRODUCTION

There's a saying: "Biblical Christianity is unpopular. Popular Christianity is unbiblical." The role of the church is not to be popular and make people feel comfortable. It is supposed to be where people hear the Truth, are convicted of their sins, and get saved.

The church at Pergamum, which was surrounded by pagan culture, is like many churches today that fail to follow Biblical warnings against worldliness. John states one such warning:

"Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever." (1 John 2:15-17)

The church must never compromise with sin, or as with the church at Pergamum, it risks facing Christ's judgment.

***Memory verse: "Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth."*—Revelation 2:16**

Pray, and read Revelation 2:12-17. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

OBSERVATION: What does the passage say?

1. Who is “him who has the sharp, double-edged sword” whose words John is writing to the church at Pergamum? (See Revelation 1:1, 16, 19:13-16)
2. Despite where the church lives (i.e., in the world where “Satan has his throne”), what did the believers do? (Revelation 2:13)
3. What few things does Jesus still have against the church at Pergamum? (Revelation 2:14)
4. What does Jesus say they must do, and if they do not, what will happen to them? (Revelation 2:16)
5. To those churches that repent, what will Jesus give? (Revelation 2:17)

4. What does it mean that, “To the one who is victorious [i.e., believers (1 John 5:4-5)], I will give some of the hidden manna”? (John 6:48-51)

APPLICATION: How do the passages apply to your life?

1. False teaching seems to be creeping into churches more frequently than ever before. Have you personally witnessed false teaching in any church you’ve attended? What, if anything, did you do in response to it? Based on what you’ve learned from this lesson, what do you think you should have done?

2. John Piper lists four tests to discern whether or not someone is a false teacher:

- Fruit Test—Matthew 7:15-20
- Doctrine Test—1 John 4:1-3
- Scripture Test—1 John 4:6
- Gospel Test—Galatians 1:8-9

Write a prayer asking God for discernment so that you are not led astray by false teachers.

3. James (4:4) wrote that, “anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God”. Some churches today have become enemies of God by tolerating, accepting, and sometimes even promoting sinful behavior through false teaching. Do you know anyone that has fallen for these dishonest messages? How can you help them learn the truth?