

THE CHURCH AT PERGAMOS

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CITY OF PERGAMOS

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1. LOCATION: About 40 miles north of Ephesus and about 15 miles inland in the valley of Caicus.
 2. One thing that set it apart from all other cities was that it was a capital city. Compare to our modern London, Paris or Berlin.
 3. Was not the great commercial or trade city as had been the other two...but was superior in historical greatness.
 4. Had one of the most famous libraries in the world, at least 200,000 volumes. This back when every thing was written by hand.
 5. Had been a capital city for over 300 years.
 6. In fact the word parchment is derived from the name Pergamos. (The early conflict with Egypt over a librarian). Egypt cut off supply of papyrus. Thus Pergamos developed animal skins or parchment.
 7. It was also famous as a center of religious worship. (1000 feet high)
 - a. The worship of Asklepios...The god of healing...The emblem of Asklepios is the serpent.
 - b. It also gloried that it was the last outpost of Greek civilization, beyond lay the uncivilized.
 - c. Very proud of all of its Greek gods, particularly Zeus and Athene.
 8. It was also a center of Caesar worship.
 - a. Another point in this was that it was not a conquered city.
 - b. It had literally given itself to Rome.
 - c. The king (Attalus III) dies and in his will, willed the city to Rome.
 9. Thus Pergamos was an old, historically, great city. Resting much on the orthodox. Proud of Caesar...And very disdainful of a new upstart religion. Especially one that would not bow to Rome.
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COMMENDATION

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- A. Accented by fact that it was in an exceedingly difficult place. "Where Satan's throne is" and "where Satan dwelleth."
 1. This would suggest the moral and religious corruption that was there.
 2. Great luxury, accompanied by great vice.
 3. Probably had more idols than any other city in Asia.
 - B. "THOU HOLDEST FAST MY NAME."
 1. This of course a symbol of himself.
 2. That is, they continued to acknowledge Him as Their, Savior, Lord and Master.
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COMMENDATION, cont.

- C. "THOU DIDST NOT DENY MY FAITH":
1. Two possible thoughtsconnected.
 - a. They personally remained faithful.
 - b. And Faithful to the FAITH, the Gospel.
 2. An example of loyalty is Antipas, "my witness."
 - a. We know very little of this man.
 - b. Yet some popular outbreak against the church resulted in his death.
- D. EVERY CHRISTIAN in every age is surrounded by evil, to be confronted by some kind of persecution for his loyalty to Christ.
1. We must ever strive by God's grace to hold fast the Lord's name.
 2. Can the Lord say to you, "**Thou holdest fast my name and did not deny my faith**"
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CENSURE

- A. Notice that He does not direct His censure at those who were guilty of holding false teachings, **but at those who had fellowship with them.**
1. Vs. 14. The error from within was potentially more dangerous than that from without. (See I Cor. 5:1-6)
 2. In this, there is a great lesson for the church today.
- B. THE SIN OF BALAAM.
1. Eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication.
 2. The idea here and in II Peter 2:15; Jude 11, **is to try to find a way around the specific instructions of God.**
 3. They want to do something and try to find a way to justify it.
- C. THE ANTINOMIANS....described as "patrons of free vice under the mask of free grace." (Romans 6:1,2).
1. Taught that Christians were not under the obligations of morality.
 2. Because men are saved by grace through faith and not by their own merits or works, it was argued that an "elect person" did not sin even when doing what in another would be wrong.
 3. A saved person, then, could commit such an act as fornication without sinning.
 4. It would also be the logical outcome of the argument of not being able to fall from grace today.
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COUNSEL

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- A. REPENT:.....of what.
1. Tolerance of false doctrine.
 2. Of not maintaining discipline.
- B. REPENT;.....**or** what?
1. I come quickly....
 2. Make war....
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PROMISE

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- A. RECEIVE THE “HIDDEN MANNA”
1. Manna was something that came from God .
 2. It came to save life. (Israel in the wilderness.)
 3. This manna comes from God to save the soul.
- B. “A WHITE STONE” and a “NEW NAME”.
1. Name to be given.
 2. A **white stone is for one who is accepted....**
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