

B.O.S.S. Study Guide - Week of April 26, 2010
Studies in the Book of Revelation

What do we know about the city and the church at Pergamos?

Though they were living in the belly of the beast - where Satan is enthroned (from verse 13), two positive things are said of them. **What are they? They remained true to the name of Christ and secondly, they did not renounce His faith.**

These must have been things that they were under pressure to do.

Though these are very positive comments that Jesus make concerning them, He has concerns. The first concern is that not all of them are living true to their understanding and faith in Jesus. They had not denied the faith but they were not living consistent with what they had come to know. This is the same concern Paul has as he addresses these same churches in his circulating book to the Ephesians.

Read Ephesians 4:17-24

Paul is insisting that two things are to happen, in your growing relationship with Christ. The first is in verse 17, **what is it?** Apparently some in the church at Pergamos were living as though they were still unbelievers.

The reason for their condition is found in verse 18. It was because of a lack of clear understanding of the nature of God and their life in relation to Him. **They were willing ignorant of God, refusing to acknowledge their condition as separated from Him due to the hardness of what? (verse 18) This spiritual condition of the heart was seen in their continual pursuit of what? (verse 19)**

In contrast, Paul declares that it is possible to know, in relation to truth and in the realm of what is real, Christ in your life now. This comes through hearing of the truth, being willing to be taught His life and to allow the reality of Christ in our lives, to shape our behavior. For Paul this is critical to the Christian life.

Both of these groups were present at the church of Pergamos. Let me remind you about the story of Balaam. Balak was the king of Moab and wanted Balaam to curse Israel. However, God prevented Balaam from doing that, so he devised a plan that would attack and destroy Israel indirectly. He used the daughters of Moab to seduce the men of Israel into sexual immorality and the worship of their god, Baal. What he could not do through the front door, he did through the back and God's judgment fell on Israel due to their immorality and idolatry which they were led into by the deceptive plan of Balaam. Apparently, similar deceptive practices were part of this churches life. **How could such a thing happen in the church in general?**

How could such things happen in the life of MLC?

Are such things happening in the life of MLC?

More importantly is this question: are their areas of compromise in our own life, areas that Satan has attacked through the back door of your life and found entrance? From other scriptures we know that Satan uses the following to invade and influence our lives; anger, un-forgiveness, lying, deceit, idolatry, sexual immorality and substance abuse.

The description of Jesus presents the same solution that Paul presents, a willingness to allow the truth of the word of God, the reality of His holy nature, His eternal and inescapable presence, His love and justice, to penetrate our hearts to the point that it fashions our behavior and defends us from the attacks of the wicked one. **Read Ephesians 6:10-19.**

This passage is referring to the armor of God. If you notice, the armor is the word. It is the believers opportunity to apply the God's word to the situations of life and thus protect and defend themselves from the wiles of the Devil.

The warning to Pergamos is that the word of God that brought salvation by His grace would be the same word that would bring justice and judgment into their lives, if things did not change.

What was the solution? It is the first word of verse 16 NIV. The solution for them is still the solution today.

Why was the whole church commanded to repent? To what extent was the whole body responsible for this situation?

The promise to the church who overcomes is twofold, verse 17.

What was manna? What did it do for the people?

God promises to completely and totally fulfill and supply the needs of His people, which is something that sexual immorality and idolatry promises but can never do.

The second was a new identity and new name, maybe having something to do with the time in which the old self is finally thrown off and the new self will be eternally realized, (a reality Paul tells us we are now in the process of doing). **Read again Ephesians 4:22-24.** Discuss any final thoughts from the group as we compare Pergamos and Mother Lode Church.