



CHRIST'S EVALUATION OF HIS CHURCH "True-Heartedness in the Church" Revelation 2:12-17

No. 1491

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Pergamum was never able to compete with Ephesus and Smyrna as a trade center but after it was willed over to Rome by its dying king, it became the capital of Asia and was therefore of great political significance. This made life in the church particularly difficult.

I. Words of Recognition.

- A. Recognition of Christ.
 1. Whose words are like a sword. vv. 12, 16; 1:16
 2. They penetrate with blessing or judgment.
- B. Recognition of circumstances. v. 13
 1. You live where Satan resides.
 - a. Their place was permanent not temporary.
 - b. Their environment was hostile not benevolent.
 2. You live where Satan rules.
 - a. "Asklepios Soter"—God of healing—serpent.
 - b. Altar of Zeus on Acropolis.
 - c. Center of Caesar worship—"Neokoros."
- C. Recognition of constancy.
 1. You remain true to my name.
 - a. I am "Soler" not "Asklepios."
 - b. I am "Kurios" not Caesar.
 2. You kept the faith.
 - a. You knew what and why and who you believed.
 - b. Like Antipas you were a faithful "martus."

II. Call to Repentance. vv. 14-16

- A. You hold to my name.
- B. You tolerate those who hold to Nicolaitan teaching. cf. Revelation 2:6
 1. Historical example of Balaam and Balak. Numbers 25:1
 2. Contemporary repeat by Nicolaitans.
 - a. Shameful social behavior.
 - b. Sinful sexual behavior.
- C. You need to repent and deal with these people.
- D. Compare with church at Ephesus. Revelation 2:2

III. Promises of Reward. v. 17

- A. Receiving hidden manna.
 1. Manna in the lost ark. Hebrews 9:4
 2. Rabbinical hopes of recovery.
 3. Christ the Living Bread. John 6:30-35
- B. Receiving a white stone.
 1. White stone of acquittal.
 2. White stone a free pass.
 3. White stone an amulet for safety.
 4. White stone with personal new name.