

Shadows Of Christ & His Bride

Lesson #37

No Compromise: No Regret

October 2, 2024

Rev. 2:12-13 And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, 'These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: ¹³ "I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

Rev. 2:14a BUT I have a few things against thee,

BUT: Check the context to help understand the "change of direction."

Their holding fast in a difficult environment did not excuse their acceptance of false teaching that Jesus now describes.

Rev. 2:14b-16 because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

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

It seems Balaam's actions are given first as an example of the doctrine and actions of the Nicolaitans to make sure we understand the doctrine they taught.

Nicolaitans identifies the group who were teaching Balaamism.

- Note the words "thus ... in the same way" of verse 15.
- It is likely the Nicolaitans practiced fornication, and the eating of things sacrificed to idols while outwardly professing Christianity. [Spiros Zodhiates]

"Nicolaitans" is derived from the Greek word *nikolaos*, a compound of *nikos* and *laos*.

- *nikos* is the Greek word means to conquer or to subdue.
- laos* is the Greek word for the people. We get the word *laity*.

When these two words are compounded into one, they form the name *Nicolas*, which literally means *one who conquers and subdues the people*.

Spiros Zodhiates: Since *Nicolas* means victor of the people and *Balaam* means devourer of the people, the two in symbolic unity signify religious seducers of the people.

Wiersbe: It seems clear they were subjugating the people to Satan's authority by teaching compromise with the world which always neutralizes the church and results in a weakened and powerless form of Christianity. The church loses its pilgrim perspective and adopts the viewpoint, values, priorities, and pursuits of the world.

Rev. 2:16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

Wiersbe: Despite their courageous stand against persecution, the believers in Pergamos were not faultless before the Lord. Satan had not been able to destroy them by coming as the roaring lion, but he was making inroads as the deceiving serpent.

A group of compromising people had infiltrated the church fellowship, and Jesus Christ hated their doctrines and their practices. The implication is: The believers in the church at Pergamum knew about the false teaching but had compromised their convictions.

A church's or individual's good works do not give liberty to allow license to sin or compromise. Smyrna went straight into persecution because they stood for the truth of God's Word. Pergamos compromised to avoid... I don't want to be persecuted.

I don't want to be called: intolerant, bigoted, radical Christian... I'll burn some incense to Caesar and then go worship my God. That is the doctrine of Balaam!

Strauss: It is ever and always sinful to countenance evil among an assembly of believers. It is not enough to be grieved, and even shocked; the guilty one must repent and forsake his evil way. And if there be no repentance, those who have the oversight can take no other course of action except to expel. Though not guilty themselves, they failed to censure those who were guilty. They tolerated them when they should have tried them. The present tendency to minimize sin in the church has reduced her spiritual tone to a subnormal status.

Wiersbe: The congregation or the individual Christian that compromises with the world just to avoid suffering or achieve success is committing "spiritual adultery" and being unfaithful to the Lord.

I Cor. 5:1 It is reported commonly that there is fornication [sexual immorality] among you, a kind of immorality that is condemned even among the [unbelieving] Gentiles: that someone has [an intimate relationship with] his father's wife. [amplified]

I Cor. 5:2 And ye are puffed up [proud; arrogant], You should have mourned in shame so that the man who has done this [disgraceful] thing would be removed from your fellowship!

1. Paul states: You should have mourned over the sin.

This is the word used for mourning over the dead, which is perhaps the deepest and most painful kind of personal sorrow possible. Instead of mourning, the people at Corinth were puffed up. They were boasting of the fact that their church was so "open-minded" that even fornicators could be members in good standing!

Consider: "What will this sin do to the church?" Christians are "called to be saints" [I Cor. 1:2]. This means holy living to the glory of God. If a Christian loves his church, he will not stand by and permit sin to weaken it and perhaps ruin its testimony.

2. Paul states: Judge the Sin I Cor. 5:3-5

For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

The sin was not to be swept under the rug; for, after all, it was known far and wide even among the unsaved who were outside the church.

Paul described an official church meeting at which the offender was dealt with according to divine instructions. Public sin must be publicly judged and condemned.

The church was to come together and expel the offender. Note Paul's strong words

I Cor. 5:2 taken away from among you I Cor. 5:5 deliver such an one unto Satan

I Cor. 5:7 purge out" I Cor. 5:13 put away

Wiersbe: This was to be done by the authority of Jesus Christ—in His name—and not simply on the authority of the local church. Church membership is a serious thing and must not be treated carelessly or lightly.

Church discipline is not a group of "pious policemen" out to catch a criminal. Rather, it is a group of brokenhearted brothers and sisters seeking to restore an erring member of the family.

3. Paul States: There is Leaven In The Dough: Purge The Sin I Cor. 5:6-13

⁶Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: ⁸ Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Leaven, a picture of sin, is small but powerful; it works secretly; it "puffs up" the dough; it spreads. The sinning church member in Corinth was like a piece of yeast: he was defiling the entire loaf of bread, the congregation. It was like a cancer in the body that needed to be removed by drastic surgery. The church must purge itself of "old leaven"—the things that belong to the "old life" before we trusted Christ.

Context Num. 25: The people were weeping at the doorway of the tent of meeting because they were repenting and crying out for the end of the plague which had broken out after many of the people of Israel had yoked themselves with the deity of Baal-Peor.

Zimri, a leader in the tribe of Simeon (v. 14), not only attended the idolatrous feast but brought a Midianite woman named Cozbi (v. 15) back to the camp of Israel and openly took her into his tent right before the eyes of Moses and the weeping Israelites at the tabernacle door.

Weirsbe: Zimri was a prince in Israel and Cozbi was the daughter of a prince, so perhaps they thought their social status gave them the privilege of sinning. But one special act of judgment helped to bring the plague to an end and save the rest of the nation.

Num. 25:7-13 And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand;

⁸ And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel. ⁹ And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand.

¹⁰ And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy.

¹² Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace:

¹³ And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God and made an atonement for the children of Israel.

Consider: Because of his zeal for the honor of the Lord, Phinehas was given the special reward of a lasting priesthood for himself and his descendants.

Phinehas knew nothing about this reward before he acted, so his motive wasn't selfish. He was motivated by his zeal for the honor of God and the authority of His law.

Church Discipline: Forgotten Doctrine of the 21st Century

Church discipline is not easy or popular, but it is important. Its goal is restoration. If it is done properly, God can use it to convict and restore an erring believer.

- With respect to Jesus Christ: The Vindication and honor of His Name.
- With respect to the local church: To purify the church and discourage others from sin.
 - ❖ He who spares the guilty harms the innocent.
- With respect to the world: To preserve the Church's integrity and credibility as the Institution which "practices what it preaches."

Note: People are not removed from the fellowship because of the original sin.

It is because they will not repent.

II Corinthians 2:1-11 indicates that this man did repent and was restored to fellowship.

II Cor. 2:6-8 Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many.

⁷ so instead [of further rebuke, now] you should rather [graciously] forgive and comfort *and* encourage him, to keep him from being overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. [AMP]

⁸ Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him.

Too many churches sweep such things under the rug instead of obeying the Scriptures and confronting the situation boldly by "speaking the truth in love" [Eph. 4:15].

"Peace at any price" is not a Biblical principle, for there cannot be true spiritual peace without purity [James 3:13-18]. Problems that are swept under the rug have a way of multiplying and creating even worse problems later.

We must also get rid of malice and wickedness and replace them with sincerity and truth.

As a loaf of bread [I Cor. 10:17], the local church must be as pure as possible.

Truth: If you live Biblically, you will be persecuted.

There's no room for compromise. You can never suppress error by compromising with it.

The sword of judgment is poised over their heads. His patience is not limitless.

Admonition: Rev. 2:16 Repent or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

Wiersbe: It was more important that the church fear Christ's sword than the Roman sword.

The Issue: Three things marked the heresy at Pergamos: idolatry, immorality and infidelity. Either we repent of our compromise, acknowledge its presence and its evil and commit to moving in a Godly direction, or we face divine discipline.

Note: Both of these teachings dilute the Word of God to the extent that many are giving in to the world's standards. As soon as we allow ourselves to compromise for the sake of unity and peace, it will lead down a slippery slope into sin and the rejection of God's Word.

A.W. Tozer: Christianity has been watered down until the solution is so weak that if it were poison it would not hurt anyone, and if it were medicine, it would not cure anyone!

Swindoll: Compromise is like a cancerous tumor that penetrates and spreads through healthy flesh. Compromise allows the sinews of falsehood to invade the truth, ultimately destroying it. Only a sharp scalpel in the hands of a precise surgeon can remove the cancer without killing the patient. Likewise, Christ, the Great Physician, is qualified not only to diagnose, but also to successfully treat the insidious disease of compromise.

Millions of people go through all the motions of worship each week but maintain a heart that is completely out of touch with God. We can meticulously avoid all overt acts of worldliness as we might define them, and still have a heart full of hypocrisy, criticism of others, jealousy, bitterness, envy, and preoccupation with the details of life rather than eternal treasures.

Jesus is building a pure church, a chaste virgin. John describes the Bride of Christ:

"It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean;

for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints." [Rev. 19:8; Eph. 5:25-26]

II Cor. 11:2-3 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. ³ But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

- Simplicity - single-minded devotion; heartfelt devotion to Jesus
- Divided mind = broken relationship
- Carnal mind must be converted.
- However, a converted mind can be corrupted.
- A corrupted mind must be conquered.

Key: Your mind **MUST** be changed from an attitude of compromise to one of insistence on doctrinal and moral purity. Don't tolerate sin by bowing to the pressure to be open-minded! **LIVE DIFFERENTLY!** Worldly thinking must be dealt with positively and quickly or it eats into our lives individually. Like cancer, worldliness eats deeply into our viewpoint of life. Turn away from the world and back to the separated life to pursue holiness and godliness.

2. In the Old Testament, the manna stood for God's faithfulness to provide and sustain His people through the wilderness wanderings between Egypt and Canaan.
3. The manna was a special food, prepared by God, containing everything necessary for the sustenance and well-being of the physical body.
4. It was provided fresh day-by-day. The Israelites were to gather and eat the manna according to God's specific instructions. No supplementary food was provided or required.

Key: The "manna" the Israelites were given in the wilderness typified Jesus Christ, "the living bread that came down from heaven".

John 6:48-51 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.

This is the bread that comes down out of heaven, so that anyone may eat from it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats from this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I will give for the life of the world also is My flesh."

New Testament Believers:

1. Have been provided "Manna", the "living bread" during their pilgrim journey here on the earth to a heavenly land, wherein we will realize an inheritance.
2. The "manna" upon which Christians presently feed has been given to properly prepare and equip them for the wilderness or pilgrim journey.
3. As the manna of the Exodus sustained and strengthened the Israelites for 40 years of desert wanderings, so Jesus strengthens and sustains us spiritually as we walk through this life on our way to heaven.
4. Christians "eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood" [John 6:48-54] through the assimilation of the Word of God.
5. This Word is a special food, prepared by God, containing everything necessary for the sustenance and well-being of your growth and your soul.
6. The Spirit of God will render this food fresh day-by-day. Christians are to partake of the living Word through the written Word. No supplementary food has been provided; nor is any required.

James 1:21b Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

We need to daily feed upon His life in the Word for daily sustenance and blessing.

This and this alone can make us fruitful believers, and provide true happiness and stability of life, something which the allurements of the world simply cannot give.

Key: As a memorial to God's faithfulness, a portion of the manna was placed and thus hidden in the Ark of the Covenant [Ex. 16:32-34; Heb. 9:4].

The manna was hidden to the people, but it was visible to God.

Jesus is presently hidden from people, but He is visible to God.

Key: The provision is "manna" now and "hidden manna" yet future,

both given to equip Christians during particular periods for particular areas of service.

The "hidden manna" must be a parallel provision for *things beyond the wilderness journey*. The recipient of the hidden manna are the ones who overcome comprising the truths of God's Word.

- They stand against those who give God's people a license to sin with no divine judgment.
- They stand firm and do not affirm professing believers who practice sin.

Question: Do you think you are showing them an act of love by affirming their actions?
If you don't stand up and warn them, who will?

Repent from allowing these people to do such things in your presence. Get serious and separate yourself from them so they can understand that according to God's Word, the authority, that you are serious. That will give conviction.

They may get mad and leave. This will lead them down a dark road, hard road and then he will repent and come back. This is God's will.

So you don't have to watch in the day of judgment and be weeping; I knew they were living this lifestyle and I never said anything. I just let them go down the road; I even encouraged them. I was an accomplice - I even helped support them in their sin.

Wiersbe: Any theology that makes sin easy and divine punishment unimportant is NOT Biblical theology.

Key: Those who overcome: Jesus said, I will give to eat of the hidden manna...

It Can Be Safely Assumed That Partaking Of The Hidden Manna Will Constitute God's Provision To Properly Prepare & Equip Overcoming Christians For This 1000-year Period.

B. I Will Give Him A White Stone 3 Uses of White Stones

1. During the days when Revelation was written, and days prior to that time, giving one a white stone meant: A white stone was put in a vessel by a judge to vote for acquittal for a person on trial. The person charged with an offense had been acquitted and declared as justified. Justification on the basis of Christ's finished work at Calvary cannot be in view here.

Overcomers and non-overcomers alike would receive such a stone if that were the case.

Note: Since our works alone will be reviewed at the Judgment Seat of Christ, approval shown by the white stone must emanate out of a judgment of works.

A white stone will be given to every Christian whose works endure the fire, revealing approval on the basis of that coming under judgment — *works emanating out of faithfulness*.

2. A white stone was also given to the victor in a contest or battle, which is exactly what is in view through overcoming. It would be much like a 'well done' for service rendered.

Christians are presently in a battle, a warfare, against "*principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world* [*'age'*], *against spiritual wickedness in high places* [*against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenlies*]" (Eph. 6:12).

Satan and his angels use the world and the flesh in their never-ceasing efforts to bring about YOUR defeat. It is the victor — the one overcoming the world, the flesh, and the devil — that the promised white stone will be given.

3. Special stones were given which entitled the bearer to special hospitality and friendship. An interesting historical note: When a victor won in the games, it was not uncommon for the victor to be given as part of his prize a white stone. The white stone was his admission pass into the festival that was held following the games for all the victors.

Could it be that he who overcomes will receive the admission ticket to the marriage feast that inaugurates the Millennial Kingdom?

The white stone clearly symbolized special blessing and privilege that will be given to those believers who overcome the problems that were presented to the church of Pergamos.

C. In the stone a new name written, which no man knows saving he that receives it.

Biblically, a new name usually indicates a significant change of relationship with God.

Recall: Abram's name was changed to Abraham to portray the fact that he was to become the father of a multitude. Jacob, which means supplanter, was changed to Israel, the one over whom God would henceforth rule. Unstable Simon became Peter the little rock.

The one who overcomes is promised a new name which may show something of what God has accomplished in his or her life through a walk of faith and faithfulness.

The gift of this new name marks the overcomer's entrance to a new and higher stage of responsibility symbolizing new and greater authority.

When overcoming Christians go forth to rule with Christ in His kingdom, everything will be in a state of readiness. I believe through the provision of the tree of life, the hidden manna, the white stone, and the new name, those who overcome will be properly equipped for every facet of life in the kingdom as they rule the nations with Christ.

They will be given wisdom and knowledge to rule in equity, justice, and righteousness.

They will be provided with the necessary sustenance [physical and/or spiritual] to equip them for the position they are to hold. They will be given white stones showing their victory in this life and their abundant entrance to His Millennial Kingdom and the Marriage Feast.

The One with whom they are to rule as co-heirs will know them by a new name.

Through God's provision, a perfect rule will issue forth when man is once again brought back into the position for which he was originally created.

Jesus warned: Holding fast to Him would not be easy, but it would be well worth it.

Heb. 10:23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering;

(for he is faithful that promised;)

The King is coming for a Bride who has made herself ready and is watching for His return.