

The Connection

Messages of Hope



A Weekly Online Newsletter: Edition 848

August 13, 2025

“Jesus’ Letter to the Church at Pergamum (Revelation 2:12–17)”

Revelation 2:12–17 addresses the church in **Pergamum**, one of the seven churches to whom Christ, through the apostle John, delivers a specific message. This passage reveals both commendations and strong rebukes for the believers there. Here’s a breakdown of the situation, what the scripture says, and how it might apply to the **modern church**:

Scriptural Summary: Revelation 2:12–17 (Church at Pergamum)

Commendation (v.13)

“I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, not even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city—where Satan lives.”

- **Christ acknowledges** that the believers in Pergamum live in a spiritually dark place—described as where “Satan has his throne,” likely referring to rampant paganism, emperor worship, and idolatry.
- Despite this, many in the church **remained faithful**, even under persecution. One example is **Antipas**, a faithful martyr.

Rebuke (v.14–15)

“Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: There are some among you who hold to the teaching of Balaam... Likewise, you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.”

- Some in the church were **compromising morally and doctrinally**:
 - **Teaching of Balaam**: Encouraging idolatry and sexual immorality (a reference to Numbers 22–25).
 - **Nicolaitans**: A sect believed to promote similar compromises, perhaps justifying immoral behavior under the guise of Christian liberty.

- The rebuke is directed not only at those practicing these things, but at the church for **tolerating** such people within the community.

Call to Repentance (v.16)

“Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.”

- Christ warns of **judgment** if the church does not act to correct these problems.
- The “sword” is symbolic of Christ’s word—bringing truth, judgment, and division when necessary.

Promise to the Overcomer (v.17)

“To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it...”

- **Hidden manna**: Symbol of divine sustenance—spiritual nourishment for those who reject worldly compromise.
- **White stone with a new name**: Likely symbolic of **identity and acceptance**, possibly referencing the Roman custom of giving white stones to victors or for admission to feasts.

Spiritual Situation in Pergamum

- **Strengths**: Faithfulness under persecution, unwavering in public allegiance to Christ.
- **Weaknesses**: Tolerating false teaching and moral compromise within the church.
- **Warning**: Christ will discipline the church if it fails to cleanse itself of internal corruption.
- **Hope**: For those who stay faithful and reject compromise, spiritual reward and intimacy with Christ is promised.

HOPE Calendar

Wednesday, August 13
Study and Prayer
Bible Study @ 7pm
Prayer @ 7:45

Thursday, August 14
Worship Team Rehearsal @ 7:00

Sunday, August 17
Worship Team Run Through
@ 8:00 a.m.
Worship @ 9:30 a.m.
Sunday School @ 11:15

Wednesday, August 20
Study and Prayer
Bible Study @ 7pm
Prayer @ 7:45

Thursday, August 21
Worship Team Rehearsal @ 7:00

**Helping Hands for
August 17, 2025**

**Live Streaming
Al Floyd
Soundboard**

**ProPresenter
Bill Joyner
Communion
Elizabeth Floyd**

**Sunday's Scriptures &
Sermon Title**

**"The Quest to Know...
Kindness."**

Prophecies O.T.

Revealed....

N.T.

Aug 10	Mat 3:16
Aug 11	Ps 45:7-8
Aug 12	Luke 2:11
Aug 13	Ps 45:17
Aug 14	Eph. 1:20-21
Aug 15	Ps 55:12-14

GROW

Women of HOPE

**Meetings generally at HOPE
on the second and fourth
Saturdays
every month**

**"Food of the Month"
for the Raleigh Dream Center
Food Pantry**

**KID'S TREATS - Salty, Sweet, or
Fruity
Individually Wrapped
OR**

**A cash donation to HOPE for the
church to obtain these items.
We have a collection bin in the
foyer**

SERVE

**TLC Devotion
August 27, 2025
@ 11:00 a.m.**

5124 Departure Dr # 101,
Raleigh

HOPE Meal Ministry
Take a meal from the freezer if
needed for you or someone
else.

The Crowns Given:

1 Co 9:25 - *Imperishable*
1 Th 2:19 - *Exultation*
2 Tim 4:6-8 - *Righteousness*
1 Pet 5:4 - *Glory*
Rev 2:10 - *Life*
Rev 4:4 - *Golden*

Prayer Requests:

Kathi's Friend, Sandy, Don's uncle, Alan,
Joan's friend, Donna, Patty Moyer and her
son Brandon, Jerry's scheduling and Alice's
transplant possibilities, Tom and Donna
Williams, Ryan's Mom and Dad, Gene &
Becky Hale, Elizabeth, Franklin's Brother,
Will, Ron Clifton, Pastor Search Committee,
Josh McDonald, Erin's parents and brother,
Janice Worthington, Donna Williams,,
Burton(Erin), Phil Parton, Krishana, Sam and
Rachael, Joan Rollinson, Dianne Reinoso,
Cindy (Elizabeth), Barbara(81) Stroke,
Joey(18) Crohn's, Youth Ministry, Kathy Jo
and her family, Peggy Karpenske, Claudia in
Idaho (Kathy H), Dave & Dot Geil, Corbin
Broome, The Mallory family, Carol & Colin
(Kathy H), Loretta (Sandi U), Joan Summers,
Jordan Stevens (Lynn J.), our Military, Police,
Fire, and EMS. Missionaries, our Nation.

NAVIGATOR UPDATE

August 16: 9am-1pm

**"Disciple making: God's
Plan for Reaching the
Nations" (Light lunch provided)**

UPCOMING

**WOMEN OF HOPE
Saturdays at 10 a.m. at HOPE
8/23
Discipling/Mentoring
9/13
Spiritual Disciplines - What's Yours
9/27**

**NO MEETING - Attending
Presbytery in Cary**

**HOPE Church Raleigh
An Evangelical Presbyterian Church
4911 Green Rd
Raleigh, NC 27616
919-508-6827
Worship Time: 9:30 AM**

**www.HopeChurchRaleigh.org
www.facebook.com/HOPEChurchRaleigh
Twitter: @HopeChRaleigh
YouTube.com (type "HOPE Church Raleigh"
in the search box)**

Analogies to the Modern Church

1. Compromise with Culture

- **Then:** Some in Pergamum embraced teachings that justified idolatry and immorality.
- **Now:** Many churches today face pressure to conform to modern cultural norms, including:
 - Redefining sexual ethics.
 - Minimizing biblical authority.
 - Embracing syncretism—mixing Christianity with secular ideologies.

2. Tolerating False Teaching

- **Then:** The Nicolaitans and Balaam-like teachings were present in the congregation.
- **Now:** Churches may tolerate teachings that dilute the gospel or promote self-centered theology (prosperity gospel, moral relativism).

3. Faithfulness Amid Persecution

- **Then:** Despite the dangers (Antipas' martyrdom), some in Pergamum stood firm.
- **Now:** In many regions, Christians face **hostility**, legal pressure, or social marginalization for holding to biblical truths. Faithfulness is still required.

4. Spiritual Nourishment & Identity

- The promise of **hidden manna** and a **new name** speaks to those who resist cultural compromise:
 - **Manna:** God's Word and presence as the true sustenance.
 - **New name:** A personal relationship and identity in Christ that the world cannot offer.

Summary: The Church at Pergamum

The church at **Pergamum** stood in a dangerous spiritual climate and was praised for its courage, but sharply rebuked for its tolerance of sin and heresy. The **modern church** finds itself in a similar tension—called to stand firm in truth, resist cultural pressures to compromise, and reject internal corruption. The message is timeless:

Christ knows our challenges. He calls for courage, correction, and uncompromised faithfulness—and He promises reward to those who overcome.

Discussion Questions:

1. Understanding the Text

- What does it mean that Pergamum is where “Satan has his throne”?
- Who was *Antipas*, and why is he mentioned?
- What are the “teachings of *Balaam*” and “*Nicolaitans*”? Why are they dangerous?

2. Connecting to Today

- In what ways does today’s culture resemble the spiritual environment of Pergamum?
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- Can you think of examples where the modern church is tolerating false teaching or moral compromise?
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- How can a church or individual remain faithful while living in a hostile environment?
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3. Personal Reflection

- Are there areas in your life where you're tempted to compromise truth for comfort or acceptance?
- What does "repentance" look like when compromise is discovered?
- What role should church leadership and community accountability play in addressing compromise?

4. Encouragement & Hope

- What do the promises of “hidden manna” and a “white stone with a new name” mean to you?
- How does Christ’s reward motivate you to remain faithful?

Closing Prayer Points:

- Pray for courage to stand firm in truth even when it's unpopular.
- Pray for discernment to recognize and reject false teaching.
- Pray for purity and strength in your church or group.