

The Seven Churches - Part II

Pergamos and Thyatira

2:12-29

Introductory Notes

- These are messages from Christ to literal churches that existed as John wrote.
- Basic structure of each message:
 - Description of Christ
 - Commendation
 - Condemnation and Warning
 - Exhortation and Promise

Outline

- Message to Church of Pergamos - 2:12-17
- Message to Church of Thyatira - 2:18-29

Notes on the Message to Pergamos

- Pergamos was a well-to-do city situated on major trade routes and home to many temples. The most famous of these was dedicated to Asclepius (god of medicine and healing), whose was worshipped through the imagery of the serpent.
- Description of Christ - vs. 12
 - Has the sharp, two-edged sword - also in 1:16 - speaks of judgment
- Commendation - vs. 13
 - Faithful in spite of strong local opposition
 - “Satan’s seat” - throne or judgment seat
 - Antipas - no other record of this individual
- Condemnation and Warning - vs. 14-16
 - We have a good church that is harboring evil doctrines and people
 - Balaam (see Numbers 22-25 and 31:15-16 for his story)
 - Doctrine of Balaam (Revelation 2:14) - Jews intermarry with heathen - COMPROMISE
 - Way of Balaam (II Peter 2:15) - selling prophetic gift for money
 - Error of Balaam (Jude 11) - assuming God would judge Israel
 - Nicolaitans - see notes on Ephesus (2:6)
- Exhortation and Promise - vs. 17
 - hidden manna - the pot of manna that was believed to be in the Ark of the Covenant
 - white stone - probably speaks of approval or pardon. White and black stones may have been used by ancient judges
 - new name - Christ’s, maybe? - compare to 3:12
- Church period possibly described - A.D. 314-590
- Application for today: There is no compromise on truth.

Notes on the Message to Thyatira

- Thyatira was a much smaller town known for the manufacture of purple dye. Lydia in Acts 16:14-15 was from here.
- Description of Christ - vs. 18
 - Note the name - Son of God
 - The description of the eyes and feet (see 1:14-15) symbolize a righteous judge
- Commendation - vs. 19
 - This church is very active, but we'll see it has doctrinal problems
- Condemnation and Warning - vs. 20-23
 - vs. 20 - suffer - allow or tolerate
 - Jezebel - probably not the woman's real name, but using the wicked queen's name as comparison reveals much about this individual.
 - This Jezebel, like her Old Testament counterpart, seems to have tried to merge the Holy and the profane, teaching that Christians should participate in the most wicked of pagan traditions.
 - vs. 23 - God will make an example out of them
- Exhortation and Promise - vs. 24-29
 - Note the separation of this church into two groups. Now that we have dealt with the wicked we will turn to exhort the faithful.
 - vs. 25 - note the command to the faithful to hold fast
 - vs. 26-27 - the reward for staying faithful is beyond any hardship we face on earth.
 - vs. 28 - morning star - probably refers to Christ (22:16)
- Church period possibly described - A.D. 590-1000
- Application for today: Do not tolerate apostasy or false doctrine, even if masked by good works.