

The Chapel Family Bible Reading Program – August 14 – 19
Doing Life Together – Seven Churches of Revelation Pt 3

MONDAY: Isaiah 49:2, Revelation 1:16

KEY VERSE: Revelation 2:12

OBSERVATION: The sharp two-edged sword, the phrase that was used to describe Christ in chapter 1, is used here to identify Christ who is now addressing the church in Pergamum. This sword is further described in verse 16 as the sword of my mouth. Again, Christ's weapon of warfare is not made of bronze, iron or steel but is the word of truth that comes from his mouth.

TUESDAY: Matthew 4:10, 1 Timothy 5:8

KEY VERSE: Revelation 2:13

OBSERVATION: The greatest threat at this time was the social, cultural, economic, religious and political pressures on Christians to fit in the way of life assumed to be the norm by the majority. Still, the fact that there was at least one martyr in this church is an indication that resentment against Christians could erupt into violence at any moment.

WEDNESDAY: Numbers 31:16, 1 Corinthians 10:20

KEY VERSE: Revelation 2:14

OBSERVATION: In the New Testament, Jude 1:11 mentions "Balaam's error for the sake of gain." According to 2 Peter 2:15-16, which may have been written around the time of The Book of Revelation, Balaam is said to have "loved the wages of doing wrong, but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with a human voice and restrained the prophet's madness." There seems to be the implication in these texts that Balaam delivered false prophetic oracles for the sake of monetary gain.

THURSDAY: Matthew 7:28, Revelation 2:6

KEY VERSE: Revelation 2:15

OBSERVATION: The church in Pergamum tolerated certain compromises of the Christian faith in the name of being present, involved, and relevant in the dominant culture of Pergamum. Are these the only options, or might there be another possibility? It is significant that the call to both churches is to repent. Christ is not satisfied with either option. "Speaking the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15) is what Christ expects.

FRIDAY: Isaiah 49:2

KEY VERSE: Revelation 2:16

OBSERVATION: Here is the difference between the church in Ephesus and the church in Pergamum. The church in Ephesus maintained correct doctrine and fought against false teaching so vehemently that somehow it failed to practice acts of love toward people whose teaching it disapproved. It abandoned the love it had at first. It could not hate the sin and love the sinner. The problem in Pergamum went in the opposite direction.

SATURDAY: Revelation 2:7, Exodus 16:33

KEY VERSE: Revelation 2:17

OBSERVATION: The manna in the Old Testament was God's miraculous provision for Israel in the desert when Israelites had absolutely no source of livelihood. In John 6, when Jesus fed the five thousand in the desert, he used the Old Testament manna story to say to the crowds that he himself was the bread of life, that whoever ate his flesh and drank his blood would have eternal life. When the crowd heard that, they abandoned Jesus and went away. That's not what they were looking for. They did not want some mysterious, hidden manna.