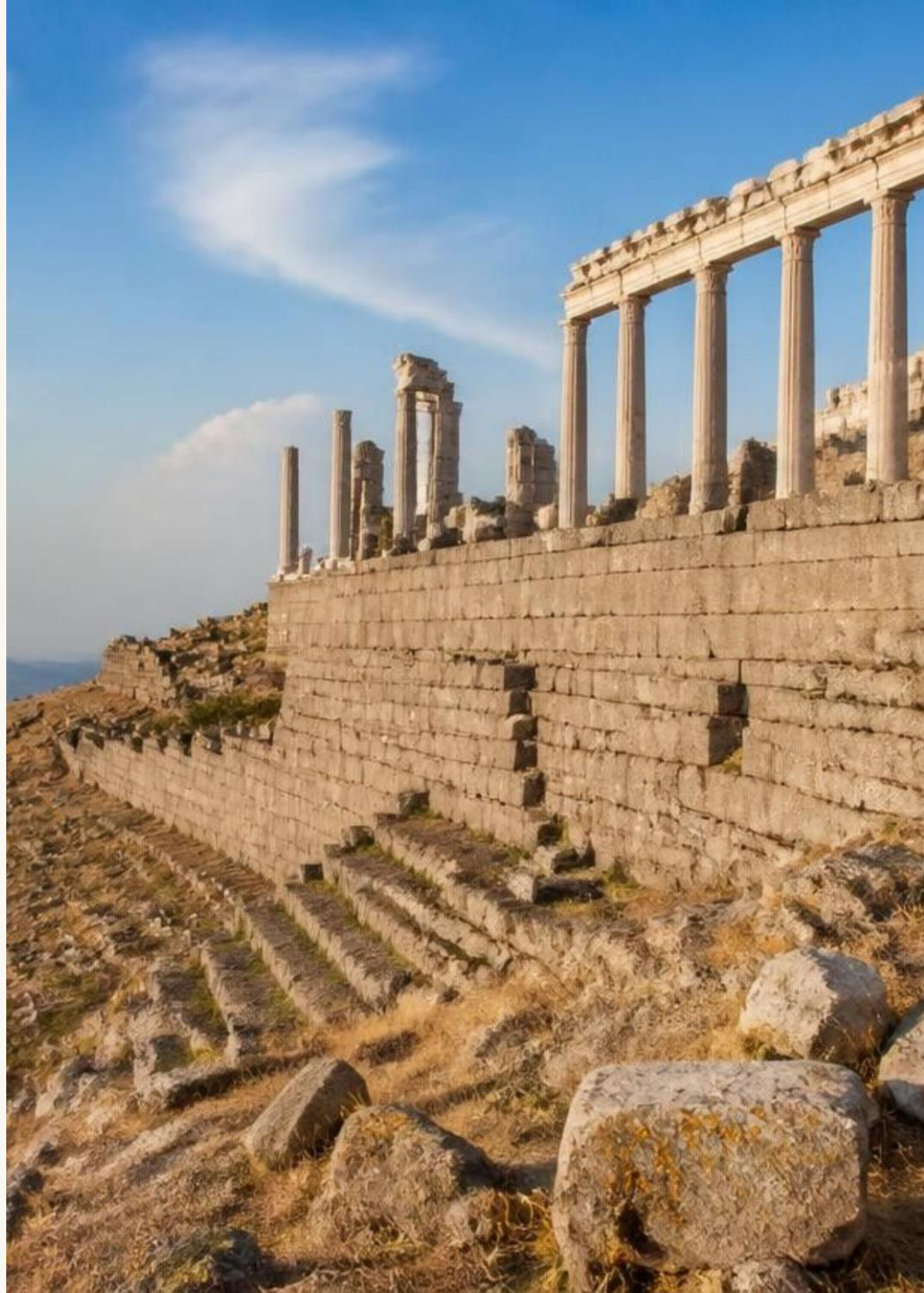
Revelation 2:12-17

The Message to the Church in Pergamos

A Call for Doctrinal Purity



It's Easy to Wander

It's easy to wander from the truth and doctrines of Scripture over time

Today we have a feeling oriented, worldly Christianity that is far from the Word of God

If we are not careful our church and we will compromise as well

This is the warning of Jesus to Pergamum

Summary of Christ's Letter to Pergamos

Church: Pergamos

Christ's Strength: Him who has the sharp 2-edged sword

Commendation:

I know where you live and yet you remain true

Condemnation:

You tolerate false teachers among you

Warning:

Repent or I will have to deal with them

Promise:

I will give you manna, a white stone and a new name

Summary:

ROOT OUT WORLDLINESS

The Temptation of Worldly Idols

- The Third letter to Pergamum about fifty-five miles (88km) north of Smyrna
- North of Smyra, founded by Greek colonists. Greek culture and pagan religion.
- Pergamum used much of its plentiful wealth to build temples devoted to idol worship. A 1,000-foot-high hill, the earliest site of the city, was covered with such temples and altars.



Top of the Hill of Pergamos

The Gods of Pergamum

Zeus & Athena

Zeus, the savior-god, and Athena, the victory-bearing goddess, were testimonials to Greek power

Dionysos

Dionysos (Bacchus) - the God of wine and partying

Asklepios

Asklepios, like Dionysos more of an animal-god, was associated with healing

The Shrine of Asklepios



Temple of Asklepios (Valley)



Feeding a living serpent in the temple was the manner of practicing worship. The sick spent the night in the darkness of the temple where nonpoisonous snakes were allowed to roam. When touched by one of these snakes, he was cured of his illness

The Temptation of Worldly Politics

- Despite the city's fascination with idol worship, it was the first in Asia to have a temple devoted to the worship of the Roman emperor (before Smyrna)
- This temple was erected in 29 B.C. in honor of Augustus along with the goddess Roma
- Later became one of the biggest temples to Trajan

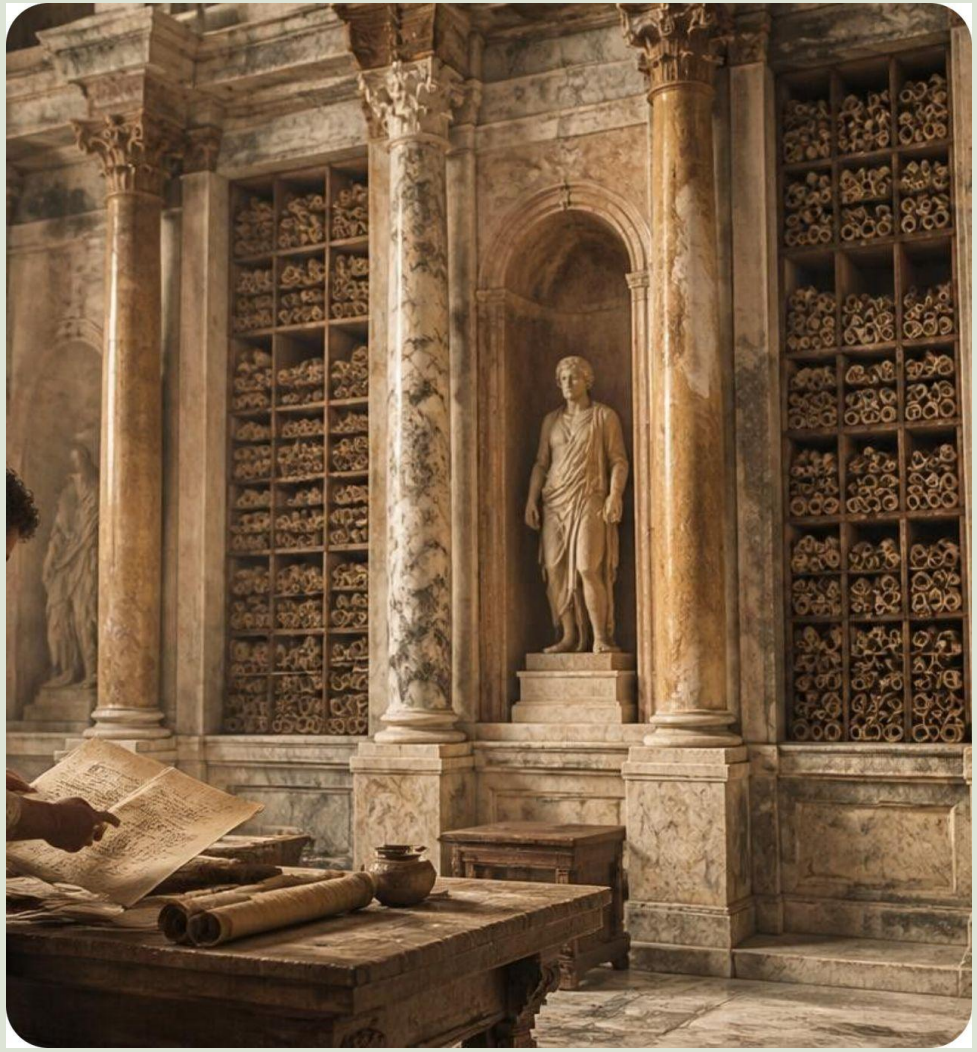


Temple of Trajan

The Temptation of Worldly Knowledge

It also developed a well-known library whose collection rivaled that of Alexandria. Several kings continued the library project, which eventually grew to 200,000 volumes.

In the midst of all this paganism, Pergamum was called to doctrinal purity by Jesus...



Four Ways Christ Calls Pergamum to Doctrinal Purity

1. The Judgment of Christ (12)

Identification

Christ identifies Himself to the church at Pergamum as “the one who has the sharp two-edged sword”

Rev 1:16

The judicial authority of Christ

Rev. 2:16 & 19:15

The punishing power of Christ's word and the defeat of His enemies

1 John 5:19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

2. The Care of Christ (13)

A. Their Challenges

Challenge 1

The Challenge to Dwell in the World

Challenge 2

The Challenge to Resist Sin

i. The Challenge to Dwell in the World

The first aspect of His knowledge of them - "where you dwell".

Katoikeis

Katoikeis - settled residence

In Revelation

Used frequently in Revelation, carrying the weight of morality

Our challenge is to be in this world but not of it - *John 17:15,16*

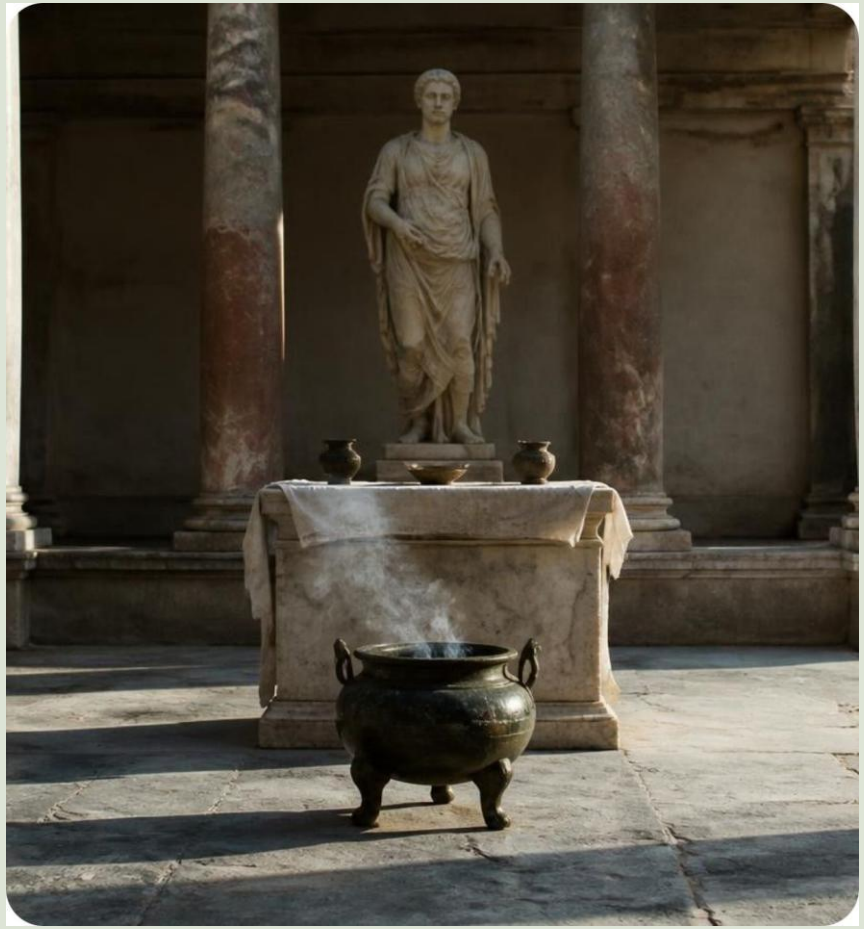
ii. The Challenge to Resist Sin

The second aspect of Christ's knowledge - "where the throne of Satan is".

Every day Caesar worship was promoted

Some believers compromised — eating food sacrificed to idols

And yet some were faithful to death in this church...



B. Their Commitment

Faithfulness

The third item of Christ's knowledge - their faithfulness

Antipas

Antipas did not deny Christ's name - a specific known incident

Martyr's Witness

He was an example of being faithful even to death - Martyr (Rev 17:6)

Under Domitian

Tradition tells us that he was burned to death in a bronze bull during the reign of Domitian

3. The Confrontation of Christ (14,15)

Doctrinal Compromise

First Compromise

They Did not Guard their Pulpit (14)

Second Compromise

They did not flee from Evil (15)

A. They Did Not Guard Their Pulpit (14)

The leaders had allowed false teaching to enter this church.

Persecution does not necessarily mean that there is purity.

Teaching of Balaam - mixing Christianity with the World

Be killing Sin or it will be killing you! *(John Owen)*

B. They Did Not Flee from Evil (15)

The Teaching

The teaching of the Nicolaitans – Christians can sin without fear of God

The Downward Spiral

Compromise always spirals into further compromise, like a chain of error

Are you guarding your heart? *(Proverbs 4:23)*

4. The Correction of Christ (16,17)

Rebuke

Root out Falsehood (16)

Encouragement

Relish Eternal Rewards over Earth (17)

A. Root Out Falsehood (16)

Urgent Command

v.16 – Therefore, Repent! An urgent command (Aorist)

Logical Outcome

The logical outcome of the Lord's hatred of the grave evils in their midst.

Motivation

The motivation – “I am coming quickly, with the sword of my mouth”

Action Needed

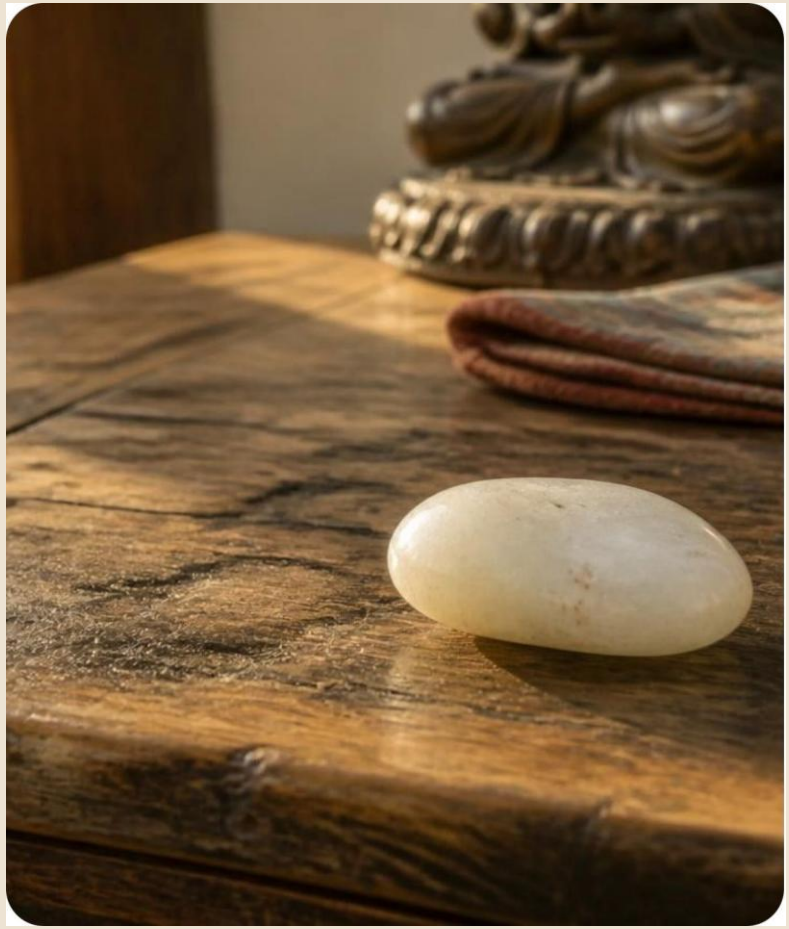
Remove false teachers and worldliness quickly! (Tit 3:10,11)

B. Relish Eternal Rewards over Earth (17)

"*Hidden Manna*" – typology, manna to Israel. Christ is now our Bread of life (John 6:35)

"*White Stone*" - our final "No Condemnation" in heaven.

"*New Name*" – reflecting our status as belonging to Christ



Christ's is Sufficient!

- The reason why Pergamos had compromised doctrinally was they were not looking to Christ but to broken cisterns.

Jeremiah 2:13 "For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, The fountain of living waters, To hew for themselves cisterns, Broken cisterns, That can hold no water.

John 4:14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."