

ACTNow! (Applying Christ's Teaching NOW) follows the weekly sermon series of TPMC, and challenges us to apply and put into practice the biblical truths we hear each week. It is the recommended Bible discussion material for TPMC's Cell Groups, and leader's notes are available to all Cell Group Leaders and at the Information Counter.

The Seven Churches of Revelation: Pergamum

Revelation 2:12-17

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SERMON SYNOPSIS

- The city of Pergamum was a city of refinement that was revered for its scientific and medical progressiveness. It was however also known for its worship of various pagan gods – this is what Jesus referred to as where Satan has his throne (Revelation 2:12).
- Jesus recognised that the Christians in Pergamum were in a difficult situation, and commended them for holding fast to His name, even when Antipas, the representative of the Christian Congregation in Pergamum was roasted to death in a pagan human sacrifice ritual for refusing to renounce his faith. (Revelation 2:13)
- The church of Pergamum was not perfect. Jesus pointed out that some of them were holding to the teachings of Balaam, which promotes the idea of living a compromised life that has been influenced by worldly behavior while serving God, especially for the sake of economical gain. Some were holding to the teachings of the Nicolaitans, who were taking part in pagan feasts and worship, and sexual immorality despite going to church. (Revelation 2:14-15)
- Jesus commanded the church of Pergamum to repent and stand firm using the sword – the Word of God – as our weapon. He promised that if they were faithful, He would restore them and give them manna; Jesus the Bread of Life is our manna (Revelation 2:17). God invites us to all the blessings of His kingdom and we will share in an intimate relationship with Him, if only we ask for forgiveness and truly turn from our sin of living compromised lives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. All of us have our weaknesses – what is one thing that you find most difficult to sacrifice, whether for God or a loved one?
[Children's Activity: Prepare a potato and a coffee bean and place them in boiling water. Although the potato appears bigger and stronger than a tiny coffee bean, they react differently when placed in boiling water - the potato becomes soft and mushy while the coffee bean retains its shape, but its fragrance permeates the rest of the water. Like the coffee bean, we must remain steadfast when placed under pressure and instead be the influence to the world around us.]

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2. What does it mean to compromise on God's standards and what are the dangers of doing so? What does the Bible say about living a compromised Christian life?
[Verses to help us go deeper: 2 Timothy 4:3-5, Psalm 119:1-4, 1 John 2:16-19]

3. All of us struggle with the temptation to stray from God's perfect standards and Christ's teaching. How do we guard against creating for ourselves such compromises?
[Verses to help us go deeper: 1 Timothy 6:12, 2 Corinthians 10:5, James 1:22-25, Romans 12:2]

PRAYER POINTERS

- Pray that God will help us to see the areas in which we have compromised on His standards/teaching and ask that He helps us to repent.
- Thank God for His grace and forgiveness and ask that He restores our relationship with Him and brings us to a greater level of intimacy.

MEMORY VERSE

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." [Romans 12:2, ESV]

PRACTICAL HANDLE

Share with a cell group member something that you have been struggling to give up for God. Encourage each other and brainstorm for ways in which you can keep each other updated to check on each other's progress.