



Growth Group Discussion Questions

3. The Church at Pergamum – stay exclusively devoted to Christ

Read Revelation 2:12-17

The Christ is described

1. Read verse 12. ***Describe what this picture of Christ means? Consider what the Bible tells us in Psalm 2 and Revelation 19:11-16. How is this understanding of Jesus Christ good news?***

The Church is commended

2. Read verse 13. ***What is the church at Pergamum commended for? What is it about their situation that makes their faithfulness to Christ so commendable? Discuss how easy or hard it is to be exclusively faithful to Christ in Perth where Satan rules. Why do you think Jesus Christ mentions Antipas by name?***

The Church is condemned

3. Someone in the Group briefly tell the history of Balaam in Numbers 22-24 and Numbers 31:13-16 as a background to verse 14. ***Discuss what you think Satan's number 1 strategy is, to undermine the Church and prevent her from being a faithful witness to Christ in this dark world? Who does Satan use to get the job done? What are the two areas that he targets and why?***

The Concluding promise

4. Read verse 16-17. ***What is promised to the 'one who conquers'? What do the 'hidden manna', the 'new name' and the 'white stone' mean? Discuss what extent you agree with this sentence in the light of Proverbs 37:4: "If we remain exclusively devoted to Christ we will get exactly what we desire!"***
5. ***Discuss how we are doing at NCC in the light of what Jesus says to the church at Pergamum. Where can we improve and obey Jesus more? What are some practical ways we can foster exclusive devotion to Jesus Christ. Someone share their experience of feasting on the 'hidden manna'.***

Leaders Notes

1. Its pretty obvious that Jesus Christ is the One through whom God will judge worldwide rebellion against Himself. That is one of the main roles of the promised Christ and of course, Revelation, like the whole New Testament says that Jesus is that Christ that was promised. People don't like the idea of judgement – of course, because we are all sinners! But the truth is, judgement is a beautiful thing because this is how Christ will get rid of all that hurts, and destroys and is unfaithful to love. Judgement is a sweet thing to those who have been hurt. "Forgive and forget" is nonsense without God. We can only forgive and forget because we hand the matter to God the Perfect Judge.
2. The church at Pergamum had people in it who clung to Jesus Christ and remained devoted to Him even though they were living 'where Satan's throne is' = where Satan rules. Isn't it lovely that Jesus Christ mentions Antipas by name. This is not just some high-falutin' theology. This is beautiful history. Antipas was a real human being just like you and me. And he was killed because of his devotion to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ really does know those who are His and He knows them personally. He tells us about Antipas to show us that being faithful to Him may well cost us everything, even our lives. But its ok. Others have done it too.
3. Satan's number 1 strategy is to get the church to compromise so that she will look just like the world and not be a 'shining light' or a 'lampstand' in a dark place – which is what Revelation 1 tells us the church is meant to be. He gets us to compromise by sending preachers/prophets like Balaam who, for the love of money, preach a compromised gospel. Essentially their message is "God and..." whereas God requires "God only". You shall love the Lord Your God only. He targets the area of feasting and sexual immorality. The reason he targets these two areas is because we are particularly weak in these two areas. If Satan came along and tempted us to kill someone the chances are the vast majority of us would easily resist him. But not when it comes to comfort, self-indulgence, and sexual immorality. These are things we want because we are sinners. We are a soft target.
4. Jesus promises intimate fellowship with all those who remain exclusively devoted to Him. The 'hidden manna' is the spiritual nourishment He promises to provide those who cling to Him. Some mature Christians – especially when they suffer – will tell you how sweet it is to have intimate fellowship with Jesus Christ even now. The new name is Jesus' very own name as we read in Revelation 19, which symbolises ownership. And the white stone is exclusive access to the afterparty for those who conquer in the games. In other words, Jesus promises intimate fellowship with Him now and even more fuller one day. The point is that if we love God, we will get God. That is what Proverbs 37:4 is saying. It does not mean, if you love God you'll get the Ferrari. That makes no sense. If you love God, you wouldn't really want the Ferrari and if you did get the Ferrari you'd sell it, get a reasonable car and give the money away. That is what exclusive devotion looks like. Its very different to the way the world works.
5. Up to the Growth Group.