

Revelation 2:12-17**5-31-06****“Wanted: Bouncers in Pergamos!”****1. Intro:**

- 1.1. Mike Ramsey – Share on “The Next Phase”.

2. WANTED: BOUNCERS IN PERGAMOS! (12-17)

- 2.1. **INTRO!** (12)
- 2.2. Pergamos – “Height or elevation”.
- 2.2.1. The city was built on a **cone-shaped hill**(1000’ high).
- 2.2.2. 80 miles north of Ephesus. It was the **Political capitol** of Asia.
- 2.2.3. They had one of the **largest Libraries** of antiquity w/200,000 books (all manuscripts).
- 2.2.3.1. One of the products the city was famous for was its paper or parchment. Pergamos was the 1st place where **skins** were used for writing on, which replaced the **parchments**.
- 2.2.4. The Library was later sent to Egypt as a gift from **Mark Anthony** to **Cleopatra!** {Guess she liked to read? “Here honey the *library of congress!*”}
- 2.3. **Sharp 2-edged sword** – (preceded by 1:16; & before 2:16)
- 2.4. **COMMENDATION!** (13)
- 2.5. **Satan’s throne is & Satan dwells** –
- 2.5.1. Mystery cults of Babylon set up their headquarters there.
- 2.5.2. **The official Center for Emperor Worship**(started here).
- 2.5.2.1. They had their 1st temple dedicated to **Augustus Caesar**(reigned when Jesus was born)
- 2.5.3. **The Askelpios center** – They had a temple dedicated to **Askelpios** (the god of healing) whose insignia was the entwined serpent on the staff. (still a med. symbol today!)
- 2.5.3.1. The Asklepieion was a kind of **Mayo Clinic** of the ancient world.
- 2.5.4. The Lord commends the church for its steadfastness in the “**epi-center**” of Satan’s domain!
- 2.5.4.1. They remain faithful even on **Satan’s Turf!**
- 2.5.4.2. **Note:** The church isn’t told to get out of “Las Vegas; Laughlin; Pechanga!” [C.C.Pechanga hmmm – would we even think of it?]
- 2.6. **Didn’t deny the faith**, even during persecution -
- 2.6.1. They held to their faith even when it might have cost them their lives!
- 2.6.2. **“Faith”** - Heb.11:32-35a - **“Some By Faith subdued kingdoms & escaped the edge of the sword.”**

- 2.6.2.1. Heb.11:35b-38 – “Others, **Through Faith** were tortured & slain w/the sword.”
- 2.6.2.2. Heb.11:39 - “**All** these obtained a good testimony through **Faith.**”
- 2.7. **Antipas My faithful martyr** – **Show relief.**
- 2.7.1. Persecution during the time of Domitian.
- 2.7.1.1. [he would have been killed in John’s lifetime]
- 2.7.2. Some **ancient writers** tell us he was enclosed in a **red-hot brazen ox** & thus burned alive w/great pain, **yet** in **steadfastness.**
- 2.7.3. God knew all about this humble believer who lived & died for Christ.
- 2.7.3.1. “**He calls his sheep by name**”
- 2.7.3.2. 2 Tim.2:19, “**Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are His.”**”
- 2.8. **CONDEMNATION!** (14,15)
- 2.9. Some held bad doctrine – (not even “the churches” stance, yet still effected the body)
- 2.10. “**But...they were too tolerant of false doctrines!**”
- 2.10.1. They were drifting into Worldliness & Carnality!
- 2.10.2. Some resisted the flow, but the majority were being swept out to sea!
- 2.10.3. **Being willing to die** for the faith is no substitute for **living** the faith!¹
- 2.11. **Doctrine of Balaam** – His story is in Numb.22-25
- 2.11.1. Moabite King Balak was scared regarding Israel coming up from Egypt, as saw what they did to the Ammorites.
- 2.11.2. Invited Balaam(a hireling prophet) to come curse them for him. Tried to no avail. So, “*If you can’t curse em, corrupt em!*”
- 2.11.3. Balaam gave King Balak advice to “made friends w/Israel”!
- 2.11.3.1. Israel, instead of instituting “neighborhood watch”, became “good neighbors!”
- 2.11.3.2. They wedded the world, to get worldly advantages.
- 2.11.4. Satan decides, “**If you can’t beat em, join em...so he does!**”
- 2.11.5. The **meat sacrificed** to these idols was served at their banquets.
- 2.11.6. Often **sexual immorality** was a part of these banquets.
- 2.11.6.1. The issue wasn’t eating the meat, but actually **participating in idolatrous feasts & sexual sin.**
- 2.12. **Doctrine of Nicolaitans** –
- 2.12.1. What begins with **deeds** in one church(Ephesus vs.6), is now a **settled doctrine** in another!

¹ Warren Wiersbe; Outline of the NT.

- 2.12.2. This church is now divided into “priests” & “people”.
- 2.12.2.1. As Protestants we still deal with this, just without the titles!
- 2.12.2.1.1. Many in church still see, the pastor is the **minister** of the church, when we **all** are supposed to be!
- 2.12.3. **Don't compromise but resist!**
- 2.12.3.1. Antipas said, “*no compromise*”; many in the church said, “*let's take the easy way out.*”
- 2.12.3.2. **Illustration:** many years ago we had a church night at Mulligan's. I watched as little *Ali Irwin* had 1 foot on the dock & 1 one the boat...& it sloooooowly separated, & in she went!
- 2.12.3.2.1. Many Christians are trying to live with one foot on the dock & one on the boat.
- 2.12.4. “While the Christian must live in the world, he should not let the world live in him!”
- 2.12.4.1. “We are to be like the fish that live in salt water...**yet...don't...taste...salty!**” 😊
- 2.13. **REPENT!** (16)
- 2.14. **Repent** – His constant charge and command to His own is “**Repent!**”
- 2.14.1. “Change or I will come to you and I will remove your lampstand”.
- 2.15. **Antipas** felt the sword of Rome, but the **church at Pergamos** would feel the sword of Christ if they did not repent!
- 2.16. **A little girl said to her mother, “I know why flowers grow;...they want to get out of the dirt!”**
- 2.16.1. **Q: Do you want to get out of the dirt?** - “Repent, is the wake up call to the church!”
- 2.16.2. **What drives the plant up?...**the power of the Sun.
- 2.16.2.1. Many plants like the sunflower follow the sun East to West.
- 2.16.2.2. We also must follow the **Son**, growing away from the earth & unto heaven!
- 2.17. “The influence of a **Holy Life** is often the **greatest contribution** we can make to the salvation of men.”
- 2.18. **PROMISE!** (17)
- 2.19. **Hidden Manna** – Food from God. Angel food cake. The *Messianic Banquet* aka The Marriage Super of the Lamb.
- 2.19.1. **Jesus** is the real manna for Christians to live on.
- 2.20. **A White Stone** – is **ambiguous!** (just like it was to you when you walked in & received yours) - This may stand for many things. - A **white stone** had many meanings in ancient society!

- 2.20.1. [1] **Rabbinic legend** – that *precious stones* fell from heaven along w/the manna.²
- 2.20.2. **Followers of Christ** – This would represent the precious gifts of God to His people.
- 2.20.3. [2] **Ancient Law courts** – white & black stones were used for registering the verdict of Juries. {black for condemnation; white for acquittal}
- 2.20.4. **Followers of Christ** – are acquitted in the sight of God because of the work of Christ.
- 2.20.5. [3] **The Thracians & Scythians kept an urn in their house** & each day they threw either a **white stone** in for a Happy day, or a **black stone** for ever Unhappy day; at the end of their lives the stones were counted to distinguish whether they had a **wretched** or a **Happy** life!
- 2.20.6. **Followers of Christ** – we can have the joy that no man can take from us (**Jn.16:22**)
- 2.20.7. [4] **Wear an amulet or charm** (lucky jewelry: a piece of jewelry worn to provide protection against evil, injury, disease, or bad luck)
- 2.20.7.1. A very common custom in the ancient world.
- 2.20.7.2. On the pebble was a **sacred name**; to know a god's name was to have certain power over him, to be able to summon him to one's aid in time of difficulty & to have mastery over demons.
- 2.20.7.3. It was also known to be **doubly effective** if no one else knew the name inscribed on it!
- 2.20.8. **Followers of Christ** – maybe he will place around your neck, not a good luck charm, but maybe a small stone that would represent more of what a “promise ring on a chain” represents in our culture. With a special name of Himself on it...just for you! (explain His Names/titles thru Scripture are to reveal more of himself to us)
- 2.20.9. [5] **Friendship** – when 2 people, seeking to seal a friendship, broke a stone into 2 & each retained a half, which gave access to each others home.³
- 2.20.10. **Followers of Christ** – here is guaranteed **access** to His home & promise of His **friendship**!
- 2.20.11. [6] **Admission to a feast** – if there was an expensive & restricted feast often they would use a white stone for admission...**much like an exclusive club** today.
- 2.20.12. **Followers of Christ** – here is your ticket to His feast.

² William Barclay; Rev.2:12-17.

³ Willmington's Bible Handbook.

- 2.21. ***Pull out your stone!*** [there was no polished white stones in our whole valley today!]
- 2.21.1. [7] **Victory** - In Rome a great Gladiator was the admired hero of all.
- 2.21.1.1. Often a gladiator had to fight on until he was killed in combat.
- 2.21.1.2. But if he had a specially illustrious career, when he grew old, he was allowed to retire in honor.
- 2.21.1.3. Such men were given a **white stone** w/the letters **SP** on it.
- 2.21.1.3.1. **SP** stands for the Latin **Spectatus** which means a man whose **valor** has been proved beyond a doubt.
- 2.21.1.4. **“Tried, tested, proved; esteemed!”** (Latin dictionary)
- 2.21.1.5. **Followers of Christ** – one day saint you **WILL** receive a stone. Maybe it will say, **“tried, tested, proved, & esteemed”?**
- 2.21.1.5.1. Maybe, **“SP” Spectatus?**
- 2.21.2. The best I could do was **“Tope”** but your Messiah will provide you with **“White”** representing your **quantum leap in purity!**
- 2.22. **A New name** –
- 2.22.1. **New** (**καινός** *keenos*)– “not only in point of **time** but also in point of **quality**; nothing like it has ever been made before!” (Barclay)
- 2.22.1.1. Also: **new Jerusalem**(3:12); **new song**(5:9); **new heavens & new earth**(21:1); **God makes all things new**(21:5).
- 2.22.2. **You are special!** – you will be identified with Yeshua as you have won the Victory!
- 2.23. **End:** Last picture, I took on a spiritual day at the beach in Oceanside.
- 2.23.1. The constant drip on the “river rock” knocks off the edges & makes it smooth.