

COMMIT TO MEMORY

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it. - Revelation 2:17

CONSIDER

The next church we are going to look at this week is the church at Pergamum. By the time Jesus gets to this church, He has some very graphic things to say. He states that Pergamum is located smack dab in the center of Satan's throne room itself (Revelation 2:13). It is within this dire predicament, Jesus has a message about overcoming through determination not compromise. He gives a message about how to live above the culture, chaos, and quagmire around you. Jesus says the key to experiencing eternal victory in the midst of earthly experience that is not ideal comes in one word; Conviction. He says if the people of the church at Pergamum, as well as, us through the reading of Scripture want to overcome, then we must be an uncompromising Christian. We cannot compromise. This is because compromise is the antithesis of conviction; they cannot exist together.

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CONNECT

Remember to always open your group time together in prayer. Invite God's Spirit to manifest Himself fully in your midst, to soften your hearts and open your ears to His Word as well as to guard your lips—seasoning each person's speech as with salt. Keep specific prayer requests to be covered at the end of the meeting, if possible. This is a time to connect with each other and to connect with God as we open our time together.

Share your responses to these questions as you open up your time of connection.

What is something that you learned or stood out to you in your personal time in the Word this past week?

Can you share about some of the things you are putting into practice based on the principles learned in this study? Have you noticed any positive outcomes at this point?

Are there any specific needs you want to share with the group this week? Or answered prayers?

This is a time to connect with each other and to connect with God as we open our time together.

After this preliminary connecting time is completed, watch the DVD teaching by Pastor Evans on this session. Next, have someone read the discussion questions in the Concentrate section and guide the discussion.

CONCENTRATE

Use the following questions and Scripture passages to guide your discussion of the teaching you just experienced from Pastor Evans and the discussion from your group members.

1. Read Revelation 2:12-17. Describe the cultural surroundings that the members of the church of Pergamum must have lived in. Contrast that with the culture we live in today.
2. Why do you think Antipas lost his life (verse 13)? Are we at the point in our culture where loss of life for being a Christian can be expected?
3. In the teaching, Pastor Evans shares that Jesus is calling the church to repent and become people of conviction. Name some convictions that have become compromised in our Christian culture today and how we could return to living in light of their full conviction personally?

Notes

(Use this space for personal notes on the lesson and discussion.)

CONVERGE

“be doers of the Word,
not just hearers”
- James 1:22

In this section, talk with the group about how you will apply the wisdom you've learned from the teaching and Bible study.

Discuss the following questions:

1. Describe a time in your life where you felt that your Christian values were being challenged by the culture or people around you. How did you respond?
2. How does a commitment to convictions help us in overcoming the challenges we face?
3. Is there an area in your own personal life where you feel convicted to increase your commitment and decrease your compromise?

Focusing
on practical
applications of
what we've
learned in this
lesson in
order to better
align our life
choices with
God's truth
and will.

To close your time together, spend some time worshiping God together—praying, singing, reading Scripture. Use the Prayer and Praise to keep track of how God answers prayer.

CONTINUE

Rest, and allow the Lord to lead you as you seek Him through His Word.

The following section is for you to use personally on your own as you continue in the week's topic throughout the next few days. Pray and ask the Lord to open your ears to truly hear His truth and apply it in your life. If you want to, feel free to write what you learn in the margins or in the Notes section of this week's lesson.

Day 1

For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins.
 - Hebrews 10:26

REFLECT:

What does this verse mean to you?

Is there an area in your life where God has convicted you about a particular sin but you have not yet responded?

Are you willing to respond now in light of this truth?

Day 2

If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. - Read John 14:15

REFLECT:

What should be our motivation for living a life of purity?

Does your love for Jesus Christ motivate you to keep His commandments, or does something else motivate you such as legalism, pride or fear of consequences?

In what ways can you seek to increase your love for Jesus Christ? Pray and ask for wisdom on how to cultivate this love relationship in your life even more.

Day 3

Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. - Colossians 3:5

REFLECT:

Does it surprise you to read the word "greed" in this list of sins?

In what ways does "greed" show up in our contemporary Christian culture today, and in your own life?

Are there things you need to do in order to live a more pure life in Christ? Pray and ask God for wisdom on how to cease ongoing sins in your life and how to guard yourself from adopting any in the future. Be sure to record or write down what the Spirit tells you in your time of prayer, or throughout your day in response to your request for wisdom.

Day 4

Like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has no control over his spirit.
 - Proverbs 25:28

REFLECT:

What does it mean to have no control over your spirit?

Are you fully living with control over your spirit? What are the main areas where you feel you may have a lack of control, or less control?

In what ways can you adjust your thoughts, mind-sets and choices to have better control over your spirit? In what ways does the reality that nothing is final unless God says it is final give you strength to face the trials and tests you may be in or may one day be in?

Day 5

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REFLECT:

What does the "hidden manna" mean to you?

How has this week's lesson on overcoming convicted you in your personal life?

In what way can you share what you have learned with others in your spheres of influence?

Make a commitment to pray for greater convictions in your life and a greater outgrowth of your love for Christ.