



April 25, 2010

Celebration Service
Sunday 8:45 am

Pastor David Mitchell

The Compromising Church { Pergamum }
Finding Commitment to Christ in an Evil World
Revelation 2:12-17

1. What Defines You:
2. Sins You Live In:
3. Lies You Believe:

❖ I must recognize the authority of Christ and His Word in my life. vs. 12

The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this:
Hebrews 4:12; Revelation 19:15

❖ I must make a commitment to Christ regardless of the cost. vs. 13

I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith...
I John 5:4, 5

Witness =

❖ I must identify any compromise in my behavior and beliefs. vs. 14- 15

James 4:4; Numbers. 25; 31:16
But I have a few things against you...

❖ I must confess all sins by repenting to Jesus Christ. vs. 16

Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly...
Acts 3:19; I Corinthians 5:6-7; II Timothy 2:24-26

❖ I will become a new creation in Christ. vs. 17

Hidden manna, new name, white stone. (see Digging Deeper)
II Corinthians 5:17

Digging Deeper

Our world has many great features in it since it is God's creation. But we know there are evil forces that want to destroy it.

According to **I John 5:19**, who has God allowed to rule in our world? According to **I John 5:4, 5**, why can we have victory over sin and Satan?

What challenge for commitment do the following passages teach you? How are you living out this commitment in your family, work, school or community?

Romans 12:1, 2

Titus 2:12

James 1:27

James 4:4

I John 2:15-17

Sometimes I think the church has become too soft in confronting sin. It is easy to compromise with the values of this world and not want to offend anyone. Being tolerant of all views, accepting them with no judgment is the norm for today. We must never compromise the truth of God's Word. And as we call for repentance, we must also conduct ourselves in a spirit of love and grace. Read **II Timothy 2:24-26**. What do you learn from this passage on how you should confront about sin.

Revelation 2:17 speaks of a new name and the white stone. Christ came to make us a new creation and promises to give us a white stone with our new name. Using the culture of that time, this white stone can mean the following for us today:

First, it may allude to the law court, where jurors would pass a white stone for acquittal and a black one for condemnation. If so, then the meaning is that overcomers are acquitted before God. This symbol is consistent with the judgment theme of Revelation.

Second, the image may be taken from the ancient theater, where a flat stone was used as ticket. The context of the messianic feast, which might require such a ticket, favors this interpretation. We are invited to a feast with Jesus.

Third, the symbol may allude to the stones in Aaron's priestly robe (Exodus 28:30). Finding the context for both manna and stone in the story of Aaron favors this interpretation. If it is correct, the resultant meaning is that the conqueror, like the priest, has direct access to God.

Fourth, stones were tickets given to the poor for use in exchange for food (Suetonius, *Augustus* 40, 42). This idea indicates that the conqueror will have all needs met by God.

Fifth, a good day was noted with a white stone (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 7.40). This would signify that the overcomers are blessed on the Day of the Lord.

Sixth, It seems best, however, to understand the white stone in light of the Roman custom of awarding white stones to the victors in athletic contests. A white stone, inscribed with the athlete's name, served as his ticket to a special awards banquet. In this view, Christ promises the overcomers entrance to the eternal victory celebration in heaven