

## Sermon Discussion

### 2 May 2021

Read Revelation 2:12-17

#### Dig Deeper

According to v. 12 and 17, Jesus is mentioned as having a sword. The intent would be to use as a form of judgment through His Word. It is interesting that Pergamum was a city to which Rome had given the **rare power of capital punishment**...symbolized by the sword.

The Christians in Pergamum were reminded that though they lived under the rule of an almost unlimited imperium, they were citizens of another kingdom. The ruler of which needs no other sword than that of his mouth.

A **white stone** represented a vote of acquittal or a favorable vote. Victors in contests or battles also received a white stone. The name on that stone is new (Greek "*kainon*") in the sense of being different, not new in contrast to what is old. In view of Philippians 2:9, the name is probably that of Christ. It is unknown to others in the sense that others who are not overcomers do not possess it.

1. There is a saying, "small compromises lead to major changes". How have you seen that truth play out in people's lives, or even your own?
2. How does the church influence culture without becoming part of it?
3. We read in v. 12-13 that these believers remained faithful even when one of them was martyred. What do you think would happen to the church in the U.K. if it started facing martyrdom?
4. The Balaam-like teachings and the Nicolaitans (v. 14-15) were likely an over-reaction to legalistic religion which led some into moral laxity. How do the temptations of idolatry and sexual immorality present themselves to us today? What are other idols in our culture we worship?
5. The "white stone" in v. 17 speaks of a new name and links to a new family and identity. How does a new identity sound to you? How does your identity shape your witness to others?

#### Application & Prayer

- In what area(s) in your faith are you compromising? What is one area in your life where you need to stop straddling the fence and give yourself fully to God? Ask someone to pray specifically for you in this area.

- Jesus calls the church to repent, which has the meaning of turning around or having one's mind transformed with new thinking. Looking at the church in Pergamum, how do you need to "repent" in your thoughts or actions this week?
- Take a moment to thank God that He is the one who ultimately names you and thank Him that He frees you from all names that are not truly yours.
- Meditate on this: *"Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth."* Revelation 2:16