



January 18, 2026
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Revelation 2:12-17

Introduction: In this sermon, Kevin focused on Jesus' words to the church in Pergamum from Revelation 2:12-17, specifically highlighting the danger of syncretism - mixing faith in Jesus with worldly values. While the church in Pergamum never renounced Jesus' name, they compromised their allegiance to Jesus by blending their faith with the surrounding culture's practices, including idolatry and sexual immorality. Kevin challenged us to consider the four modern temptations we encounter toward syncretism - sexuality, power, materialism, and contempt. He also points us to Jesus' invitation to repentance, and His offer for hidden manna and a new identity for those who return to wholehearted allegiance to Jesus.

Key Texts: Revelation 2:12-17, 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, Numbers 20-25

Icebreaker: What is one thing you have adjusted (or want to adjust) in your lifestyle or life rhythms this year? How has that adjustment affected you, or how do you imagine it will?

Discussion Questions

1. Read **Revelation 2:12-17** aloud as a group. Take a few minutes to silently sit with the text and write down any initial observations. What stands out to you from Jesus' words to the church in Pergamum?
2. Re-visit **Revelation 2:13**. Kevin shared the incongruence of "not renouncing Jesus name" while still being far from Him. What do you think this looks like?
3. Where have you seen this concept of syncretism (God and _____) play out in your own life? Where might you be tempted to mix Jesus with worldly values?
4. Kevin named four modern temptations toward syncretism - sexuality, power, materialism, and contempt. Which of these do you find most challenging in your own walk with Christ?
5. Re-visit **Revelation 2:16-17**. Kevin reminded us of the important role that repentance (changing our mind/heart) plays in maintaining our distinctiveness as

followers of Jesus. How do these verses convict or encourage you, and how might Jesus be specifically inviting you into repentance?

6. What, or who, comes to mind when you think of “quiet faithfulness” to God? What do you think makes a quiet faithfulness to God so beautiful or compelling?
7. How do you think God is calling you, and us as a community group, to live as a “contrast society” in our current cultural moment? How might Jesus be inviting you to faithfully live as the salt and light?

Key Takeaways

- The fundamental temptation for both the church in Pergamum, and for us, is that we do not allow Jesus to shape every part of our lives. We do not see things as “God or _____”, but “God and _____.” We are prone to syncretism - mixing Jesus with other things counter to the way of Jesus.
- We were created to live in orbit around God, yet we often seek to obey our own voice - the “sacred self” (the deception of the self).
- The call to Jesus is against or away from the standards of this world. It is important that we do not shy away from the distinctiveness of what it means to faithfully and quietly follow Jesus.
- The four lures toward syncretism in our moment that we must be mindful of are sexuality (sexual immorality), power, materialism, and contempt.
- God invites us to repent and return, and promises to both sustain us day by day and grant us a new identity that is rooted in an intimate connection with God.

Notes