

WATCH FOR THE STONES

Revelation 2:12-17

Satan's stones – all Christians must repel them (13)

A. The city of Pergamum

1. Highly religious:
 - a. Had pagan t_____ honoring three Greek gods.
 - b. Had one honoring Augustus Caesar (built in 29 B.C.).
2. Highly educated
 - a. Had the second largest l_____ in the world.
 - b. Had a m_____ university under the name of the god, Asclepius.
3. Highly political – politics intertwined with religion and education.

B. Jesus's assessment

1. Of the city - Satan's t_____ was there (i.e. Satan ruled it, not just influenced it).
2. Of the leader
 - a. Stood strong for the name of Jesus – spread the message of Christ which required people to a_____ politics, pagan practices, and philosophy of education.
 - b. Did not deny faith in Christ even in the days of Antipas.
 - 1) Antipas was put to death in the city in the presence of the c_____ people.
 - 2) History tells us that he was put to death by Domitian who reigned from 81-96 A.D.

C. Application

1. Satan's stones
 - a. What he wants to do – knock us down with discouragement, worry, immorality, compromise, etc.
 - b. What he cannot do – cannot r_____ our minds, but only can draw conclusions from observation.
 - c. Where he aims the hardest – our w_____
2. Your weaknesses
 - a. Acknowledge them
 - b. Repel Satan's stones with God's w_____ (as Jesus did when He was tempted) and p_____ (Matt 26:41)

Stumbling stones – all churches must remove them (12, 14-16)

A. Jesus had a few things against the leader

1. Some in the church held to the teaching of Balaam (the story of Balaam is found in Numbers 22-24)
 - a. Balaam was a p_____ of God
 - b. The king of Moab feared the Israelites and tried to b_____ Balaam into prophesying curses upon Israel.
 - c. Although Balaam refused, he did counsel the king in how to get the people of Israel to s_____ into actions that would displease the lord (idolatry and sexual immorality)
2. Some in the church held to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

B. Jesus called for action on the leader's part

1. The leader was to r_____ (instead of allowing the stumbling blocks to continue, he needed to remove them)
2. If the leader does not repent, Jesus would
 - a. Come to the leader s_____ (i.e. without warning; see 1:1 notes for this word)
 - b. War against those causing others to stumble with the s_____ of His mouth (reference to 1:16 and brings us back to how Jesus introduced Himself to this church in verse 12)
 - c. The meaning of the two-edged sword is clarified – bringing judgment on those causing others to stumble in the form of severe d_____.

C. Application

1. We must understand that we live in a m_____ pot of cultures .
 - a. Religious objects hold i_____ in all religions (in Christianity – the cross, pictures of Jesus, depiction of Jesus on the cross)
 - b. Hezekiah destroyed a religious object (the bronze s_____ on the pole) when the people started worshipping it (2 Kgs 18:4; Num 21:6ff)
 - c. Idol worship is the religious life of most outside of Christianity and repent from idol worship to become a believer in Christ.

2. How sensitive are we to not put stumbling stones before others?
 - a. Would you serve communion wine to a believer who was an alcoholic? (most churches remove this stumbling block and replace it with g_____)
 - b. Likewise we should remove Christian religious s_____ from being a focal point in worship.
 - 1) We do not want people worshipping the c_____, only Christ.
 - 2) We do not want people worshipping a picture of Christ, but Christ Himself.

Special Stones – all conquerors will receive one (17)

A. The gifts given to the true believer

1. Part of the hidden m_____
 - a. Manna was the heavenly f_____ God provided for the people of Israel while in the wilderness.
 - b. The ark of the covenant contained a golden j_____ of manna (Heb 9:4) – some think Jesus is referring to this.
 - c. Jesus quoted Ps 78:24, telling us that the manna came out of h_____ (not the sky) and told us that He is the bread of life from heaven (Jn 6:31).
 - d. Manna represents eternal life and it is hidden in heaven which means that it is s_____ and cannot be stolen (Col 3:3).
2. A w_____ stone
 - a. In Greek culture a white stone was used to a_____ a person (black stone was a guilty verdict) – true believers are declared innocent of all s_____.
 - b. In Greek culture a white stone was used to a_____ a person into a particular place – true believers will be admitted into the glorious presence of God.
3. A new n_____ - no one k_____ what the name is except the Lord and the person receiving the stone.
 - a. There will be no identity t_____
 - b. Our future life with the Lord will be deeply p_____

B. The bottom line – Our eternal life with Christ will be complete, secure, and personal.

He who has an ear, listen to what the Spirit is saying.