

Guilty By Association - The Letter to the Church at Pergamos

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Guilty By Association

[Revelation 2:12-17](#)

Jesus Reviews His Church // The Letter to the Church at Pergamos

Introduction:

Christian living is always lived among a community with other Christians.

- Elders are commanded to take oversight of and feed the **flock** of God ([Acts 20:28](#), [1 Peter 5:2](#))
- Consider the commands to each other.
- There are many inter-relational commands in the New Testament
- The command to disciple every **nation** ([Matthew 28:18-20](#))

The church is not a collection of individuals with separate beliefs, goals, and ideas. **The Church is a body that has one mind** ([Phil. 4:2](#), [1 Peter 3:8](#))

The Church at Pergamos had a problem with unity.

Commendation

Their dwelling

He said they dwelt in the seat of Satan.

Their Faithfulness

Jesus commended them for holding fast to His name in Satan's seat.

Not even the slaying of Antipas caused them to waiver.

Guilt

The sin of this church was not the doctrine (although it was clearly sinful) the sin that Jesus addresses is that they allowed association with them that held this doctrine.

It would not be consistent with Scripture to say that they were being held accountable to the sin of their culture at large but to say they were being held responsible for the disunity of their assembly.

Call to Unity

[Eph 4:3-4](#) - Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 [There is] one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

[Phi 1:27](#) - Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

[Phi 4:2](#) - I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

Call to Correction

[Rom 16:17](#) - Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them** which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; **and avoid them**

doctrine which ye have learned, **and avoid them.**

2Th 3:6 - Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that **ye withdraw yourselves** from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

1Co 5:11 - But now I have written unto you **not to keep company**, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

1 Ti 6:5 - Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: **from such withdraw thyself.**

2Ti 3:5 - Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: **from such turn away.**

The harmful doctrine explained

Jesus refers to the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before Israel.

This is a reference back to a story in [Numbers 22-24](#).

[Revelation 2](#), seems to sum up this story...

Rev 2:14 - But I have a few things against thee because thou hast there them that hold the **doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac** to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

The Doctrine of infiltration

They were infiltrated rather than defeated.

It is a picture of what Jesus talks about to the Pharisees. He said, your outward appearance is perfect, but inwardly you are full of dead man's bones ([Matthew 23](#)).

Living in the seat of Satan, there were some in the church who went into the Temple and worshipped idols and become sexually immoral. And others in the church allowed this in their assembly.

The guilt was that of association and dropping their responsibility to correct and admonish.

Solution

Repent

Repent or I will come to YOU and make war with THEM with the sword of my mouth.

Jesus is demanding that they change their direction on what they have allowed among themselves.

Or I will come and make war

Notice how Jesus will be making war. The same way He'll make war in [Rev. 19](#)....

Rev 19:11, 15 - And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him [was] called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. ... And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

The beginnings of John and 1 John elevate the position of the Word.

Jhn 1:1-5, 14 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. ... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

1Jo 1:1, 5-7 - That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; ... This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth

us from all sin.

The Word gives light and it is the Light that provides fellowship with Him and one another.

Knowing that God's Word will ultimately win in the end, we are to elevate the Word of God to a place of prominence in FAITH and PRACTICE.

Conclusion:

Here are some thoughts to ponder:

1. Could we, like Anitpas be called, a "Faithful Witness"?
2. Are we guilty to allow the enemy's infiltration among our ranks?
3. What role does the Word of God play in our relationships with one another?