

*The Seven Churches of Revelation*

*Jesus' Words to a Compromising Church*



**Revelation 2:12-17**  
**Week 3 - Feb. 18, 2024**

# Welcome!

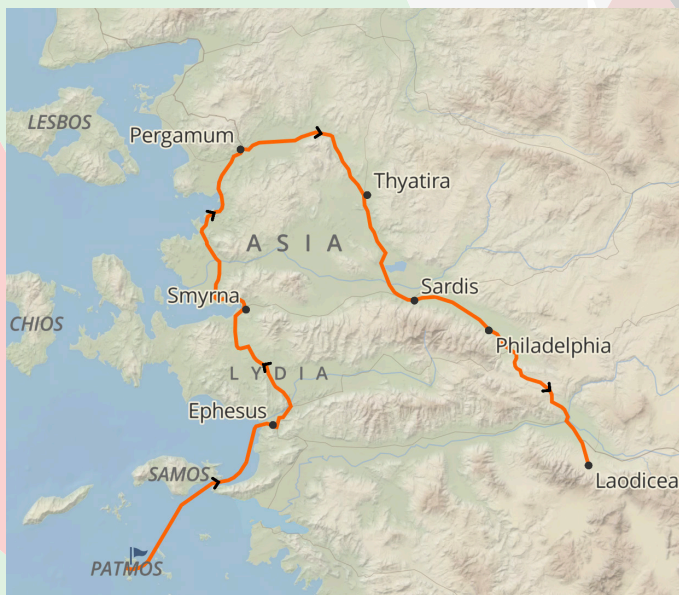
Welcome to the Winter 2024 Life Group Series! In this session, we will be learning about the Seven Churches of Revelation.

First CRC of Hanford is in the midst of transition, and has been through quite a lot over the last few years. We've weathered political discontent, a pandemic, the loss of our Senior Pastor who'd served twenty years in the role, watched, prayed, and cried as we've lost beloved members of our church family.

All churches have struggles, and according to the book of Revelation, they always have. Join us in this seven week study as we examine ancient churches in their strengths and struggles.



## Map of the Ancient Churches



## Tips for Reading the Book of Revelation

The book of Revelation, written by the Apostle John, is one of the most misunderstood books of the Bible. It's full of strange imagery that's unfamiliar to modern readers. However, the careful reader will discover patterns in the text that help us interpret it.

Our texts roughly have the following pattern.

1. Setting - the church under discussion.
  2. Title - a title of Jesus.
  3. Commendation - what the church is doing right.
- Complaint - what the church is doing wrong.  
Correction - what the church needs to do to get back on track.

# Before You Come to Life Group

1. If you're bringing a new person to the study, we recommend getting them study materials ahead of time so they can feel prepared.
2. Pray that the LORD will open your eyes and heart to receive the lessons he has to teach you in the study.
3. Read the scripture focus for the study.
4. Go through the questions and think about how you might answer them. We've provided space in the study for you to write down your answers if you'd like.

## Chatechism Corner

Q & A 30

Q. Do those who look for their salvation in saints, in themselves, or elsewhere really believe in the only savior Jesus?

A. No.

Although they boast of being his, by their actions they deny the only savior, Jesus.<sup>1</sup>

Either Jesus is not a perfect savior, or those who in true faith accept this savior have in him all they need for their salvation.<sup>2</sup>

1 1 Cor. 1:12-13; Gal. 5:4

2 Col. 1:19-20; 2:10; 1 John 1:7

# What We Believe

1. Read Revelation 2:8-11. What title does Jesus have in our text? What does the title mean?

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2. What commendation does Jesus have for the church in Pergamum? Do you think Jesus would commend the First CRC of Hanford for a similar reason?

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3. What complaint does Jesus have for the church in Pergamum? Do you think Jesus has a similar complaint against the First CRC of Hanford?

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4. What correction does Jesus give to the church in Pergamum? What's the outcome if they correct themselves? What's the outcome if they don't correct themselves?

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# Pergamum Facts

The legend of Pergamum's founding places Zeus, Athena, and Heracles in the city's pedigree. The myth claims that as a boy, the city's founder, Telephus, was put into a chest with his mother and floated across the open sea to the mouth of the Caicus River, where Heracles and Athena provided him with sustenance. Telephus went on to become the king of Mysia

Archaeological excavations conducted by the German Archaeological Institute reveal that ancient Pergamum has been occupied since the second millennium BC. The first mention of the city in written history comes from around 400 BC in the work of the Greek soldier and writer Xenophon.

The Lexham Bible Dictionary.



# God Speaks to Us

1. The church in Pergamum claimed the name of Christ, yet some compromised their faith by worshipping other gods. What other gods do we have in our lives that compromise our profession of faith in Jesus?

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2. Name three spiritual disciplines Christians can engage in to combat encroaching idolatry in our lives.

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The massive throne-like Altar itself is really more like an open-air temple. Many scholars believe that John was speaking about this distinctive landmark in particular in Revelation 2:13 when he said that Pergamum was home to “Satan’s throne”. Jews often identified the pagan gods with demons, claiming that those who worshiped idols were really worshiping demons. John exhibits a similar perspective in Revelation 9, verses 20 to 21, as does the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 10, verses 19 to 21. Identifying the Greeks’ chief god, Zeus, with the chief demon, Satan, would have been a natural extension of this.

## Cross References

See how our text fits into the story of the Bible by referencing itself!

**Revelation 2:12** -  
Hebrews 4:12

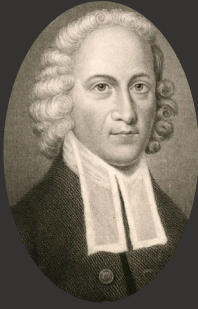
**Revelation 2:13** -  
Matthew 4:10

**Revelation 2:14** - 2  
Peter 2:15

**Revelation 2:15** -  
Revelation 2:6

**Revelation 2:16** -  
Isaiah 11:4

**Revelation 2:17** -  
Exodus 16:14-15,  
32-34



“Some make gods of their pleasures; some choose Mammon for their god; some make gods of their own supposed excellencies, or the outward advantages they have above their neighbors: some choose one thing for their god, and others another. But men can be happy in no other God but the God of Israel: he is the only fountain of happiness.”

- Jonathan Edwards

## God Speaks to Our Families

1. The text mentions that the Pergamum church was, “...where Satan’s throne is.” Pergamum was filled with pagan temples and was well known for their worship of Caesar. They were in close proximity to pagan worship, and the temptation was too much for some in the church. Are our families in close proximity to the worship of false gods? If so, where?

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2. Can we hide our children from the false religions and philosophies of the world? How should we prepare the children in our congregation for when they encounter the religions and philosophies of the world?

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# God Speaks in Worship



1. Give an example of a good, appropriate compromise when it comes to how the church worships. Give an example of a bad, inappropriate compromise when it comes to how the church worships.

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2. What differentiates a good compromise in worship from a bad compromise?

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# The Gospel Call

1. Is there a difference between: A. Compromising our message to unbelievers and B. Making our message more palatable to unbelievers? If yes, explain the difference.

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2. Can we compromise in our proclamation of the gospel? If yes, what? If no, why not?

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I most certainly believe that it is the gift of God that I am what I am. And so I dwell amongst barbarians, a proselyte and an exile, for the love of God.

- Saint Patrick

