

The Authority Of Christ!
Revelation 2:12-13

Introduction:

1. There Is Much Rebellion Against Authority Today!
 - Against Government / Employers / Teachers / Parents!
 - Greatest Rebellion: Against Christ!
 - Even By Those Who Claim To Follow Christ!
 2. Third Church To Be Written To By Jesus Through John:
 - Church At Pergamus / Pergamum!
 - City Was About 15-16 Miles From The Aegean Sea!
 - About 60 Miles North Of Smyrna!
 - Important City In Those Days!
 - Pergamus Was A Royal City!
 - In How It Was Made!
 - Many Cities Were Built Around A Hill – This City Was Built On A Hill!
 - Hill Rose 1,300 Feet From The Valley!
 - Great Military Position – No Surprise!
 - In How It Was Used!
 - For Hundreds Of Years, Used As A Capital City!
 - The Kingdom Of Pergamos Lasted For 300 Years Before The King Willed It To Rome In 133 BC!
 - The Romans, To Show Them Favor, Made It The Capital Of The Entire Province Of Asia, Until 130 AD!
 - Historian: Pliny - “By Far The Most Famous City Of Asia!”
 - Much Like Washington D.C. – Maybe Not The Largest / Richest / But Certainly The Most Important & Powerful!
 - Pergamus Was A Rich City!
 - Invented Parchment, Named After Pergamus - Animal Skins Instead Of Papyrus, Made Of Reeds From Egypt!
 - 2nd Largest Library - 200,000 Volumes / Scrolls - Alexandria In Egypt Was First!
 - Famous Hospital! Later, 20,000 Seat Amphitheater!
 - Pergamus Was A Religious City!
 - 3 Major Gods:
 - Their Local God - Asklepios - Serpent God!
 - The Greek God - Zeus!
 - The Roman God - The Emperors!
 - All This Made It A City Of Authority!
 - A Force To Be Reckoned With!
 3. In This City & In The Midst Of This Culture, God Formed A Church!
 - And Wrote This Letter To It!
 - There Is Both Something To Praise & Something To Challenge This Church About!
 - Tonight, Focus On Its Praise!
 4. In Spite Of The Powerful Authority Found In Pergamus, The Church Here Believed They “Ought to obey God rather than men!” (Acts 5:29)
 - Their Authority Was Ultimately The Lord Jesus Christ!
 - They Would Not Rebel Against Him, In Order To Submit To The Officials In Their City Of Pergamus!
 - Who Is Your Greatest Authority?
1. ***We Must Consider The Authority Of Jesus Christ!***
 - 2:12 - “And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges!”
 - He Is Above All Other Authorities!
 - An Official City Like Pergamus Was Considered To Have “The Right Of The Sword” – Which

- Meant, That It Had The “Power Of Life & Death!”
- And In A Very Real Sense, They Did!
 - But It Was Only Given To Them By The Lord!
- Because, According To This Letter, Jesus Is The One Who “Hath The Sharp Sword With Two Edges!”
 - Found In John’s Vision In 1:16!
 - Where It Comes From His Mouth, Symbolizing The Importance & Power Of His Words!
 - His Word Stands Above The Words Of All Other Men!
 - We Love Our Constitution! But How Much Do We Love His Word! Psalm 119:97 - “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day!”
- He Has The “Right Of The Sword!”
 - He Has The “Power Of Life & Death!”
 - Therefore, We Ought To Listen To Who Is Speaking & What He Is Saying!
- He Displays What Our Attitudes & Actions Are To Be Toward Compromise & Error!
 - “Sharp” Sword! Cutting Back & Forth!
 - Because It Is His Word & Truth! And, There Comes A Time When We Must “Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints!” (Jude 1:3)

2. *We Must Cling To The Authority Of Jesus Christ!*

- 2:13a - “I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is: and thou holdest fast my name!”
- In Spite Of Where You Live! Jesus Knows!
 - Once Again, His Knowledge (“I Know”) Is Perfectly Clear! Nothing Hazy Or Cloudy! (**IE:** Like The Air Quality In China Before The Olympics!)
- It Is A Place Of Hostility!
 - They Were Living “Even Where Satan’s Seat – THRONE – Is!”
 - Pergamus Was Not Only The Throne Of Rome In Asia!
 - Pergamus Was The Throne Of Satan Himself!
 - And This Church Was Right There In The Middle Of It All!
 - And Satan, Is & Always Has Been, The “Adversary” Of Christ & Christians!
 - And He Used The Policies & Politics & Culture Of The Known World – Rome – To Influence The Church! He Still Does This!
 - God Knows Where You Live As Well!
 - The Pressures & Strains & Difficulties!
 - In The World / Country / State / City / Even Home - Where Sometimes It May Seem Like Satan’s Throne Is Also!
 - It Wasn’t Just His Throne, It Was His Home!
 - 2:13c - “Where Satan dwelleth!”
 - But Don’t Give In! Remember 1 John 4:4 - “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world!”
- It Is A Place Of Honor!
 - Through It All, They “Held Fast” Christ’s Name!
 - They Knew, Like The Church In Smyrna, That No Matter Where They Lived Or What They Faced, They Needed To Cling To Jesus!
 - And By Clinging To Him, They Were Honoring His Name!
 - The Hostility Caused Them To Honor Him More!
 - Cling More Tightly!
 - Instead Of The Name Of Any Other God Or Caesar, The Majority Within The Church Would Cling To The Name Of Jesus!
 - They Wouldn’t Follow Anyone Else!

3. *We Must Continue In The Authority Of Jesus Christ!*

- 2:13b - “And hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr!”
- Through Faithfulness!

- They Did Not “Deny My Faith” – Or Faith In The Truths About Jesus Christ! He Is Our Faith!
- And To Deny The Faith Is To Deny Him, His Word, His Work, & Ultimately His Authority!
- Remember: Peter, Under Intense Pressure, Denied Jesus Temporarily!
 - Pergamus Was Faithful!
- How Tempting & Easy It Must Have Been!
 - Polycarp - “What Harm Is There In Saying: Caesar Is Lord?”
- But They Remained Faithful!
- Through Following!
 - After Godly Examples, Like Antipas!
 - Even During A Period Of Time When Their Persecution Led To Death – Even The Death Of A Beloved Leader, Antipas, They Did Not Deny The Authority Of Jesus Christ!
 - And Antipas Became Someone That They & We Could Follow!
 - To Remain Faithful To Christ Until Death!
 - And Antipas Was Given A Royal Badge Of Honor!
 - In Washington DC, The “Highest Military Decoration Awarded By The United States” Is The Congressional Medal Of Honor!
 - Awarded To Those Who: “Conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States.” / “Because of its nature, awards of the medal are frequently made posthumously!”
 - And In The Middle Of The Capital City Of Their Greatest Enemy, Satan, He Received The Greatest Badge Of Honor Christ Could Give:
- Jesus Christ Himself Called Him: “My Faithful Martyr!”
 - It Is The Same Term Given To Jesus Christ!
 - Martyr - Not Originally An English Word - Here Not A Translation, But A Transliteration, Which Receives An English Definition! (Like Baptism) Meaning Is “Witness” - And Since Many “Witnesses” For Jesus Were Killed, It Took On The Meaning Of Someone Who Dies For What They Believe!
 - Revelation 1:5 - “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood!”
 - Revelation 3:14 - “And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God!”
 - Jesus Gives Him His Own Title!
 - Because He “Fought A Good Fight!” (2 Timothy 4:7)

Conclusion:

1. Who Is The Greatest Authority In Your Life? Jesus?

*Grace Baptist Church
 Stephen Elmer, Pastor
 4245 North 200 West
 Greenfield, Indiana 46140
 317-326-2362
www.sermonaudio.com/wordofgrace
www.growatgrace.org
pastor-elmer@hotmail.com*