



DANGER

DANGERS



DANGER

Facing The

LORD'S CHURCH

THE DANGER OF Persecution & COMPROMISE

**THE
WORLD**

**PRIDE /
SELFISHNESS**

**ERROR /
DIVISION**

**STUFF /
MATERIALISM**

**APATHY /
COMPROMISE**



DANGERS *facing The* **LORD'S CHURCH**



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■ **The church (people of God) has always faced DANGER!**

- ◆ Persecution / temptation – Mark 13:9 / 1 Cor. 10:1-13; 1 John 2:15-17; Mt 6:24
- ◆ Carnality – 1 Cor. 3:1ff; Jam 3:14ff
- ◆ Drifting away from the truth – Heb. 2:1; Gal. 1:6-9
- ◆ Lukewarmness – Rev 3:14 ff
- ◆ Deception – Mat. 24:4; 2 Pet 2:1-22

Dangers Facing The **LORD'S CHURCH**

**STORMY
WEATHER
AHEAD**

**THE DANGER OF
PERSECUTION &
COMPROMISE**

REVELATION 2:8-17 (NKJV)

REVELATION 2:8-11 (NKJV)

⁸ “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, ‘These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: ⁹ “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and *I know* the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. ¹¹ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.” ’

THE DANGER OF PERSECUTION

"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, '. . . Rev 2:8



*The Agora At
Smyrna*

- ▶ In 23 b.c. Smyrna was given the honor of building a temple to the Emperor Tiberius because of its years of faithfulness to Rome.
- ▶ The city became a center for the cult of emperor worship which brought severe persecution for the early church under some of the emperors of Rome.
- ▶ Polycarp was martyred in the stadium at Smyrna in 155 a.d.

THE DANGER OF PERSECUTION

"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, ' . . . Rev 2:8

Revelation 2:8 (NKJV)

8 . . . "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, 'These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:

► Hope Because of Jesus!

- "I am the First and I am the Last" - a declaration of His uniqueness as deity in contrast with the many idol gods of pagans. - (Isa. 44:6; cf. 41:4; 48:12).
- Several times in Revelation Jesus identifies His own deity and oneness with the Father - (1:8,11,17; 2:8; 22:13, 16; cf Jn 1:1-3; 6:46; 8:58; 16:27-29).

THE DANGER OF PERSECUTION

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► Hope Because of Jesus!

- "Who was dead, and came to life" - Jesus came into the world for the purpose of suffering death so He could defeat death - Heb. 2:9-15; 1 Cor. 15
- His resurrection is the ultimate proof He is the Son of God - ("Alive forever more" - 1:18; Romans 1:4)

THE DANGER OF PERSECUTION

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Revelation 2:8 (NKJV)

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► Hope Because of Jesus!

- The Christians in Smyrna faced tribulation, even to the point of martyrdom, but knowing WHO Christ IS, and His resurrection, gave them faith and hope to face it.
- The hope of the resurrection to eternal life should give us the strength to face the trials through which we must go.

THE DANGER OF PERSECUTION

"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, '. . . Rev 2:8

Revelation 2:9 (NKJV)

9 . . . "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

► The Faithful Will Suffer ...

- For faithful Christians to be "under extreme pressure" because of their faith was, (is), common and to be expected. (Mat 10:21-28; John 16:33; Acts 14:22; 2 Tim 3:12)
- Persecution is an instrument used to pressure Christians to surrender their faith & loyalty to Christ - (2 Tim 2:3-15; 3:10-12)

THE DANGER OF PERSECUTION

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▶ The Faithful Will Suffer ...

- ▶ Tribulation CAN destroy us, (Mat 13:20,21), but CAN also help us grow spiritually - (depends on our perspective & response) - Rom 5:1-5; James 1:2-12; 2 Cor 4:8-5:4
- ▶ "I know your . . . poverty (ptochēia)" - not one who is merely barely making it - but one who has "nothing" at all.

THE DANGER OF PERSECUTION

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▶ The Faithful Will Suffer ...

- ▶ Unbelieving Jews oppressed Christians - persecuted because of their faith. - Rom 8:18-28; James 5:1-11
- ▶ Income often associated with idolatry - Acts 19:19-27
- ▶ “(***But you are rich***)” - treasure in heaven / in faith & good works - Mt 6:19-21; 1 Ti 6:18; Jm 2:5),

THE DANGER OF PERSECUTION

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▶ The Faithful Will Suffer ...

- ▶ "The real enemy, the devil, is behind our suffering ...
 - ▶ accuses & slanders (12:9-10),
 - ▶ sifts us as wheat (Lk 22:31),
 - ▶ oppresses by physical suffering (Ac 10:38)
 - ▶ as a roaring lion seeks whom he may devour (1 Pet 5:8)"

THE DANGER OF PERSECUTION

"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, '. . . Rev 2:8

Revelation 2:10 (NKJV)

Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days.

▶ Christ's Exhortation

- ▶ Do not be afraid ... More severe persecution was coming - (2:10; 1 Pet 5:8; Luke 12:4-5; Isa 51:7-13; Acts 20:24; Phil 1:28; 1 Pet 3:14)
- ▶ Christ has not promised to remove us from all trouble but provides all we need to endure - Phil 4:13; 1 Cor. 10:13; James 1:5,6; Rom 8:18-39

THE DANGER OF PERSECUTION

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▶ Christ's Exhortation

▶ All Trials Are Temporary -

- 🌀 "must through MANY trials ... " - Acts 14:22
- 🌀 Light affliction, but for a moment, 2 Cor.4:16ff
- 🌀 Now for a little while, . . . you have been grieved by various trials, 1 Peter 1:6
- 🌀 Life is but a vapor, Jam 4:14

THE DANGER OF PERSECUTION

"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, '. . . Rev 2:8

Revelation 2:10 (NKJV)

Be faithful until
death, and I
will give you
the crown of
life.

▶ Christ's Exhortation

- 🌀 Be faithful to the point of death - Mat 10:22; Luke 21:16-19; Acts 20:24; 21:13; 2 Cor. 4:7-12; 2 Tim 4:6-8
- 🌀 Not tempted above ability to bear - 1 Cor. 10:13; Rev 12:11
- 🌀 Crown of life —“promised imperishable reward of glory” - (1 Cor 9:24-25; 2 Tim 4:7-8; Jam 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4)

REVELATION 2:12-17 (NKJV)

¹² “And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, ‘These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: ¹³ “I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne *is*. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas *was* My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. ¹⁴ But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.

REVELATION 2:12-17 (NKJV)

¹⁵ Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. ¹⁶ Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth. ¹⁷ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it*.” ’

THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

"And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, . . . Rev 2:12



Altar of Zeus

► **"Where Satan's throne is . . . where Satan dwells" (13)**

- 🌀 3 temples to emperor worship,
- 🌀 The worship of Asclepius, (its symbol was the serpent)
- 🌀 The great altar to Zeus which resembled a throne
- 🌀 The seat of Rome's authority.
- 🌀 Paganism ran deep ...

THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

"And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, . . . Rev 2:12

Revelation 2:13 (NKJV)

¹³ I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

▶ **““And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith” (13)**

- 👁 They refused to deny Christ's identity & authority - He 10:23
- 👁 Refused to deny His teachings - Mk 8:38; 2 Jn 1:9; Col 1:23
- 👁 Even under enormous pressure to honor paganism & to confess the Emperor as “lord & god.” - for this reason Antipas was put to death ...

THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

“But I have a few things against you” — Revelation 2:14-16

Revelation 2:14, 15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. ¹⁵ Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

▶ **“you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam” (14)**

- 🌀 Spoken to those who held to the truth but yet continued to fellowship those in error.
- 🌀 Seduced Israel with harlots so they might sin & therefore not be blessed. Num 25:1-8; 31:16
- 🌀 Sought after the “wages of unrighteousness” - 2 Pet 2:15
- 🌀 Error for profit - Jude 1:11

THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

“But I have a few things against you” — Revelation 2:14-16

Revelation 2:14,15 (NIV)

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▶ **“you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam” (14)**

- 👁 The doctrine of compromise - (Num 23,24; 31:16; 2 Pet 2:15,16)
- 👁 Some ate things sacrificed to idols, practiced immorality and taught others it was OK to do so to avoid persecution & hardship – 1 Cor. 8:4,8-12; 10:14, 19-22, 27-29; Acts 15:20; 1 Cor. 6:13,18

THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

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▶ **“Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans,” (15)**

- 👁 Ephesus hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans, but those in Pergamos tolerated them.
- 👁 Probably early forms of gnosticism refuted in 1 John - Christ hated this doctrine - 2:6
- 👁 Taught grace gives us license to do what we want - 2 Pet 2:12-22; 1 John 1:5-3:10

THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

“But I have a few things against you” — Revelation 2:14-16

William Barclay
The New Daily Study Bible



Volume Two
The Revelation of John

“The fault of the Nicolaitans was that they were seeking to adjust Christianity to the level of the world rather than lift the world to the level of Christianity. In other words, they were following a policy of compromise simply and solely to save themselves from trouble they were afraid and unwilling to face.”

William Barclay, 115

THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

"But I have a few things against you" — Revelation 2:14-16

■ Be faithful where you are:

Applications



Is it easier to live a Christian life and talk about spiritual matters when we are surrounded by people who believe and follow the Bible (Acts 11:26; Heb 10:24,25),

What would we do if we were citizens of Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Africa, China, Russia, etc...?

Would we suffer for Christ?

THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

"But I have a few things against you" — Revelation 2:14-16

Applications

■ **Compromise is a prevalent disposition today –**

- ◆ While we must seek to live peaceably with all men - we cannot compromise the truth by compromising with evil - 1 Cor 5:6; Gal 5:9
- ◆ The compromise of spiritual principles is how we slowly become conformed to this world - Rom 12:1-3; Eph 5:1-15; 1 Jn 2:15-17



THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

"But I have a few things against you" — Revelation 2:14-16

Applications

■ The Danger of the Spirit of Compromise:

- ◆ What fellowship has light with darkness - 2 Cor 6:14-7:1
- ◆ No fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Ephe 5:11; 1 Pet 4:1-3
- ◆ Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God . . . do not bid God-speed. 2 John 9, 10



THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

"But I have a few things against you" — Revelation 2:14-16

Applications

■ The Danger of the Spirit of Compromise:

- ◆ Homosexuality / Same sex marriage / Adultery
- ◆ Fornication / Abortion
- ◆ Divorce for any cause
- ◆ Drunkenness / Revelries / Drinking Socially
- ◆ Lasciviousness / Immodesty.
- ◆ Denominationalism / Error / Unscriptural practices ...



THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

"But I have a few things against you" — Revelation 2:14-16

Applications

■ TEST: Are we standing for the truth where we ARE? ...

- ◆ Taking a stand for the Lord's church? — Romans 16:16.
- ◆ Telling others what they must do to be saved — Mark 16:16
- ◆ Standing in opposition to false worship? — John 4:24; Mat 15:7-9; Eph 5:19; Heb 12:28
- ◆ Refusing to participate in the social gospel? — Rom 14:17; 1 Cor. 11:22,34; 1 Tim 5:16



THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

"But I have a few things against you" — Revelation 2:14-16

Applications



Mark 8:38 (NKJV)

³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

"But I have a few things against you" — Revelation 2:14-16

Revelation 2:16

(NKJV)

16 Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

■ **Jesus DEMANDS we stand with Him & AGAINST SIN! — 2:16**

- ◆ To repent, i.e., to make "a radical, moral turn of the whole person from sin and to God" (Mounce. 580; cf. Matthew 12:41; Jonah 3:10).
- ◆ Jesus will judge the sinners and compromiser's
- ◆ Let us NEVER take the path of compromising matters of faith and conscience. (Rom. 14:23)

THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

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Revelation 2:16

(NKJV)

16 Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

■ **Jesus DEMANDS we stand with Him & AGAINST SIN! — 2:16**

- ◆ How can we stand strong against the ever present culture of our day? (TONIGHT)
- ◆ Reverence For God
- ◆ See The Seriousness of Sin
- ◆ Resolve To Please God
- ◆ Trust The Lord
- ◆ Strengthened By Each Victory

THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

“But I have a few things against you” — Revelation 2:14-16

Revelation 2:17 (NKJV)

17 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it*.” ’

■ Invitation & Promise — 2:17

- ◆ Remaining loyal in the midst of hardship can be done through Christ - (Phili 4:13)
- ◆ True riches **ONLY** gained by faithfully serving Jesus - A wonderful reward awaits
- ◆ Is serving Christ & receiving the salvation He offers **worth** whatever pain & suffering this life may bring for you?

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Revelation 2:17 (NKJV)

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■ Invitation & Promise — 2:17

- ◆ Are we as faithful in the sight of God as we ought to be?
- ◆ Are you faithful to the Lord no matter the cost?
- ◆ If not, are you willing to repent & commit your life to the Lord whatever the cost?

Dangers Facing The **LORD'S CHURCH**

**STORMY
WEATHER
AHEAD**

**THE DANGER OF
PERSECUTION &
COMPROMISE**

REVELATION 2:8-17 (NKJV)

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MATTHEW 10:24-33 (NKJV)

²⁴ “A disciple is not above *his* teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵ It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *will they call* those of his household! ²⁶

Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known. ²⁷ “Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops. ²⁸ And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

MATTHEW 10:24-33 (NKJV)

²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. ³⁰ But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. ³² "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. ³³ But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.