

Holy War – Revelation 2:12-17

What is a Holy War? A war waged in support of a religious cause!

Unfortunately, the Church at times has waged war in very unholy ways. From the Crusades, to bombing abortion clinics, to devaluing women, to discriminating those in the LBGTQ+ community, to slandering political candidates, etc. There is a better way to fight our battles!

We are in a war against our sworn enemies – the devil, the world and our own flesh, but how we fight matters. With what we fight with matters!

We must not fight in the ways, & with the weapons, of our sworn enemies.

- Hate, violence, slander, etc. These are not the weapons of a true Holy War.

We have one, & only one, weapon to fight with, and that is the Word of God – the written Word and the incarnated Word of God – Jesus Christ!

The Kingdom of God is at war, & Jesus does bear a sword! – **Revelation 2:12**
“The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword.” Matt. 10:34-36, Hebrews 4:12

The “who” and “what” we are fighting against may change, but what we fight “with” should never change! It is the foundation for all faith & life!

The early Church battled against the Romans with their emperor worship, the Greeks with their multiple God’s, the Jews with their rejection of Jesus as Messiah, they even battled with themselves with their own sinful desires.

The church in Pergamum knew these battlefronts well. Jesus both commended them & confronted them with how they were fighting these battles.

Revelation 2:13 – “I know where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. Yet you hold fast to my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.”

Jesus knew the severity of the battleground – they were in a war in Satan’s backyard! Yet these Christians were not going down to defeat. They were holding fast to Christ and the faith! Jesus commends them for this!

But in vs 14, Jesus confronts them about the effects that battling in Satan’s backyard has begun to have on some of them. There are some in their ranks who are beginning to fall prey to the deceptions of the enemy!

Satan is making inroads & has begun to weaken their defenses! His most powerful weapon is deception (false teaching) & he will use it to attack us at our most vulnerable places.

Vs. 14-15 lay out the stumbling blocks that the enemy used to weaken the defenses of the church in Pergamum and make their faith vulnerable!

- These faithful followers of Jesus began to compromise their integrity.
- These faithful followers of Jesus began to engage in sinful sexual practices
- These faithful followers were exchanging the truth of God for a lie.

Nothing will lead a church to fall faster than to remove the very foundation that it stands upon, the Word of God! To compromise with the world on the clear teachings of the Word of God is to surrender and admit defeat!

The Church has lost so much ground in the battles we face in our day, because our light has grown dim, and our salt has lost it’s saltiness!

The lines between the world and the Church of Jesus Christ have blurred!
- Consider how we worship, what we worship, even our view of sexuality!

Some lines need to be blurred because not everything is black and white, but where God’s Word draws a line in the sand, we must too!

God’s Word is a sharp two-edged sword that needs to be wielded. It will divide us, but it will also unite those of us who will hold to it’s truth claims.

“Do you not know that friendship w/ the world is enmity w/ God. Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”- James 4:4

This is essentially Jesus’ message to this church in Pergamum, & to us today as well. We can’t be a church that compromises the truth of God with the ways of the world, for to do so is to forfeit the fight in this Holy War!

Either way Jesus wins, truth will prevail, His Kingdom will overcome b/c even if we won’t wield the sword of truth, Jesus Himself will – **Rev. 2:16**

We are to be set apart, a city on a hill, a beacon of light. But how is that possible if we look, sound, believe and fight in the ways of the world?

Let us repent, and fight the spiritual battles of our day. Let us conquer as we wield the sword of truth & receive that which Jesus promises in **vs. 17.**

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