

Growth Group Discussion Questions—Oct. 4-10

1. Share your favorite Santa Cruz eatery and your favorite menu item.
2. In his message, Dave said: *“The Church of Pergamum bought into the lie that you can love the world and the ways of the world and love Jesus as the same time. They tried to have Almighty God in one pocket, while carrying the little gods of Greek mythology in the other....”* As modern-day believers, we’re not much different. What different “idols” do we stuff into our spiritual pockets?
3. Have you ever given up something valuable that you later wished you had? What was it? What invaluable thing do believers throw away when they “cling to worthless idols”? (See Jonah 2:8)
4. It’s grade-school wisdom to “mind your own business” in life. This is good practice most of the time. But for people in Christian community, the Bible offers a different view. What does Heb. 12:16 imply about the level of involvement believers are supposed to have in one another’s lives?
5. Jesus provides the perfect example of someone who balanced grace and truth in his dealings with others (Jn. 1:14). Consider the famous story of the woman at the well. How did Jesus both show her respect, and challenge her lifestyle? (You can find their conversation in Jn. 4:7-18.) What impact did his words have on her?
6. As Christ-followers, we can’t rise above spiritual compromise without good friends to lift us up. But as people who are called to clothe ourselves with *“compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience”* (Col. 3:12), how do we challenge and confront other believers when necessary, but not crush and condemn them in the process? In other words, how do we walk the tightrope of grace and truth, without falling off on one side or the other? Follow up: Has anyone ever walked this tightrope successfully with *you*? How did they do it?
7. If you’ve ever played sports, you know that to win you must do more than train and play hard. You also must study your opponent.
 - a. Share about a time on the court or on the playing field when an opponent exploited *your* weaknesses. What was your weakness, and how did your opponent use it against you?
 - b. How is the devil like a savvy sports opponent? Brainstorm ways that you can keep the enemy from praying upon your weaknesses?

Eight Warnings from the Book of Revelation Let’s Compromise

Background

Zeus = _temples, altars and shrines were dedicated to Zeus (king of the gods and known there as “savior-god”)_____

Athena = _goddness of victory and patron of the city_____

Dionysus = _parton god of the dynasty, symbolized by a bull_____

Asklepios = __the savior of the god of healing, symbolized by a serpent_____

I. The Comment.

These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword.

Revelation 2:12

II. The Compliment.

I know where you live – where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name.

Revelation 2:13

A. I know you live where Satan has _his throne_____.

Throne = **_in the ancient world a throne signified special authority and royal governance.**_____

B. I know where you live and that you remain _true to my name_____.

I know where you live = _a permanent residence, not just passing through_____.

Remain true = _you continue to hold fast, to grasp forcibly._____

C. I know you don't renounce your faith _under persecution_____.

You did not renounce your faith in me, even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city – where Satan lives.

Revelation 2:13

III. The Criticism.

Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality. Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

Revelation 2:14 – 15

A. The First Criticism: __You hold the teaching of Balaam_____.

But these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts they too will perish. They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their pleasures while they feast with you. With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed – an accursed brood! They left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness.
2 Peter 2:12 – 15

B. The Second Criticism: __You hold the teachings of the Nicolaitans_____.

IV. The Charge.

Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

Revelation 2:16

V. The Comfort.

To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.

Revelation 2:17

... No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him.

1 Corinthians 2:9

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