Pergamum--( or Pergamas)

 Church period is 312-606 A.D.

**The name means “Mixed or Objectionable Marriage"**

(Per means perversion-or opposition or unacceptable--objectionable!)==**=gamas means as gamamy or bigamy=marriage.**)

The **epistle** that this church corresponds to is - I Corinthians.

The **parable** that defines this church is “The Mustard Seed”

 -Mt 13:31-32.

Revelation 2:12-17-describes this church.

**V-13** -refers to the city of Pergamum as Satan’s throne -(or where Satan dwells.)

 Pergamum was known for its strong Idolatrous Religion. There was a large altar there that was dedicated to Zeus, the Greek god.-(the city was full of idolatry.)

**This is the Church period that saw Constantine come to power by the help of the Christians.**

 Constantine was emperor of Rome and as such was the Pontiff Maximus the High Priest of the religion—(which was the Babylonian religion passed down through the empires into Rome).

The Babylonian Religion states that Nimrod married Semerimus and had a child named Tammuz, who was supposed to be miraculously conceived. He died and the vestal virgins prayed for 40 days and he was resurrected. It’s called the feast of Ishtar, the passing of the egg, which means 'life out of death.' This feast was in celebration of the resurrection of her son Tammuz. It’s the pagan holiday that we celebrate today called Easter. However, we, (Christians), celebrate the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Babylonians called this the Mother/Child religion. It was modeled by a Madonna holding a baby in her arms. (The Catholic Church calls her the Virgin Mary holding the child Jesus.)

--In the year 312 Constantine was at war with Maxentius and was almost defeated but he saw a Cross in the sky and heard a voice say “with this sign you will conquer.” So he called on the Christians who up until this time had been persecuted and asked them for help.-**-consequently the Church of Smyrna filtered into Pergamum , the Church of Constantine**.

Constantine therefore made Christianity the State Religion. Now he was already the High Priest or Pontiff Maximus, of the cultic religion that had infiltrated into Rome from Babylon. Now he would also become the High Priest**, (Pope),** of the Christians. (The first Pope was not Peter, as the Catholic Church claims, but Constantine.)

His first official act was to have all the Roman babies **baptized** as Christians and declared that all their previous religious practices of lent, Ishtar (Estar)- and other religious practices be celebrated by all Christians as well as Romans. It was a mixture of Christianity and Paganism. -a mixed marriage.

Genesis -The Lord destroyed the population of the world except for 8 people who honored the Lord. In Gen 9:1 The Lord told Noah to increase in number and fill the whole earth.

==**But**  Genesis 11:4 -we see the people wanting to come together and make a tower to reach into heaven and make a name for themselves. That was in the land of Shinar-Babylon. Then in v-6 the Lord scattered them and confused their language so they had to separate.

**==313 AD**-Constantine, Emperor of Rome, brought the Church and State together.

**---Then** Reformation separated the Church from Roman Catholic Church.

**===Vatican II-**Pope John 23rd, opened the door for all Churches and Religions to join together.-Called the Ecumenical Movement. --(This is for the future False Prophet to rule.)

**Some of the Babylonian Religious practices were:**

 Making the Sign of the Cross. ( Comes from the word **Tammuz--T --the Cross)**. Later on the this practice would find it's way into the church.

 -The **rosary was started** --(pagan practice of counting their repetitious prayers on beads)

Prayers for the dead , theWorship of Angels, saying Mass (The Christ-mass, which started on December 25th, Tammuz's birthday),-Worship of Mary, Extreme Unction, Doctrine of Purgatory all became part of this church.

Needless to say the Church declined in Spiritual blessing and power during this period.

The great theologian Augustine started the **“ A “-Millennial view.** (Everyone thought they were in the Millennium period & that Christ would come back at the end of the period.

**A. Title**

**v-12-** “ The words of Him who has the sharp double-edged sword” -Heb 4:12 -The sword is a symbol of the Word of God. Two edged sword used for discernment of thoughts & motives.

-(He’s telling the Church if they had kept the Word they would not have experienced the evils of the Dark ages! )

 The Word of God Sanctifies,(John 17:17); Cleanses,(John 15:3); brings Joy, (John 15:11); brings Peace,(John 16:33); It judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart, (Heb 4:12), and divides the soul from the spirit.

A Christian who is not in the ord of God daily will have trouble keeping the world out of his lie. He will hold onto the things of this world, and will end up being a mixture and will become known as a 'Worldly Christian".==(The problem is he will not be committed to either, and without commitment there is no real happiness, and no blessing from the Lord.)

 **B. Christ’s Commendation.**

**v-13-** “yet you remain true to my name-you did not renounce your faith in Me”-(The Church remained doctrinally pure but they sinned by taking part in ceremonies of the pagans which later polluted the true doctrines.) =this was 13 years after coming joined with the state religion.

ie.**-the council of Nicea** was held in **325** to debate whether Jesus was God or His Representative. They concluded He was the Deity, very God of very God. “They remained true to His Name” !

-(So this church believes that Jesus is God, but practices idolatry as well as Christian doctrines.)

==67% of so called Christians deny that Jesus is the only way of Salvation.==

**C. Criticism.**

**V-14-** “ Nevertheless-I have a few things against you.”

 Some were holding to the teaching of Balaam.

( The story is noted in Num 22 & 23. The king of the Moabites, Balak , hired Balaam , a prophet, to scare the Israelites & lure them by using voluptuous women as enticement for sexual sins. So the women would invite the men of Israel over for a party and then to worship their idols. Balaam persuaded them to live with and marry the Moabites and consequently they became as the Moabites. -(This of course was contrary to the Will of God.)

**God’s people are not to get involved with the world ! So this Church became Adulterated--Mixed!-Contaminated!**

-(we are told in the N.T., II Cor 6:14 not to be unequally yoked. Not to marry outside the faith. The reason is obvious but many struggle with this scripture due to the fact they previously got involved with unbelievers.)

**V-15-** “ Likewise they also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.”

 Now this doctrine was rejected at the Church of Ephesus but now became accepted.

The Emperor of Rome (Constantine) became ruler of the laity.

 **The clergy** became an ivory tower type of existence.--**They ruled** the people **and took the scriptures** out of the hands of the people and they became the interpreters of the bible, saying the people could not interpret it themselves.

The Lord Jesus said **in Rev 2:6,** He hates the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. -(This teaching has ruined many churches.)

The teaching messages leaned to the brotherhood of man rather than the Fatherhood of God. The church became the controller of people's lives, whereby they had to obtain permission to marry, and even how to run their personal lives.

**D. Exhortation.-- (Counsel to the Church.)**

**V-16**--” Repent or be Judged.”

Unless we are willing to repent of our sins and return to obedience to the Word, we will be judged.)

 1 Cor 11:31 says "if we judge ourselves we will not be judged."-( Judging ourselves is to confess our sins and repent). That also means to throw out the errors previously noted and come out of her. Don't stay in a church that is not teaching the pure Word of God.

**E. Closure. (The Challenge to the Church)**

**v-17-**

 The “Hidden Manna" was the food from heaven sent by God to the children of Israel in the wilderness.-- (This typifies the spiritual food that God provides in His Word. Just as the children in the desert had to go after the manna, so must the child of God go after the Word of God, and then He will obtain a spiritual blessing.)

This is what keeps us clean, keeps our doctrine pure. This is the mean to bring us into the Holy of Holies, that close fellowship with the Lord!

 "The White Stone" -White means righteousness or pure. -(in ancient times a white stone meant **aquitted!** A man tried by a court and found innocent would publicize it by wearing a white stone around his neck for all to see.)

This is what Christ gives to His child— **Aquital!!** **Through faith in Him.**

A" new Name",symbolizes intimacy. A secret name that only the Lord knows and the receiver. It's a name of endearment.!

==This is what the Lord desires of us--Repentance. Don't look to the world, look to Jesus and He say "I will give you hidden manna and a white stone and a secret name.

So this Church believed that Jesus Christ was God-however, they don’t believe in the Tribulation Period or the Millennial reign of Christ.

They have mixed the Babylonian religious practices into Christianity.

They are ruled by a hierarchy rather than autonomous.

They have no convictions about morality.

They have no knowledge of their bible doctrines.--( they rely on the pulpit and generally receive canned messages from their denominations.)

They allow everyone to believe the way they want to as long as they belong to the church.