

**Articles and Sermons :: Antipas – A Faithful Witness by Zac Poonen****Antipas – A Faithful Witness by Zac Poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2013/11/8 20:54**

In Rev 2:12-17 we read, “And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this: “I know where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith, even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells...”

Pergamum was a city, which was so evil that the Lord says that Satan had his earthly headquarters there. This is mentioned twice in Rev. 2:13. And right in the midst of that city the Lord had placed His church.

The Lord tells them, “I know where you dwell”. He knows exactly where we are living and in what circumstances we are living. And He can keep us pure and triumphant, even if Satan has his earthly throne right where we live. With the sword of the Spirit, we too can overcome.

No lampstand ever complains that the surroundings are too dark for it to shine in. The brightness of a lampstand has nothing to do with its surroundings. Its light depends solely on the amount of oil it contains.

It is exactly the same with any local church. The surroundings may be evil. Satan may have his throne in that city. But if the church is filled with the oil of the Holy Spirit, the light will shine brightly. In fact, the darker the surroundings, the more brightly any light will be seen in such surroundings! The stars are seen at night - not during the day.

The Lord commends this church for holding fast His Name and not denying the faith even in times of persecution. He especially mentions Antipas, who was a faithful witness who laid down his life for his faith.

Antipas was one who stood for God’s truth, even if it meant having to stand alone. He was a man of conviction and not one who sought to please men. Those who know God do not have to look around to see how many others believe what they believe. They are willing to stand alone for the Lord, if necessary against everyone else in the whole world. Antipas was a man like that. And as a result, he was killed.

If he had been a man-pleaser, he could have escaped death. He was killed because he stood uncompromisingly for God’s revealed truth. People probably called him narrow-minded, stubborn, hard-to-get-along-with and insane. But it made no difference to him. He just stood true to his Lord, standing against all sin, worldliness, compromise, disobedience to God’s Word and against the devil. Here was a man who was a threat to Satan’s kingdom.

Perhaps it was because Antipas was in Pergamum that Satan decided to place his throne there. What a man Antipas must have been if even Satan dreaded him!

God needs people like Antipas in every part of the world today. The time is soon coming when we will have to pay a price for our faith. All of Babylonian Christendom around us will compromise and bow to the Antichrist. Will we stand firm in that day, like Antipas did? Or will we bow the knee to Satan to preserve our life? Are we convinced that it is worth losing our life for the sake of God’s truth?

Today, God is testing us through little trials. It is only if we are faithful in these little testings that we can be faithful in the bigger trials that will come in the future. Satan should consider you such a threat to his kingdom that he moves his throne to the town where you live.

The sad thing was that the church at Pergamum lost out spiritually, after Antipas died. Antipas was probably the messenger of the church when he was alive. When he died, someone else took over and the church went downhill. This is the sad history of many churches.