

Week Five: *Intrinsic vs. Market Value*
Revelation 2:12-17

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. Describe a time when you did a really big favor for someone; the type of favor that really cost you time, money, or energy you probably shouldn't have spared.
2. What was that person's response to your favor? Was his or her response adequate for the amount of effort you extended on their behalf? How long did his or her appreciation last?
3. Sometimes when we strive to please others, we expect a longer-lasting response from the recipient than we often receive. Janet Jackson wrote the theme song for this expectation, called, *What Have You Done For Me Lately?* How does it feel to be treated as though you are only as good as the last thing you have done for someone else?
4. Read Revelation 2:12-17. What was the church in Pergamum praised for in verse 13?
5. A surface reading of this section of Scripture seems to praise the church in Pergamum for what they did well, but when we look closely, we see they are praised for whose they are, not what they have done. Read John 16:33. Who has done the true work?
6. In this world, we are often valued for what we do, in other words, our "market" value, which is an exhausting pursuit of "what have we done lately?" But in God's economy, we are valued for whose we are, our "intrinsic" value as his children. Spend the rest of your FIFTEEN in prayer, thanking God for what he's done and how he sees us as his own.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

7. What weapons come to mind when you think of power and strength? What makes that weapon powerful?
8. Read Revelation 2:12-17. What term was used to describe the source of John's words?
9. A double-edged sword is mentioned in another place in the Bible. Read Hebrews 4:12. What is the double-edged sword used to describe?
10. Now read John 1:1-5. Who is known as the Word?
11. In the church today, we often focus on Jesus' love and sacrifice. But throughout Revelation we continue to see a glimpse of Jesus that we don't often talk about — the powerful and mighty Jesus — the double-edged sword of God that guards and defends us. How does knowing and understanding this fuller picture of who Jesus truly is impact your

faith?

12. A double-edged sword was likely the most terrifying weapon many ancient people could have imagined. Think back to the weapon you listed in question 12. Jesus is even more powerful than that. End your FIFTEEN in prayer by thanking God for using his might and strength to fight on our behalf.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

13. Have you ever tried to tell someone about an experience that is so far out of the realm of his experience that he was unable to relate? On the reverse side, have you ever talked with someone who knew exactly what you had gone through? How does having a shared experience affect your ability to relate to someone else?
14. Read Revelation 2:12-17 again. How is the city of Pergamum described in verse 13?
15. Pergamum was the evil Roman Emperor’s capital in Asia. Huge altars were built for pagan gods, and animals were sacrificed continually to Zeus. The sights, sounds, and smells of pagan worship could not be avoided. As we saw on Day One this week, God praised the church in Pergamum for remaining true to him despite the horrible environment in which they lived. Are there any modern-day places that compare to this experience?
16. No one has to tell you when you are living in a place where “Satan has his throne.” How would it feel to the residents of Pergamum to understand that God knows exactly what is going on in their city?
17. Would it make it harder or easier for you?
18. God praised the church in Pergamum for remaining true to him despite the horrible environment in which they lived. Look again at verse 13; what event took place? What was the person’s name in that event?
19. It doesn’t seem to be an accident that this martyr was listed by name. God knew who he was and what he had suffered, and he made sure his faithful church knew that he remembered this man’s faithfulness. Read Isaiah 49:16. What does God say about his people?
20. Just like the church of Pergamum, God knows who you are and what you are going through. He will not forget you; your name is on the palm of his hand. Spend the rest of your FIFTEEN in prayer, thanking God for his watchful eye over you.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

21. Look again at Revelation 2:12-17. Who are the unfaithful people listed in verse 15?

22. We may not know the nature of the specific offenses of those people may have been, but we can tell by God's threat of punishment that he was serious. What were two of the offenses listed?
23. It's interesting to note that one of the offenses was eating food sacrificed to idols. What hidden things does God offer his faithful in verse 17?
24. Read John 6:50-58. How is spiritual manna different from the manna that the Israelites lived on in the desert?
25. God continually reminds his people that he offers them so much more than they can grab for themselves. And certainly more than what popular opinion offers. What else does Revelation 2:17 say God also gives his people?
26. God gives us so much more than forgiveness. He gives us a new name. A new identity. We are not the sum of all of our sins, we are his beloved people! End your FIFTEEN by thanking God for all he gives you, including a fresh start every day.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

27. Read Revelation 2:12-17. What did we discover God offers his people in verse 17?
28. Now read Revelation 20:12-15. What happened to those who were judged by their deeds?
29. What happened to those who were found written in the book of life?
30. We don't just have a new identity here on this earth, we have one for eternity. How does knowing that he has claimed you as his own — for eternity — change how you feel about your circumstances today?
31. Read Luke 10:1-20. In this passage Jesus' disciples had just returned from spreading the news of Jesus. What did the disciples report to Jesus in verse 17?
32. What was Jesus' answer to them in verse 18-20?
33. Having demons submit to your will is pretty noteworthy. Accordingly, the disciples were thrilled to have experienced this power. As Jesus reminded them, no matter how strong and powerful our actions might be, there is no greater promise for us than finding our name written in the book of life. It is not what we do but whose we are that gives us true power *and* a reason to celebrate. Finish your FIFTEEN by asking God to remind you of whose you are, whether you are despairing of your failings or glorying in your accomplishments.