

ROCK ETERNAL CHURCH

**THE SEVEN**



**SERMON  
SERIES**

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# **DON'T BE FOOLED**

**The third episode of the Seven series.**

**Seven means perfection and there are many attributes to Seven in the Bible. The Lord spoke to seven churches and there was an important message to each church. Each church mentioned categorizes our church into one of those seven and also represents a believer's mindset.**

**First was the church of Ephesus which lost its first love. The second was the church of Smyrna, standing for God amidst all persecutions.**

**The third church is the church of Pergamum.**

**The message to the third church (Pergamum) is "Don't be fooled." Most of the times, we are being fooled by the devil and this world. The church of Pergamum was also fooled by the devil and the world and the church was compromising itself with the world. They were deceived. This church had good faith but they were deceived and diverted. We also are being deceived by this world and are being led into its ways. Though we want to walk in the ways of God, we are being diverted by certain things.**

**This church became a compromising church and conformed to this world. It's important that we, being His children, do not compromise on Godly standards to get our works done.**

**God tells us not to compromise with the world thinking what it says is for our good. Today, a lot of people deceive others on social media with the pictures they post and with fake logins. In these last days, be careful that you are not fooled by people.**

### **Illustration:**

**A man, who did not have a job for a very long time, went to the zoo looking out for a job. The owner of the zoo told him that we do not have any job right now but have one unlike the one you have expected and come here, and asked him whether he would be interested in doing that job. This man told the owner, "I could not find a job all these days and I will do any job that you give." The owner then said, "We had a big gorilla in the zoo and it suddenly passed away. We need somebody who can wear the dress of that of a gorilla and attract the people as if there is a gorilla in the cage. Will you be able to do it?" This man thought of taking up the job as he did not have a job for a long time. He thought people will not be able to recognize him and accepted the job. Every day, he would put on the gorilla dress and many of them believed that it was a real gorilla. One fine day, some students who came there were encouraging him a lot. This man got**

excited and he was on the tree, hanging, swinging and jumping. But unfortunately, he fell into the next cage, very close to the lion (a huge African lion). He started to shout for help. The lion came near as he was shouting. The lion then put its hand on this man and said, “Please do not shout. If you shout, both of us will lose our jobs.”

The lion was also another man.

Both of them were cheating the entire crowd. The devil also wears different kinds of clothes and masks and comes in different forms to deceive us and fool us. The devil even blesses you to distract you. Be very careful.

*Let's look into this church (Pergamum).*

- Some information about Pergamum city is as follows:
- Pergamum was a beautiful city, the capital of Asia Minor.
- Pergamum was 80 miles north of Smyrna.
- Pergamum was a historical city. It was the capital of the Roman government in Asia.
- Pergamum was a university town. It had the largest library in the world with books about 200,000 volumes.
- Pergamum was an exciting place to live and visit.
- Pergamum was also known for different kinds of gods (a lot of idols were there). God says that this is the devil's throne and dwelling place.

**Amidst these, there was this church. This is the message the Lord sent for this church.**

***Revelation 2:12***

**12 –To the angel of the church in Pergamum write:**

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

**The introduction of God to this church is “The Lord with the double-edged sword.” Double edged sword means that one side of the sword is to correct, punish and give judgments. The other side is to show mercy and grace. The Lord commends, cautions and corrects.**

***Revelation 2:13***

**13 –I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, not even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city—where Satan lives. God wanted to appreciate this church for they stood faithful amidst all persecutions without renouncing His word, though it was satan’s throne and where satan lives. Antipas, the pastor of this church, was a martyr – he was put in the burning fire and was killed. But still, you people stood faithful.**

**People go through a lot of problems in their life – a very bad career, marriage or a tough time in your ministry, or problems with your children. You are holding on to it and God appreciates that. You had done all these.**

**You had been standing for me but you have left out something.**

***Revelation 2:14***

**14 –Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: There are some among you who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin so that they ate food sacrificed to idols and committed sexual immorality.**

**God gives them a caution as many of them are still holding on to the teachings of Balaam. Satan uses two kinds of tactics in our lives to remove us away from God. One, he will bring problems and persecutions and will fight you directly. We will face these and stand strong. Next, the devil will seduce you. He will give the things that we desire in this world (blessings and beautiful things) and deceive us.**

**The devil uses three steps:**

- 1. Distraction**
- 2. Deception**
- 3. Destruction**

**It goes in this order. He distracts, then he deceives and then he destroys. Many a time, we complain about our family, health and church. Are we distracted? If you read about Balaam in the Old Testament, King Balak hires Balaam to curse Israelites. But Balaam was not able to curse but only bless the Israelites. He was not able to attack them directly.**

**So Balaam gives an idea to Balak to send women from their land to Israelites to entice them.**

## **1. DISTRACTION**

**Numbers 25:1**

**1 –While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women.**

**Israelites had an immoral relationship with Moabite women. If we can stand against the direct attack of the enemy, he will try to distract us. An old man who taught me how to drive the car, use to show a building and say how beautiful it is. When I turned to look at that building, he would immediately give a knock on my head and would say not to get distracted. He would do that again and would say “every time something interesting or attractive comes, you get distracted and you will end up in an accident.” Distraction is the best way the enemy brings into our life to bring that to an end.**

**Today, to people who want to do the work of God, he will give extra work and salary and people leave God’s work. Satan will give the blessing and the things that we desire to distract us. Do not be deceived. Do not be hasty. The devil will open some doors immediately for you so that you will miss out the bigger doors that God has kept for you.**

## **2. DECEPTION**

**Numbers 25:2**

**2 —who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods. The people ate the sacrificial meal and bowed down before these gods.**

**First, they were distracted. Then the Israelites ate what was offered to idols and bowed to worship them. If you allow the devil to work in our lives, he will deceive us by giving the best blessings of this world. Many believers are willing to bribe and take shortcuts, trying to do unethical things. Be cautious for you will be subjected to God's anger. The devil will deceive you through God's word.**

**A man went to church and after the pastor preached, he went and told the pastor that God had spoken to him and had given him a sign. The Pastor asked what did God speak to him and confirm. This man said, "I wanted to divorce my first wife and marry a lady called Grace. I asked for a sign and today you preached completely on grace saying grace is sufficient for you. This is God's will."**

**This is deception. Just because we like something, we want something and it happens in our life, the devil can deceive. Do not be deceived just because the blessings are coming our way, as we desired.**

### 3. DESTRUCTION

Numbers 25:4

**4 –The Lord said to Moses, “Take all the leaders of these people, kill them and expose them in broad daylight before the Lord, so that the Lord’s fierce anger may turn away from Israel.”**

**The Israelites were killed – there was a plague and 24,000 people were killed. A small distraction led to deception and destruction. These many people died because of the simple plan of Balaam. If we start to compromise and get along with the world, the devil will distract, deceive and destroy us. Many have lost their lives. Be cautious, do not be fooled. The world talks a lot about success. The success according to the world is not success according to the Lord. Making money and living a wealthy life is the success the world speaks about. Do not compromise with the world like the church of Pergamum, just to get over the situations.**

**The Lord commends, cautions and then, He corrects. He gives them a chance to the Israelites.**



***Revelation 2:16***

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

**Check yourself and change. You might have made a mistake. But God says, “Repent, change yourself and do not do the mistake again.” Repent else there is judgment.**

**We have lost our purity, intimacy and focus on God. He will give all the blessings we need. Do not base God’s love and grace based on the blessings of people. Even the enemy can bless. Be very careful and do not be fooled by these blessings. Repent without conforming to this world and God will reward you. If you hold on to your faith and stand faithful, this is what the Lord will reward you with.**

***Revelation 2:17***

**17 – Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.**

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***God gives the hidden manna and a white stone. He gives us a new name. You will not be known by your name, your family's name or place you come from; for God will give you a new name and you will be identified with the name of Christ. You need to cut off from whatever you compromised. Don't let the devil fool you. The plan of Balaam was to distract, deceive and destroy. The devil also wants to do the same in our lives by giving us the blessings of this world. God wants us to change from all those ways, hold on and He will give the white stone.***

### **Story of Heinrich Schliemann:**

**In 1871, Heinrich Schliemann started digging up (excavating) the city of Turkey for he wanted to find out the city of Troy. Troy was an ancient and beautiful city, and it had big walls. For 10 years, the Greeks tried to defeat and capture Troy but they were not able to do it because of the big walls the city had. So, they built a big Trojan horse, a big horse and hid selective soldiers inside that and the rest sailed away, for they couldn't get through the walls of Troy. They left this horse as a gift. The people of Troy saw that the soldiers had left and took the gift inside the city. Some said not to take the gift inside but the people took it inside. In the night, the soldiers who were hidden**

*inside the horse came out and opened the gate; meanwhile, the other soldiers also sailed back. The Greek soldiers came inside and set the entire city on fire and killed the people. The Greeks tried for 10 years and were not able to come inside but now they deceived them. The walls which could not be broken were broken through deception.*

### **Conclusion:**

**The Lord is also standing like a wall in our lives. And as long as we are in the protection of our Lord, no one will be able to do any harm. But the devil wants to deceive us by giving gifts. Just because we receive a gift or a blessing comes, do not think that it has come from the Lord. By receiving the gifts, we open the gates and allow the enemy to come inside and destroy us. Be very careful how blessings come your way, not to compromise and allow the enemy to deceive and destroy. But the Lord wants to correct, caution and give you a new certificate. He wants to give a white stone and a new name and bless us. If you had been compromising your lives, your family's and your ministry with others, it is time to change right now. Amen.**