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**B0435 -- August 29, 2004 -- 2 John 9-13 -- Remaining in Doctrine of Christ**

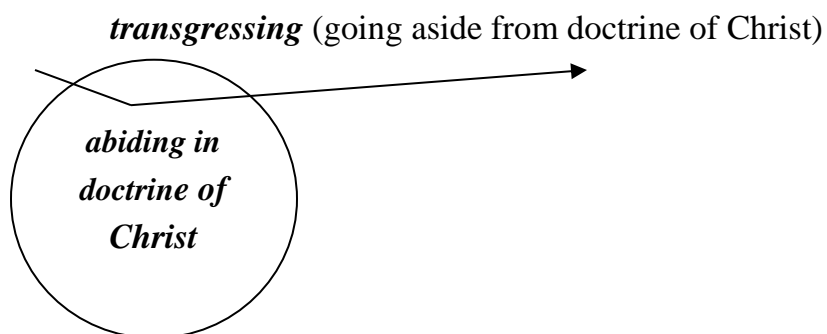
***9 Every one going aside and not abiding [remaining] in the doctrine of the Christ has not God: the one abiding in the doctrine of Christ, this one has both the Father and the Son.***

**9 pa/j o` parabai,nwn kai. mh. me,nwn evn th/| didach/| tou/ Cristou/ qeo.n ouv k e;cei\  
o` me,nwn evn th/| didach/| tou/ Cristou/( ou-toj kai. to.n pate,ra kai. to.n ui`o.n e;cei**

There are manuscript differences here in v. 9. The Critical Text, for example, has the verb *proago* meaning “to go too far” but the Majority Text uses the verb *parabaino* meaning “to go aside”. The vast majority of the manuscripts have *parabaino* and so it should be translated ***every one going aside from...the doctrine of Christ***. This warning does not mean that a Christian can lose his salvation (Arminian's) or that he was never saved (Reformed). What it does show is that a Christian can turn aside from true doctrine and go into heresy, even when the heresy has to do with Christ. The immediate context indicates that if a Christian does turn aside from true doctrine that he will fail to receive ***full reward*** as v. 8 intimated. Too many theologians make a serious error in verses like this one. They pull the verse out of context and then claim that it means loss of salvation or that the person was never saved. These Bible teachers are falling for the fallacy that these texts are talking about eternal salvation! But this severely abuses several books in the NT (e.g., 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> John, Hebrews, and Revelation 2-3). All these books or chapters are written to true believers. They are not written to professing unbelievers (i.e., those who profess Christ but don't possess Christ). They are not warning Christians that they can lose their salvation. If they warn of anything it is loss of reward! And only Christians can lose reward! Theologians who teach that these books are about salvation instead of sanctification are radically misunderstanding these books. The result is a loss of 22 chapters of scriptural teaching. Here, John doesn't want Christians to ***go aside*** from and ***not abide*** in the ***doctrine of Christ***. The phrase ***doctrine of Christ*** does not mean the “doctrine given by Christ”, but the “doctrine about Christ”; His nature and person. John's subject is Christological heresies that distort the person of Christ (v. 7). Serious loss of reward takes place when Christians don't have a proper doctrine of Jesus Christ (v. 8). Such a Christian ***does not have God***.

Since he did not *remain* in the doctrine of Christ, but went *aside* from it, he leaves God behind. God is not with him in his abandonment of the proper doctrine of Christ. This does not mean he is unsaved. If a person really did believe the truth at some point in time but then abandoned the truth of Christ, then that person is still born of God. “Contrary to the opinion of some theologians, we are not saved by *continuing* to believe, but by *believing*.”<sup>i</sup> John 3:16 has figured largely in this debate. Are we saved by believing once for all or by continuing to believe? Some have recently taken John 3:16 to mean continual belief is what saves so that it would read, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever *continually* believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”<sup>ii</sup> But this makes havoc of the present tense. It is true that the present tense can have an *ongoing* nuance but “suffice it to say that nowhere in the New Testament is ongoing faith made a condition for eternal life.”<sup>iii</sup> How could it be that salvation is conditioned on *continual faith* when regeneration and justification are miracles that happen instantaneously? Realizing this vexing problem theologians try to get around it by saying that we really were saved at the moment of true saving faith, but that we cannot know whether we really believed or not unless we remain in the faith.<sup>iv</sup> All this means is that we are supposed to accept this absurd idea that we can ‘believe’ without knowing whether we *really* ‘believed’ or not!<sup>v</sup>

Some argue that John is so clear that these people are not really believers in v. 9 because he says they *do not have God*. For example, Wuest says this phrase means that he “does not possess God in a saving relationship”, but this explanation doesn’t fit the context. John is speaking of the doctrine of rewards (v. 8) and of *abiding* which are restricted to Christians. Notice how many times in this verse John uses the word *abide*. *Abide* is a word that means “to remain”. You can’t remain in something if you are not already there. In other words, if I tell you to stay at HEB until I get there but you’re not there now then my statement is meaningless. You have to be at HEB first before I can tell you to stay there. The same is true for John. When he says they are *not abiding in the doctrine about Christ* they first had to be there for them to abandon it. Christians may not be abiding, instead they may go aside from the doctrine of Christ. On the flipside we have v. 9b where we have the Christian who is *abiding in the doctrine of Christ*. This one has *both the Father and the Son*. This means he is vitally in touch with God. These people are adhering to the proper doctrine of Christ and are therefore living Christ. Ultimately, they are storing up rewards (v. 8).



So, when a believer moves away from the teaching of Christ, God is not with him in this course of action. God only approves of our actions when they line up with His word (John 8:31). On the other side of the coin, the one *abiding in the doctrine of Christ* is *abiding in both the Father and the Son*. This means that the Father and the Son approve of this course and the result is true discipleship and growth (John 8:31). This is a warning against doctrinal deviation and its consequent disobedience in the area of Christology. These at the home church of the *elect lady* should not be led astray by the false doctrine of Christ. Instead, they should abide in proper doctrine of Christ which will result in *full reward* (v. 8).

*10 If anyone comes to you [all] and he does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into a household and do not say farewell to him:*

10 ei; tij e;rcetai pro.j u`ma/j kai. tau,thn th.n didach.n ouv fe,rei( mh. lamba,nete aucto.n eivj oivki,an kai. cai,rein auctw/| mh. le,gete\

*If* is a particle of fulfilled condition (Wuest) meaning this was already going on in this local church. It's obvious that the *children* of the *elect lady* must have related this to John. "A common phenomenon in the Greco-Roman world of John's day was the familiar figure of the traveling teacher or philosopher who made his living by going from place to place and recruiting "students" who would pay for his instruction. The Christian church also had its traveling teachers, in particular, evangelists. As Third John shows, these men likewise needed to be supported if they were to carry on their work of evangelization. What John now enjoined on the members of the church was a determination to refuse all help for any professed Christian teacher who did not proclaim the truth about Jesus Christ."<sup>vi</sup> It is clear that these are teachers and not just regular people stopping by for assistance because it says that they *do not bring this* doctrine, referring to the proper doctrine of Christ. These traveling teachers often received assistance by way of food and lodging while they were in town. John is telling this lady and her children (*you* is plural in this verse) not to provide food or lodging for them or even to *greet* them! John instructs local churches to respond to revealed or known false teachers in two ways: *first, do not receive him into a household*. This means in the least don't provide food and lodging for false teachers. "But the wisdom of not allowing such people even "to get in the door" has often been proved by those who have invited the representatives of cults to come in and talk. Letting them in is often easier than getting them out!"<sup>vii</sup> Moreover, we put our wives and children at risk whenever we let deceptive spirits into our homes and/or churches. So, we are commanded to bar false teachers from entry and they are to be barred from teaching from the pulpit if at a church. *Second, do not give him a greeting*. The English word *greet* does not do justice to the Greek intent. When we think of *greeting*, we think of what we say when one first arrives at the door. That's not what John is talking about. John is talking about what is said when

someone is departing. The Greek word is *chairo* and it means “to rejoice, be glad”. It was the standardized equivalent in John’s day of our “good day, good luck, or goodbye”. Why would John be so intent that we not even use these standard words of departure? John gives us the reason in verse 11.

Procedure for Known or Revealed Heretic:

1. Barr Entry
2. No Departure Greeting

***11 for to greet him is to fellowship in his evil deeds.***

**11 o` le,gwn ga.r auvtw/| cai,rein koinwnei/ toi/j e;rgoij auvtou/ toi/j ponhroi/j**

Many people, even commentators are offended by John’s intolerance here in v. 11. They perceive this to be a harsh and excessive teaching. Why is saying “good day, good luck, or goodbye” so wrong? Because to say “goodbye or good day” to him is to ***participate in his evil deeds***. John doesn’t take language lightly. There is no doubt that we often say things routinely. For example, “what’s up” “how’s it going” “what are you up to”? We don’t really want to know “what’s up”. We don’t really care “how it’s going”. We could give a hoot “what they are up to”. These are just surface routine sayings. John doesn’t share this type of insincere, superficial view of greetings. “If a Christian is personally resistant to the common hypocrisies of the society around him, then he should cultivate sincerity and genuineness in whatever he says. This affects how we greet people.”<sup>viii</sup> The Greek word for ***participate*** is *koinonia*. The same word for ***fellowship*** in 1 John 1:9. In this context it means to become a “partner” or “partaker” with the false teachers in disseminating heresy. From God’s perspective, to “partner” with a known false teacher is to be as guilty as the known offender!<sup>ix</sup> Let’s think of this for a moment: “Would I really want to say “have a good day” to a man I knew to be an enemy of the truth? Suppose he really *did* have a good day! Would that not be a *bad* day for the truth?”<sup>x</sup>

As for further application this teaching applies to Christian giving (more directly in 3<sup>rd</sup> John). It is the responsibility of every believer to know exactly where his financial gift to any ministry is going. For years and years believers have unknowingly given to specific so-called Christian institutions that are funding rank Liberal unbelief; groups that laugh at Jesus and the Bible. By doing so they are propagating false doctrine and are partners with the ***deceiver*** and the ***antichrists***! Most Christians have no idea what is going on in their denomination. This is so common. I can’t even express the magnitude of Christian giving that has gone to apostate organizations. Organizations that laugh at Jesus and the Bible, teaching that He was just a good teacher, got married, was a homosexual and a hundred other things. And these organizations sit under what most of us consider good denominations. I feel sorry for so many Christians who have given money for their entire

lives to these organizations and fueled our opponents. I'm talking billions and billions of dollars. This is one reason, just one that I am so against hierarchical church organizations. That's why I'm for the independent local church like this church. We get to say where our money goes. We don't have to send it up some chain where people we don't even know can dispense of our funds any way they want. So, it's not going to be a pretty site at the judgment seat of Christ for many believers who were so irresponsible with their giving that they didn't even check out where their money was going. It's your responsibility to investigate and find out where your money goes when you give it to an organization. You may be partnering with evil doers and you will be held responsible for it!

I can tell you that this local church is not a partner with any organization. We are an Independent Bible Church and if you give to this church then your money goes into the operating fund of this church and furthers the dissemination of doctrine taught at this church. If you designate your gift to a specific ministry, for example "audio ministry", then we keep tabs on how much money has been given to that account and if we have a need or maintenance in that area then we use your designated gift for that ministry. My point is that you don't have to worry about your money going through this ministry to any place you wouldn't want it to go and fund false teaching endangering your rewards.

### III. Farewell (12-13)

*12 Having many things to write to you, not wanting through paper and ink, rather I hope to come to you and speak mouth to mouth, so that our joy may be full.*

12 Polla. e;cwn u`mi/n gra,fein ouvkv evboulh,qhn dia. ca,rtou kai. me,lanoj( avlla. evlpi,zw gene,sqai pro.j u`ma/j kai. sto,ma pro.j sto,ma lalh/sai( i[na h` cara. h`mw/n peplhrwme,nh h=|Å

John has much more to say to the "elect lady" but will wait until they can speak in person. The word for *want* is *boulomai* meaning a "careful deliberation" followed by a certain decision (cf. Eph. 1:11). It is not that John does not have time to write more, but rather that he has carefully thought through the specific situation and has concluded that it would be wiser if he waited until he could see this *elect lady* again and talk things over with her. This speaks volumes about the importance of this letter since John chose not to wait until he visited her but went ahead and wrote her a short letter immediately! Why would John not write all that was on his mind? Wuest postulates, "The "many things" which he had in mind, were hard things like his warning against intercourse with heretics, and he would not write at a distance but would wait till he was on the spot and had personal knowledge. It is easy to lay down general principles, but this application to particular cases is a delicate

task, demanding knowledge, sympathy, charity. (1) The sight of peoples' faces appeals to one's heart and softens one's speech. (2) When one meets with people and talks with them, one's judgment of them and their options is often modified." A modern-day application concerns the use of e-mail, forum discussions, or telephone. Such mediums can often be rigorous and helpful halls of debate, yet the impersonal nature of such exchanges often leads to judging too fast or dialoguing in a manner unbecoming the Christian. We need to be extra careful in our choice of words when dialoguing via such mediums lest we forget that the other individual is a brother in Christ and if we spoke face to face with Him, we might soften our tone and choose kinder words. Perhaps after a personal discussion with the individual a better analysis of the situation could be gleaned and the individual may be loosed of all charges. Thus, in this case, John thought it best to not write the 'many things' ***through paper and ink***. ***paper*** is *cartou* and refers to Egyptian papyrus. It is an old word (3 Macc. 4:20; Jer. 43 '14x's') used only here in the New Testament. The paper was made of a tall, smooth reed which had a triangular stalk. Within the stalk was the pith from which the paper was made. The pith was arranged in strips, laying other strips crosswise, layering with paste and putting under heavy weight until dry. The result was papyrus, the writing paper of the ancients. ***ink*** is *melanos* from which we get the word *melanin* descriptive of the dark pigmentation produced by skin cells. The word originally meant "black" but later came to be descriptive of "black ink" as here (cf. 2 Cor. 3:3). Ink was prepared from soot, vegetable, mineral substances, gum or vitriol. There is mention of red and gold ink in the ancient world as well. It is clear from this verse that John wrote this letter in his own hand on ancient Egyptian papyrus in black ink.

However, brief this letter is it contributes greatly to our understanding of how we should deal with false teachers. The very fact that John addressed false teaching in the letter indicates that he placed a high priority on protecting Christians from error. Pastors who don't warn the flock against false teachings are extremely derelict. They allow wolves to attack the Lord's sheep. In fact, a pastor who does not warn the Lord's sheep of false doctrine does not love the Lord's sheep.

Rather than continuing the letter, for the aforementioned reasons, John hopes to ***come...and speak face to face*** (literally ***mouth to mouth***, Gk. *stoma* to *stoma*) with the ***elect lady*** so ***that our joy may be full***. John is certain that when they do see one another face to face it will be a time of mutual joy, both his and theirs.

***13 The children of your elect sister greet you.***

**13 VAspa,zetai, se ta. te,kna th/j avdelfh/j sou th/j evklekth/jÅ**

John closes out the letter by relaying a greeting from the lady's nephews and nieces which must have been in the company of the lady's children when they came into contact with John. Her sister was one of the elect who was either not there to greet her or who had already gone to be with the Lord.

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<sup>i</sup> Hodges, Zane, *The Epistles of John* (Irving, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 1999), 263.

<sup>ii</sup> For example, Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 620-621.

<sup>iii</sup> Hodges, Zane, *The Epistles of John* (Irving, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 1999), 264.

<sup>iv</sup> This is end-loading the gospel; tacking conditions on the end of the gospel. All who believe in Perseverance of the Saints, in its original sense, inevitably have this problem.

<sup>v</sup> All who hold to the doctrines of Lordship Salvation and Perseverance of the Saints (in the older sense) hold to this false idea. It colors their exegesis of many books and passages of Scripture.

<sup>vi</sup> Hodges, Zane, *The Epistles of John* (Irving, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 1999), 265.

<sup>vii</sup> Hodges, Zane, *The Epistles of John* (Irving, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 1999), 265.

<sup>viii</sup> Hodges, Zane, *The Epistles of John* (Irving, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 1999), 266.

<sup>ix</sup> Interestingly, civil law mandates that if an individual participates ever so slightly in a crime that individual is an accomplice. For example, if I'm driving a car and the passenger gets out walks into the convenient store and blows someone away, then comes back, gets in the car, and I drive him away, I'm an accomplice to the murder. So, these laws are a reflection of DVP.

<sup>x</sup> Hodges, Zane, *The Epistles of John* (Irving, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 1999), 266.

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