**The Doctrine of Christ**

*2 John 9-11*

**Introduction**

1. What is ***“the doctrine of Christ?” (2 John 9)***
	1. This may seem to be a simple question. (At least to those following the truth.)
	2. However, it does not seem to be so clear to others. (Primarily because they wish to be justified in their ways of progressivism, and others wish to extend the boundaries of fellowship.)
2. Why is it important?
	1. If you ***transgress (go beyond***), you do not have God (**v. 9**).
	2. If you ***abide (stay within***), you do have God (**v. 9**).
	3. If you ***receive one (have fellowship with)*** who does not abide (or bring) the ***“doctrine of Christ,”*** you participate in his evil deeds, and as such, do not have God **(v. 10-11**).
	4. **It is imperative that we know what *“the doctrine of Christ”* is!**
3. Is it:
	1. The doctrine ABOUT Christ?
	2. ALL the doctrine which Christ TAUGHT?
4. What is *“the doctrine of Christ?”*
5. Doctrine (teaching) ABOUT Christ?
	1. **2 John 7-8** – Gnostic doctrine concerning the nature of Christ.
		1. Belief that all matter is evil.
		2. Jesus could not come in the flesh if the body is inherently evil.
		3. **Conclusion: Jesus only SEEMED to have human form, but was not *“in the flesh.”* (FALSE: cf. Luke 24:38-39 – appearing to His disciples after resurrection.)**
		4. **(v. 7a, 8)** – Those who say such are ***“deceivers,”*** and such deception threatens the Christian’s ***“full reward.”***
	2. **1 John 4:1-3** – instruction to test the spirits.
		1. They needed to consider what was being taught by others.
		2. If they taught Gnostic doctrine, they were anti-Christ. (opposed to Christ)
	3. Doctrine ABOUT Christ.
		1. **About His nature**. (***Theanthropic person*** – *both Divine and human – come in flesh*)
		2. This view considers **v. 9-11** to only apply to believing Jesus as coming in the flesh. ***(Limiting to teaching of 2 John 9-11 to doctrine concerning Christ’s nature.)***
		3. **Implication: two who differ on a single subject both have fellowship with God, and can receive each other.** *(As long as it isn’t about WHO Christ is.)*
			1. *Institutionalism* (Not a matter of salvation or fellowship.)
			2. *Instrumental Music* (Not a matter of salvation or fellowship.)
		4. Contradiction: If two differ on the same subject they cannot both be right.
			1. **Either one is right, or both are wrong.**
			2. Can we be wrong and have God? (**cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 – believe lie – i.e. be wrong about something – lose soul**)
	4. *Context shows the* ***“doctrine of Christ”*** *certainly includes the teaching about His nature. But is it limited to that? NO. 🡪*
6. Doctrine (teaching) OF (all teaching belonging to) Christ?
	1. Entirety of **2 John**:
		1. **V. 1-3** – Introduction.
			1. ***“love in truth”; “know the truth”*** – They are associated with truth, and love each other in that commonality.
			2. **V. 3** – ***“Grace, mercy, and peace”*** – are only with those who are ***“in truth and love.”***
			3. **Cf. v. 8** – the full reward of salvation, through grace and mercy – **MUST ABIDE IN TRUTH TO RECEIVE IT. (*cf. Jude 21 – “keep yourselves in the love of God”*)**
			4. What is the truth to which he refers? 🡪
		2. **V. 4-6** – walking in truth:
			1. ***“walking in truth”*** – as commanded from Father (God). (**cf. John 8:31-32; 17:17** – Abide in truth; word is truth).
			2. ***“love one another”*** – he wants them to continue in brotherly love.
			3. ***“that we walk according to His commandments”*** – this is love.
				1. Cannot love brother without keeping God’s commands.
				2. Cannot keep God’s commands without loving brother.
				3. **Cf. 1 John 5:1-3 – We know we love God’s children (brethren) when we keep God’s commandments.**
		3. **The overall scope of the epistle is John’s urge for them to continue in truth, i.e. continue keeping the commandments of God.**
			1. His plea is synonymous with **v. 9**.
			2. **V. 7** is included in this concept, but is not limited to it.
			3. **V. 9** is the general, **v. 7** is the specific.
			4. **He wanted them to continue in the truth and keeping the commandments of God in everything, but the pressing matter concerned the false doctrine of the Gnostics.**
	2. The ***“doctrine of Christ,”*** according to the context of this passage, includes the teaching about Christ’s nature, but is not limited to that.
		1. Consider: *Parallel passage concerning fellowship*: **2 Thessalonians 3:6, 11** – disorderly in that they do not work, and are busybodies. (***They were not followers of Gnostic doctrine, but thought they didn’t need to work because Christ was coming.)***
		2. **Doctrine of Christ = All that Christ taught** 🡪
			1. ***“doctrines of men”*** – **Colossians 2:20-22** – what they taught: *“do not touch, taste, handle”*
			2. ***“doctrine of Balaam”*** – **Revelation 2:14** – what he taught: *“put a stumbling block before children of Israel”*
			3. ***“doctrine of Christ”*** – **2 John 9** – what He taught: **Matthew 28:18-20** – *“observe all things that I have commanded you*”
				1. Disciple – to become a pupil. (Strong)
				2. **More than just a believer, or simply a follower, but one who learns all of what is taught, and lives by it.**
				3. ***More than just the truth of who He was:***

**Matthew 22**:

**V. 17, 20, 21** – Taxes (Render unto Caesar – acceptable to refuse? No. Command of Christ.)

**V. 29-33** – Resurrection (Whose wife is she? – No marriage in Resurrection; ***“astonished at His TEACHING”***; NEED TO BELIEVE IN RESURRECTION – **cf. 1 Cor. 15)**.

**V. 36, 40** – Greatest Commandment? (Love God and neighbor; Take or leave? No. All Law necessary to observe)

**V. 42-45** – Teaching of Christ’s nature. (Lord said to my Lord – divine)

**Teaching of WHO HE IS, but along with other subjects.**

**Matthew 7:21, 24 –** Do the will; these sayings (Sermon on Mount – various subjects – must “abide” in these doctrines **– doctrines of Christ)**

1. ***“Doctrine of Christ”*** = Apostolic doctrine
	1. **John 14:26; 16:12-13** – HS guides apostles into all truth.
		1. All that Jesus taught them – reminded of.
		2. Things Jesus didn’t cover – revealed.
	2. **1 Thessalonians 2:13** – Thessalonians reception of apostles’ doctrine as truth – the word of God.
	3. **The apostles taught, not just about Christ’s nature (*cf. John 1:1-5, 14*), but about all that is necessary to be found in Him.**
	4. ***“Doctrine of Christ”*** only “clear,” or “core” teaching of Christ? (Other claim)
		1. **Who decides what is clear?**
		2. **2 Peter 3:15-16** – some of Paul’s teaching difficult.
			1. **If difficult to some, may be “unclear” to them. Concession to transgress?**
			2. ***“twist to their own destruction”*** – transgressed doctrine in neglect and/or ignorance – destruction.
		3. **1 Corinthians 1:10 – MUST, and therefore can, be of ONE MIND.**
2. **Conclusion**: **2 John 9-11** – In order to ***“have God,”*** we must follow all of Christ’s teaching, and abstain from having fellowship with those who transgress it.
3. **We cannot PROGRESS beyond what He has taught. (Add to)**
4. **We cannot NEGATE any of His teaching. (Take away)**
5. **We cannot REGRESS from what He has taught. (Neglect to teach, or practice)**
6. **We cannot RECEIVE any who do not bring *“the doctrine of Christ,”* and as such do not have God. (Extending fellowship)**