

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## Part of the Whole

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**J**ohn writes, “*Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son*” (2 John 9).

This verse surely impresses the mind that the teaching or doctrine of Christ is essential in maintaining a personal relationship with God. Christ’s teaching is distinctive and understandable, for God holds us responsible to abide in it. The teaching stands clearly on its own, for we also know when we no longer abide in it. John expected the lady to be able to know the teaching of Christ, for when one does not bring it, she was not to receive the teacher into her house, or give him a greeting of fellowship with God (2 John 10).

The phrase, “*the teaching of Christ*” can mean “the teaching about Christ,” or it can denote “the teaching from Christ.” For, example, the church in Pergamum had some who were following “*the teaching of Balaam*.” John makes it clear that such teaching was from Balaam because he was the one who “*taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel...*” (Revelation 2:14). Similarly, “*the teaching of Christ*” is the teaching Jesus taught through the Holy

Spirit- inspired- apostles (*cf. John 16:13-15, Acts 2:42*).

The “*teaching of Christ*” includes all of Jesus’ “*commandments*” which were laid before His followers to “*walk after*” (2 John 6). It includes extending “*love*” to fellow brethren in the likeness of the sacrificial love Jesus manifested for all (2 John 5, John 13:34). It also includes the teaching that “*Jesus Christ came in the flesh*” (2 John 7).

This teaching regarding Jesus is definitely included in the context of 2 John 9, even to labeling those who do not confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh as “*the deceiver*” and the “*anti-Christ*” (2 John 7). So, the elect lady is alerted to those who would not confess this truth and act accordingly to not have fellowship with the teacher’s “*evil works*” (2 John 11).

Some limit the “*teaching of Christ*” to this one doctrine about Christ when it comes to establishing the boundaries of fellowship. Some reason that a man who teaches error regarding Jesus’ teaching of divorce and remarriage does not fit in 2 John 9 because he is not denying the Deity of Jesus. To some, giving “*God’s speed*” to those who teach error regarding fellowship as per 2 John 9 does not apply, because in their mind, the restriction only

applies to the teaching about God coming in the flesh.

Such reasoning ignores the broader context of 2 John. If a brother came into your midst and did not bring the “teaching of the apostles,” emphasizing all of Christ’s “commandments” (*cf. 2 John 6*), could you fellowship him? Could you wish “God’s speed” to the preeminent-seeking Diotrefes who might believe that Jesus was God in the flesh, but was teaching brethren to not receive the apostles?

2 John 9 points to the whole of Jesus’ teaching in determining fellowship, which includes the teaching regarding Jesus Christ, the Son of God, coming in the flesh. Earlier, the apostle Paul commanded the Thessalonians to “hold fast the *traditions*” which they “*were taught*” (2 Thessalonians 2:15). Paul then focuses attention on one of the “traditions” that was being ignored, the necessity of “*working*.” What other “tradition” received from Paul and the apostles could one ignore and still be in fellowship with God? All of the “*traditions*” taught by the apostles and all of Jesus’ “*commandments*” comprise the doctrine of Christ. Do not ignore the basis of “*the whole*” when “*the part*” is specified. Paul and John did not when addressing fellowship.