

Preached on 7/16/23 at GBC - Ruston

“Abiding IN Christ, Pt.4”

II John 9-13

Having encouraged this “*elect lady and her children*” to walk in mutual love and appreciation with all those of “*like precious faith*”, the “*Elder*” John admonished them and US to watch over ourselves “*in the faith*”, carefully examining the message of all who come into our fellowships claiming to speak for God – “*For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.*” These “*many deceivers*” whom John has declared have “*entered into the word*” were (I think) **THOSE FALSE PROFESSORS** John written about in his 1st Epistle – “*Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would [no doubt] have continued with us: but [they went out], that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*” (I Jn.2:18,19) They had entered into the **WORLD OF THOSE WHO PROFESSED** to believe the Gospel, and as ‘**IMPOSTERS**’ (**which is what the word “deceivers” means**) they denied that Christ had actually come into the world and accomplished what He was sent of the Father to do. Remember what our Lord prayed in His High Priestly prayer concerning **HIS ELECT** – “*For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received [them], and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.*” (Jn.17:8) These **IMPOSTERS** could do a lot of things, i.e., **they could be what the world considers and calls “Christian”**, but they **COULD NOT** and **WOULD NOT** confess that Jesus was indeed the Christ of God who **had come** in the flesh to put away the sin of His people. This is the spirit of antichrist, with a goal to deceive and destroy those “*born of God*”. But thank God, **THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE!** Even though it is impossible, the children of God can’t and shouldn’t determine these things based on sentiment or emotions, but on what God’s instructions set forth concerning “*trying the spirits*”. That’s what we see in these verses we want to look at this morning.

Look at Vs.9 – “*Whosoever **transgresseth**, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.*” The original word translated “*transgresseth*” means ‘to go by the side of, to go past or pass over without touching a thing, overstep, neglect, violate, transgress, to depart, leave, be turned from, or **one who abandons his trust**’. The writer of Acts used the same word to describe Judas Iscariot – “*That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas **by transgression fell**, that he might go to his own place.*” (Acts 1:25) The **JEWS** used the same word to try and charge Christ, and Christ turned around and used the same word to describe their deception – “*Why do thy disciples **transgress** the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also **transgress** the commandment of God by your tradition?*” (Matt.15:2,3) John next used the words “*abideth*”, which means ‘to remain, to continue, to not depart’. The word “*whosoever*” means ‘**everyone**’. The word translated “*not*” means just that – **NOT!** Put it all together – ‘Everyone who neglects, or departs, or leaves, or abandons their trust, and **DOES NOT** remain, or continue in the **DOCTRINE OF CHRIST**’. John didn’t say everyone who transgresses or abides not **IN THE LAW**, seeing all men and women without exception, **INCLUDING GOD’S REDEEMED**, transgress and do not continue in the law. If we’re honest, all of us transgress the law in thought, word, and deed daily – “*Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?*” (Prov.20:9) The Spirit moved John to be very clear as to what these “*deceivers*” and “*antichrists*” transgress against, and cannot continue in – “**THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST.**” This is **VERY SPECIFIC – IT’S NOT SPECULATION!** Here’s the most important question of all – **WHAT IS THE “DOCTRINE OF CHRIST”?** The word translated “*doctrine*” simply

means ‘teachings’. I know that on multiple occasions, the Scriptures tell us the response by most who heard Christ’s doctrine was **astonishment** – “*And when the multitude **heard** [this], **they were astonished at HIS DOCTRINE**.*” (Matt.22:33) Christ told the **JEWS** on one occasion – “*My **doctrine** is not mine, but his that sent me. If any **man will do his will**, he shall know of the **doctrine**, whether it be of God, or [whether] **I speak of myself**.*” (Jn.7:16) The “**doctrine of Christ**” is that teaching or instruction which He received from the Father as His people Representative, Substitute, and Surety, which He delivered to His disciples, of which **HE HIMSELF IS THE SUM AND SUBSTANCE** – “*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all [men] **unto me**.*” (Jn .12:32) Christ’s “**doctrine**” is our doctrine, and it concerns **HIS PERSON** as the Son of God, **TRULY GOD**, “**Emmanuel, God with us**”. This “**doctrine**” is the teaching that Christ was both **GOD** and **MAN**, the “**One Mediator between God and men, the MAN Christ Jesus**”. This “**doctrine**” is the preaching out of Christ in all His offices as the God sent Messiah as His people’s Mediator, Surety, and Messenger of the covenant of grace. This **doctrine** is the preaching out of His incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, intercession for His people, and second coming to judgment. This **doctrine** preaches out peace and pardon by His blood, atonement by His sacrifice, justification by His righteousness, and complete salvation by Him. Paul stated it this way – “*For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus **HATH MADE ME FREE** from the law of sin and death.*” (Rom.8:2); “*For Christ [is] **the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth**.*” (Rom.10:4); “*For he hath made him [to be] **sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him**.*” (II Cor.5:21) Apart from the preaching out of **THIS DOCTRINE**, there is not and can be **NO SALVATION** for a sinner. **Paul stated this about as plain as it could be stated** – “*But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart **that form of doctrine** which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.*” (Rom.6:17,18) Let me read you a literal translation of this verse – “and thanks to God, that ye were servants of the sin, and — were obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which ye were delivered up; and having been freed from the sin, ye became servants to the righteousness.” In other words, God will **ALWAYS DELIVER** His teaching to His people – “*They shall be **ALL TAUGHT of God**.*” Look at John’s verdict on **ANY** and **ALL** who no longer walk in this doctrine, who refuse to continue in it – “**HATH NOT GOD**.” That word “**hath**” means ‘to have or to hold in the sense of wearing’. Those who transgress and don’t abide in Christ’s accomplish work, they are “*without God in this world.*” **But notice the flipside of this** – “*He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.*” **REMEMBER THOSE TWO ABSOLUTES – NONE of those God chosen, that Christ redeemed, that the Spirit regenerated and converted can be lost; and ALL THOSE GOD SAVED THROUGH AND BY CHRIST WILL CONTINUE, LIVE, AND DIE IN THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST.** I can’t help but think of Peter and his words to Christ – “*It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, [they] are spirit, and [they] are life. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. From that [time] many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, **Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.***” (Jn.6:63-69) This is what it is to “**abide in the doctrine of Christ**”. Truly, “**the JUST (the righteous) shall live BY FAITH**”, and they cannot be moved off the **ONE FOUNDATION** which is Christ Jesus their Lord.

Look at John’s warning and admonition to this “**elect lady and her children**” – “*If there come any unto **you**, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into [your] house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*” I’d have you notice that these “**deceivers**”, they don’t operate or go out into the lost religious world. They come to where Christ’s true church abides and worships – “*If there come any unto you.*” I think again of Paul’s words to the elders at Ephesus before His departure – “*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the*

Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”(Acts 20:28-30) John told this “*elect lady and her children*”, as well as all those who would rest in Christ’s obedience unto death as their entire salvation – If any preachers, or teachers, or those who call themselves “Christian” come unto you, and they “*bring not this doctrine of Christ*”, we aren’t to receive them into the house. I think this “*house*” he referred to is the “house of God”. So he was telling them don’t allow him to preach his message in any setting the true church meets to worship.

If we do defend them; if we bid them “**GOD SPEED**”, John states dogmatically of – “*For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*” The word translated “*he that biddeth*” literally means ‘to say or to speak’. The original word translated “*God speed*” means ‘to rejoice, be glad, to be well, thrive, or in salutations, **hail**’. In I Jn.3:13, John wrote – “*Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.*” Our Lord told His disciple, **you and me included** – “*If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*”(Jn.15:19) The question we need to ask and answer is this – **WHY** did the world **HATE** Christ, and **WHY** will they hate us? **Let our Lord answer the question for us** – “*The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.*”(Jn.7:7) The word translated “*testify*” means ‘to be a witness, or **TO BEAR WITNESS**’. They hated our Lord because **HE BORE WITNESS** concerning them - “*that the works thereof are evil*”. **What were their evil works?** The context of **John 7** tells us their evil works were their participation in the feast of the tabernacles, a religious festival ordained by God, that like all the law and the prophets pointed men to the promised Messiah. But they thought since they were **JEWS**, since they had and tried to keep the law, and since they participated in all the ordinances, **THEY WERE SAVED**. Remember what Paul wrote in Hebrews – “*The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which [was] a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; [Which stood] only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed [on them] until the time of reformation.*”(Heb.9:8-10) Paul also said of these same **JEWS** – “*As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ [is] the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*”(Rom.9:33-10:4) As children of God, those redeemed, justified, and saved by God’s mercy and grace in Christ’s accomplished work of redemption, **WE CAN NOT** and **WE WILL NOT** speak peace to any sinner apart from the **ONLY HOPE** and **CAUSE** of salvation which is “**The LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**” **What does this mean to you and me?** If we truly love our unbelieving spouses, or our children, or our in-laws, or our brothers, sisters, Moms and Dads, we can’t allow them to think for **ONE SECOND** that we believe, trust, and follow the **SAME LORD**, seeing there is **NO HOPE** of salvation in any other Lord – “*Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, [even] by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for **THERE IS NONE OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN GIVEN AMONG MEN, WHEREBY WE MUST BE SAVED.***”(Acts 4:10-12).

If we do speak peace to sinners consistently, seeking to avoid persecution for His righteousness sake, look at John’s words – “*is partaker of his evil deeds.*” The word translated “*partaker*” means ‘partner, fellowship, **COMPANION.**’ **Here’s the same word** - “*But [I say], that the things which the Gentiles*

*sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have **fellowship** with devils.”(I Cor.10:20) **LET THAT SINK IN!** If I bid those “*God speed*” who believe “*another gospel*”, who are resting in something other than Christ’s imputed righteousness alone, **I AM A PARTNER** with them, in **FELLOWSHIP** with them, and **THEIR COMPANION**. In other words, I reveal myself to be “*dead in trespasses and sins*”, ignorant of and not submitted to Christ’s righteousness alone for all my salvation. Is it God's will that any sinner seek justification and eternal life based deeds of law? Is it God's will that any sinner sincerely and morally go about to establish a righteousness of his own? Is it God's will that any sinner believe salvation conditioned on the sinner? **NO!** Those who do such things are not our brethren. Now, we are to love them, pointing them to Christ **ALONE**, praying that if they are God’s elect He will in His appointed time call them to true faith and true repentance. We are to love them enough to tell them the truth about their lost condition before God, but we **are not** to cry peace to them or encourage them in their false profession. We aren’t to take sides with them against those who do the will of God, **i.e.**, those who believe God's Gospel and seek to enter into judgment with God based on the imputed righteousness of Christ – “*We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not [his] brother abideth in death.*”(I Jn.3:13)*

Let’s read Vss.12,13 as we close this epistle.