

# 2John

**Summer, 2013 - Auditorium**

Teacher: Steve Fontenot

Before the first class, read the entire letter in one sitting. It is only one chapter.

We will note word and thought phrases throughout the class. Copies of the text are available on the front pew if you would like to use a highlighter to mark these.

### **Attestation and Authorship**

The name of the author is not mentioned in the letter. However, it is similar in style and content to 1<sup>st</sup> John and the Gospel of John (*Introduction to the New Testament*, Henry Clarence Thiessen (Eerdmans, 1973) pp. 312; et al.). External evidence is found in the writings of the early writers and versions, e.g., Old Latin Version (170 A.D.), Irenaeus (born 120-135 A.D), Muratorian Fragment (170 A.D.), Origin (c. 185-254 A.D.), Clement of Alexandria (c. 165-220 A.D), et al. Date of writing is uncertain, but if as the 1<sup>st</sup> epistle, before the destruction of Jerusalem.

Suggested marking:

- “walk/walking” along with what they were to “walk” in or according to
- “love”

Observe the same three things that were tests of fellowship in **1John** are also mentioned in **2John**. What are those three tests and what words and/or phrases reflect these same things in **2John**?

You can call them “tests,” or “requirements,” or “conditions,” but whatever you call them, how important are they, **vv 8,9**?

### **2John 9**

Clearly the error John is focusing on is whether Christ has come in the flesh, **v7**. This evidently was a prominent issue at this time - see also **1Jn 2:22-23; 4:2**). This accords with the rise of gnosticism, which denied the “Christ” could be in the “flesh.” So, while “teaching of Christ” can *grammatically* be either “teaching from Christ” (subjective genitive, or, genitive of origin) or “teaching about Christ” (objective genitive, or, genitive of relation), the *context* focuses on a particular teaching about Christ, “this teaching.”

However, the *only* way to know the “truth” (see **vv1,2,4,6**) about the “Christ” is *through the revelation of the true apostles and prophets of the N.T.* (see **1Jn 3:23-4:6** - note “by the Spirit whom He has given US...false prophets...they [vs] ...listen to US.” Note the pronouns in **1Jn 1:1-4**.) *To reject their testimony about the Christ* (as gnosticism did with their claim of esoteric knowledge available only to the initiated) *is to reject apostolic authority and revelation*. This kind of “progressiveness” (“goes too far”) is to expose one to loss of fellowship with God (“does not have God” - fellowship, or “life,” or “abiding in” God, or “knowing” God, is a recurring theme in **1John**, e.g. **1:3,6,7; 2:3,5,13,14,27,28; 3:19-22, 23-24; 4:12-16; 5:10-13,20**). One cannot reject apostolic authority without rejecting the King who commissioned them (**Mt 19:28; 20:18...20; Lk 10:16; 1Co 14:37; 1Th 4:2,8**, etc.). Therefore, Timothy a preacher, was urged to “retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me [the apostle Paul]” (**2Tim 1:13**), whether it pertains to the deity of Christ, the gospel plan of salvation, godly living, etc. The idea, that as long as we agree about the deity of Christ other issues do not matter and are not grounds for refusing fellowship (**2Jn 10-11**), does not harmonize with general N.T. teaching about apostolic authority. Note that Paul rebuked the Corinthians church for continuing fellowship with one who rejected the apostolic teaching about *immorality* (**1Co 5**), and openly opposed and warned about Hymenaeus and Philetus for their teaching about the *resurrection* (**2Tim 2:16-18**)—these were but *cases in point* of the clear rejection of apostolic teaching and authority.

### **Present Tense**

See the lesson on **1John 1:1-10** for notes about “present tense” in their language. The following bold words in bold are in “present tense” in the original language. They are not the only words in this section in present tense, but we note these due to their significance. Beside each word write some descriptive phrase to show what the word connotes.

**v9**, “abide,” “abides”

**v10**, “bring,” “receive,” “give”

**v11**, “gives,” “participates”