

True Christians Persevere in True Christian Doctrine

The greatest threat to the Christian church in our day is not so much this or that particular error or heresy, the greatest threat to the Christian church is an almost universal air of doctrinal indifference pressing in around us. By no means has everyone succumbed to it, but the atmosphere of our day is to simply not care. As long as people are nice we tend to be rather indifferent about all that high-minded doctrine. But John is concerned deeply about doctrine, and so is the Holy Spirit, here called the Anointing. The truth about Jesus as Christ is so important that to deny it is to deny the Father and have neither the Son nor the Father. It is a loss of eternal life. This is the meaning of the word heresy. The Spirit of God causes the people of God to remain in the truth about Jesus Christ unto eternal life: *True Christians persevere in true Christian Doctrine.*

✓1. There is a true and a false doctrine of Christ

- ✓• Cerinthus taught that the Christ came upon Jesus at his baptism and left at the cross – not an atheist
- ✓• “Jesus is the Christ” means the whole Bible’s teaching about him, not only pieces, not only words
- ✓• Denial therefore comes whenever the whole truth is not maintained, i.e. parts are denied
- ✓• The denial can be obvious or very subtle and convoluted –
 - Liberalism –The Jesus of History and the Christ of faith
 - Rome (replica Christ made of human replacement parts)

✓2. Eternal life is at stake

- ✓• It is a lie **v21,27**; they are liars **v22**; and antichrist **22**; and deceivers **26**
- ✓• They “do not have the father” **v23** – you only have the Father if you have the true Son
- ✓• If what you heard abides in you, you will abide and have eternal life **24-25**
- ✓• Else you will be ashamed at his coming **v28**
- ✓• They were never of us **18-19** – not saved

✓3. The Spirit of God teaches you the true doctrine of Christ

- ✓• You have been given the Holy Spirit and he teaches you the truth **20-21**
- ✓• Jesus promised the Holy Spirit for this very reason **John 14:26, 15:26, 16:13-15**
- ✓• The Holy Spirit cares about TRUTH: true, accurate, consistent doctrine! He does not cause, promote, or affirm doctrinal indifference.
- ✓• He commands you to not be indifferent “let that abide” **v24, 28**

✓4. This is a mediate and not an immediate teaching of the Spirit

- ✓• You don’t need a guru **v 27** this is public teaching – not secret or esoteric knowledge
- ✓• All teachers claim the Spirit **1Jn 4:1-3**
- ✓• But Christ has given you teachers **Eph 4:11-12, Jn 10:27, 13:20, 1Cor 14:37-38**
- ✓• It is “that which you heard from the beginning” **x2 v24**
- ✓• It is not whatever you think or feel, but must agree with Apostolic and OT teaching **1Jn 4:6**
- ✓• You need logic –i.e. non-contradiction – “no lie of the truth” **v21**, “true and not a lie” **v27**
- ✓• John urges them to make use of all this against the error **v26**

✓5. True Christians persevere in true Christian Doctrine

- ✓• You know the truth **v20-21**
- ✓• If it abides in you, will abide in the Father and the Son, and will attain eternal life **v24-25**
- ✓• You will abide **v27** and you will remain **v19**
- ✓• Because the Holy Spirit abides in you **v20, 27**
- ✓• So you will stand firm in Him, and stand before Him confidently at His coming.

Conclusion: Shake off therefore any temptation to follow the influence of our age into doctrinal indifference. Stir up the gift of God that is in you. Beware of deceptive teaching, God’s Spirit will cause you to see it as contradicting His word, and enable you to reject the poison. Remain in what you heard from the beginning and you will remain in the Father and the Son, and will inherit eternal life. *True Christians persevere in true Christian Doctrine.*