

## 2 John: Guarding the Gospel

Week Four

Verse Six (cont.)

- And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments.
  - Jesus said, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments” (John 14:15).

What is our motivation?

### **Antinomianism** (being “against the law”)

The antinomian disconnects obedience from grace. In a way, the antinomian is a kind of legalist, believing that salvation is obtained by having done something (prayed a prayer, “believed”, went forward, etc.).

*Here are signs or manifestations of antinomianism:*

1. Clinging to a “decision” as determinative of salvation, even in spite of open disobedience or rebellion.
2. Doing what is known to be wrong in the belief that God’s grace will cover it.
3. Refusing to do what is clearly commanded in the belief that God will overlook it.
4. Downplaying the wickedness of sin and disobedience.

### **Legalism**

The legalist disconnects grace from obedience.

Ultimately, the legalist believes that favor with God can be obtained by obedience.

*Here are signs or manifestations of legalism:*

1. Doing/not doing things believing that this earns God’s favor or changes His disposition toward us.
  - a. Catholicism and other works based systems are forms of legalism.
  - b. The prosperity gospel is a form of legalism.
  - c. Moralism is a form of legalism.
2. A preoccupation with the law. A compulsion to define and enumerate the details of what the Bible says is right or wrong.
3. A preoccupation with law-keeping both for herself and others. Compulsive efforts to keep the law personally or a “watchful eye” that is obsessed with what others do or don’t do.
4. A preoccupation with God’s judgment especially of “law breakers”.
5. Insistence on binding consciences with what God does not bind them, in other words, the creation of “do’s” and “don’ts” that go beyond what the Bible clearly teaches. [This is perilously close to blasphemy as it is a subtle claim to personal deity.]

*Obedience must be connected to grace and grace to obedience by way of regeneration and its fruit (cf. Eph. 5:7-9). To do otherwise is to fall off the gospel of grace alone by faith alone in Christ alone.*

## Verse Seven

- Many deceivers have gone out into the world.
  - “Out into the world” does not likely mean that they have become separated from the church, rather that they have gone out everywhere.
  - Note that “many” have gone out.
  - Jesus said this would happen (cf. Matt. 7:15; 24:11).
  - The other Apostles said this would happen (cf. Acts 20:28-30; 2 Peter 2:1).
  - The nature of their work is deception, but they are also deceived (cf. 2 Timothy 3:13).
  - By definition, deception is deceiving. It will take discernment to identify.
- Those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh.
  - This could be a denial of Christ’s humanity.
  - This could also be a denial of Christ’s deity.
  - But this could also be a denial of Christ’s sufficiency.
- This is the deceiver and the antichrist.
  - The false teacher is like Satan, the great deceiver and antichrist (cf. 2 Cor. 11:13-14).
  - False teaching is demonic.

## Verse Nine

- Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ does not have God.
  - Going too far indicates a departure from truth or it may mean *addition* to the truth.
  - Going too far is equated with not abiding in Christ’s teachings. It is going beyond what Christ taught. The false teachers addressed in Galatians went beyond Christ’s teaching by requiring circumcision and law-keeping for salvation.
  - Those who have gone too far do not have God. In other words, they do not belong to God.
  - John is talking about those who have distorted the essential truths of the gospel.
- The one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.
  - He belongs to God and is saved.
  - He has accepted the whole of the gospel, the Father and the Son.