

# Test the Spirits

1 John 4:1-6

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## 1 John 4:1-6 Discernment

1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. 4 Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. 5 They are from the world; therefore, they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

## John's Command

Test the Spirits: Why? "Many false prophets have gone out into the world."

## Two Spirits:

1. Spirit from God.
  - a. John focuses on Jesus coming in the Flesh.
  - b. 1 John 1:1-2
    - i. What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have observed and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— 2 that life was revealed, and we have seen it and we testify and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us—
  - c. The Spirit that declares the true Gospel is the Holy Spirit.
2. Spirit of the Antichrist
  - a. Is found in the false prophets.
  - b. Does not confess Jesus.
    - i. 2 Corinthians 11:1-4 I wish you would put up with a little foolishness from me. Yes, do put up with me! 2 For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy, because I have promised you in marriage to one husband—to present a pure virgin to Christ. 3 But I fear that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your minds may be seduced from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. 4 For if a person comes and preaches another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or you receive a different spirit, which you had not received, or a different gospel, which you had not accepted, you put up with it splendidly!

- c. Is already in the World.
  - i. 1 John 2:18-19 18 Children, it is the last hour. And as you have heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. By this we know that it is the last hour. 19 They went out from us, but they did not belong to us; for if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us. However, they went out so that it might be made clear that none of them belongs to us.

## Two Sources

### 1. From the World

- a. They speak from the world.
- b. The world listens to them.
- c. They do not listen to the Apostles.

### 2. From God

- a. Those who have believed the Gospel are from God.
  - i. John 10:24-31 The Jews surrounded him and asked, “How long are you going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.”<sup>25</sup> “I did tell you and you don’t believe,” Jesus answered them. “The works that I do in my Father’s name testify about me. <sup>26</sup> But you don’t believe because you are not of my sheep. <sup>27</sup> My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. <sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one.”<sup>31</sup> Again the Jews picked up rocks to stone him.
- b. Those from God have already overcome the false prophets and spirits.
- c. They overcome because of Christ’s indwelling through the Holy Spirit.
  - i. Revelation 12:9-12 <sup>9</sup> So the great dragon was thrown out—the ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the one who deceives the whole world. He was thrown to earth, and his angels with him. <sup>10</sup> Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say, The salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have now come, because the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been thrown down. <sup>11</sup> They conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; for they did not love their lives to the point of death. <sup>12</sup> Therefore rejoice, you heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you with great fury, because he knows his time is short.
- d. They listen to the Apostles.