

Series: Family Fellowship
"Testing the Spirits" # 16
I John 4:1-6
7-29-18 PM

1. After John contrasts the children of God and the children of Satan, he now contrasts the teachers and teachings of the Spirit of God and the spirit of Satan. Evil spirits are behind false teachers and their teachings. They are to be taken serious and addressed firmly.

1 Tim. 4:1, "...in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to [believing] seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons."

2. Satan wants to oppose and deceive the church. Sometimes his methods are direct and sometimes subtle. He comes as a roaring lion or an angel of light. He masquerades his lies as truth.

TT: Believers have the Word of truth and the Spirit of truth to discern whether what we hear, see, and read is true or false and the work of God or work of Satan.

John gives us 3 tests to determine whether a teacher and his message come from the Spirit of God or the spirit of Satan.

I. What do they teach about Jesus [4:2-3]? "Do they exalt Jesus?"

1. What a teacher says about Christ must be the same thing that Scripture says.

"Confess" means to say the same thing. They must agree that Jesus is God come in the flesh, he is God incarnate.

Turn back to **1 John 1:1-3**

The Eternal Christ came from the Father in human flesh born of a virgin. He lived a sinless life manifested as the 2nd person of the trinity. He came to die in our place for our sins and redeem all who would believe. He rose bodily from the grave on the 3rd day and ascended to the Father's right hand.

2. What one says about Jesus is the litmus test of what they claim to profess.

In the compromising evangelical realm it has become politically correct to say that all religions worship the same God. Jesus is not the only way!

Any such teaching is of the spirit of the antichrist [2:18, 22]. False teachers will be in error concerning his birth, his blood, the Bible, and the blessed hope.

Before you can apply this litmus test you must know what the Scripture says about Him. If you agree with Scripture, you must know what Scripture says.

II. Are they popular with the world [4: 4-5]? "Do they oppose the work of Satan?"

1. The believer has a security against false teachers [v. 4].

All true Christians possess the Holy Spirit [1 Pet. 1:23-25] and no Satanic deception can take them out of God's saving hand [John 10:28-29].

Those truly saved had been given the ability to understand truth and love it. They have been given a discernment that protects them from apostasy.

2. False teachers are of the world and the world hears them [v. 5].

There is a great difference with a great teacher being popular with believers and a teacher being popular with unbelievers.

The world sings his praises and gives him acclaim and approval. The world recognizes its own.

III. Do they point people to the Scriptures [4:6]? “Do they elevate truth?”

1. The true teacher must believe the Bible and desire to proclaim its truths [v. 6a].

The teacher and his teachings will draw people to love and search the Scriptures and accept them for what they are- the inspired, infallible, inerrant source of authority for faith and practice.

The teacher exalts the Scriptures over experience, opinions, and new revelation. They are drawn to the gospel truths

2. The false teachers lead people away from the Scriptures [v. 6b].

The emerging and purpose-driven church today claims if there is absolute truth we can't be absolute we can know it.

They draw people to entertainment, the sensational, felt needs, health and prosperity, political correctness and tolerance.

Con:

These tests are enough to discern between the true and the false.

By the way, you can apply these to any so-called move of God or revival and you can determine if it's of God or Satan.