

## 1 John 4:1-21

### Read 1 John 4:1-6

1. John has just laid out the importance of loving one another in order to model Christ's love for his people. The reality is, however, people are going to come into the midst of God's people that will seek to lead them astray. To help push back against this assault of the evil one, John gives advice to his hearers about how to remain faithful.
2. How should one "test" the spirits?

Deuteronomy 13:1-5 "If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, <sup>2</sup> and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, 'Let us go after other gods,' which you have not known, 'and let us serve them,' <sup>3</sup> you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. For the LORD your God is testing you, to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. <sup>4</sup> You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him. <sup>5</sup> But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has taught rebellion against the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of slavery, to make you leave the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

3. How does Deuteronomy align with what John says in this passage?
4. The failure to confess Christ correctly is at the heart of the deception. In what ways do we try to build defenses against these false teachings?
5. Antichrist is a term that tends to get people really excited and respond with some strong feelings. What exactly is an antichrist?
6. Ultimately, how do you determine what type of spirit individual people have?

### Read 1 John 4:7-10

7. In this section, John is reminding us that love is incredibly complex and is more than a sentiment. It is an attitude and a way of life. Why does it matter that the Christian engage in the act of love?

### Read 1 John 4:11-21

8. This section is marked by three conditional phrases that work to frame and complete John's argument of the Christian experience.
9. V. 11 If God so loved us...
  - a. Here we talk about the response to God's love and it points us back to the role of works in the Christian life.
10. V.12 If we love one another...
  - a. What is the intended effect of God's love?
  - b. Sometimes "perfected" is translated as "brought to completion." How is this alternative helpful in understanding what is being said?
11. V. 20 If anyone says...
  - a. How does hating a brother bring you into conflict with being a receiver of God's love?
  - b. What should a Christian do if they find themselves struggling with hate?