

# TITLE: Test the spirits

1John 4:1-9 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. <sup>2</sup> By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; <sup>3</sup> and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. <sup>4</sup> You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. <sup>5</sup> They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them. <sup>6</sup> We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. <sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup> By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

## FIRST VERSE-It's gonna be a long one.... ☺

1John 4:1-9 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Here around 90AD, John has already told us in this letter...

1John 2:18 Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.

Some 30-50 years earlier, the Apostle Paul warned of false teachers popping up and it seems TODAY in our time, they have multiplied like crazy!

**HERE ARE TWO OF PAUL'S WARNINGS, again 30-50 years before John's.**

**2Cor. 11:2** *For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. <sup>3</sup> But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. <sup>4</sup> For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.* **In other words-Test the spirits**

**2Tim. 4:1** *(Timothy) I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: <sup>2</sup> preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. <sup>3</sup> **For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,** <sup>4</sup> **and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.** Muthos=Fiction*

**GOD HAS BEEN WARNING HIS CHILDREN TO BEWARE OF FALSE TEACHERS FOR OVER 2000 YEARS AND THINGS ARE ONLY GETTING WORSE!**

*WE ARE IN THE END DAYS AND "MUST" TEST THE SPIRITS....THIS IS WHY WE ARE TEACHING YOU HERMENEUTICS....:) **Teaching for Beef Lovers or Bereans who searched the Scriptures themselves** 😊*

**Who are the spirits we are to test?**

**For John:** False teachers/Antichrists RIGHT "IN" THE CHURCH THEN in 90AD...

**FOR US TODAY:** Any Biblical teacher IN THE CHURCH NOW!!!! ANY teacher you might encounter in a church, or listen to on TV or read in a book or online!

***THINK ABOUT IT...**Isn't it a much better use of Satan's time to hang around the children of God, who pose the greatest threat to uncovering his power of deception and exposing his lies? **(Watch for warfare!)***

**Why Test the spirits?**

The reason God wants us to test the spirits, or all spiritual teaching, is to see if it is truly from God or if it is a lie from Satan and his servants.

**A Christian must** *"be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"* (2 Timothy 2:15).

**AND...The Word of God is to be** *"a lamp" and "a light" to our path* (Psalm 119).

Which means THE BIBLE is our best resource for uncovering FALSE SPIRITS...its light must shine on the teachings and doctrines we hold fast; the Bible alone is the standard by which all truth must be judged.

**SO...How do we Test the spirits?** *Glad you asked...You did ask didn't you 😊*  
Perhaps the acronym T.R.U.S.T. would be useful.

- **Test**: Test it with the Bible. If it doesn't say what the Bible says IN CONTEXT, then it doesn't pass the test.
- **Reflect**: Look for good fruit. Reflect on the fruit of a teacher's life through their actions and character. *(End times teachers and lavishness)*
- **Understand**: Understand what they are saying, who they are saying it to, and why they are saying it. **Why? Because context matters.** *Then, make sure you understand Christian doctrine, like the character of God, so that you can wisely discern the truth.*
- **Seek Prayer**: Pray. *Pray for wisdom and discernment.* James wrote, I quote, in **James 1:5** *"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him".*
- **Take Counsel**: **Proverbs 19:20-21** *Listen to counsel and receive instruction, That you may be wise in your latter days. There are many plans in a man's heart, Nevertheless the Lord's counsel—that will stand.* Small Groups 😊

**God expects you to test the spirits AND not accept everything you hear without Biblical proof (This is discipleship 101)**

Always test what you are taught and compare it with the clear teaching of the Bible. Don't trust MAN, but TRUST GOD AND HIS INSPIRED WORD! IT IS YOUR FILTER....BUT "ONLY" IF USED AND TAUGHT IN "CONTEXT"

## **6 WAYS to test the spirits to see if they are from God...**

- A teacher MUST acknowledge that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh **as God**
- **If you hear a voice in your head**, ALWAYS run that voice or thought through the filter of God's Word. (Remember Context is King with God's Word)
- **Evaluate all teaching especially in church** through the filter of God's Word. This requires teaching **in CONTEXT** and not taking verses out of context to make a point!
- **Observe a teacher's actions**, they are human, but are they consistent in loving others they teach?
- **A teacher's teaching must ALWAYS be in harmony with the character of God.** If someone tells you, "You can lose your salvation", there is only one inescapable truth, What they are saying is God can't be trusted, God is not faithful or God is a liar, all such conclusions are defaming to God's character and the word of God!....*I call it another Gospel that Paul warned about...*
- **Look for the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in someone's teaching**, if it doesn't tickle your ears, but pierces your heart, that is the Holy Spirit at work

## **NEXT 2 VERSES**

**1John 4:1-9** Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits** to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. <sup>2</sup> By this you know the Spirit of God: **every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; <sup>3</sup> and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world**

For John's audience around 90AD, this was a BIG ISSUE with the false teachers of his time..."Jesus was just a man that the SPIRIT of God came upon and then left before Jesus crucifixion" ....**WRONG!!!!**

This is the spirit of the ANTICHRISTOS, OR ANTI-MESSIAH!

**Palm Sunday**-Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the **Lord**

## **NEXT 3 VERSES**

You are from God, little children, and have overcome them (The Antichrists); because greater is He (God the Holy Spirit) who is in you than he (Satan) who is in the world. <sup>5</sup> They (The Antichrists); are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them. <sup>6</sup> We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us

As children of God, we are to have NO FEAR of Satan, because Jesus has already defeated our enemy for us! AND GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT is our protector, our helper and our **Ninja Stomping Satan butt kicker** 😊

1. The world is still being held temporarily captive by Satan and his lies, while believers triumph over Satan with truth!
2. Those who speak with a forked tongue should be repelling Children of the Truth, while those who speak the words of God, attract other believers AS LONG AS WE ARE DILIGENT TO **TEST THE SPIRITS** First before we speak!

## **NEXT 2 VERSES-Ya can't "AGAPE" without God** 😊

.....6b....By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.  
<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

### **When John says, "GOD IS LOVE"...WHAT DOES THAT MEAN AND LOOK LIKE?**

Let's look at how the Bible describes love, and then we will see a few ways in which God is the essence of love. **1 Corinthians 13:4-8a.**

*"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails"*

**This is God's description of love,** and because God is love this is what GOD is like.

In AGAPE, God does not force Himself on anyone. Those who come to Him do so in response to His love...through HIS GRACE!

In AGAPE, God shows kindness *to all*.

In AGAPE, Jesus went about doing good to everyone without partiality. In AGAPE, Jesus did not covet what others had, living a humble life without complaining.

In AGAPE, Jesus did not brag about who He was in the flesh, although He could have overpowered anyone He ever came in contact with.

In AGAPE, Jesus willingly obeyed His Father in heaven. John 14:31 *“The world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me”*)

In AGAPE, Jesus was/is always looking out for the interests of others.

In AGAPE, God forgives. John 1:9 *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness”*

The greatest expression of God’s love is communicated to us in John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” Romans 5:8 proclaims the same message: “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” We can see from these verses that it is God’s greatest desire that we join Him in His eternal home, heaven.

He has made the way possible by paying the price for our sins. He loves us *because He chose to*, as an act of His will.

So, what does it mean that God is love?

Love is an attribute of God. Love is a core aspect of God’s character, His Person.

However, God’s love is in no sense in conflict with His holiness, righteousness, justice, or even His wrath.



All of God's attributes are in *perfect* harmony. Not one overshadowing the other! Not one greater than the other! BRAIN FREEZE

## LAST VERSE

<sup>9</sup> *By this the love of God was manifested **in** us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world **so that we might live through Him.***

The life God wants us to enjoy on this earth is NOT found in selfishly doing what "we" want in this life *because our wants have been corrupted by the world!*

Whatever JOY you think the world will bring you is temporary and devoid of the *true* FRUIT of what is possible in THIS LIFE ON EARTH!

Jesus said, *"I came that you might have life and have it abundantly"*  
The abundant life that is possible FOR BELIEVERS on this earth can only come when we are in submission to Jesus...

## I KNOW, THIS MAKES NO SENSE ON THE SURFACE!

HOWEVER, if you look at it from God's perspective, you might get a glimpse of what *"Sold out to Jesus"* offers...

AS A PASTOR, at almost 71, the world tells me I should be retired....living off our life's savings and the fruit of our investments in the world...*no more drama...no more working 7 days a week, no more complaint dept.,....Only traveling and fishing and hunting and music and eating and eating and eating, until God calls us home...after all, 71 years is enough....*

Some days, I admit it is REAL TEMPTING, but then I remember a better life filled with fruit that can only come from God....

Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Gentleness, Goodness, FAITHFULNESS, Self Control and running the race of life TO WIN! AND the crown of righteousness that Jesus has in store for my wife and myself *IF*

we finish HIS WAY! So we canceled our “Retirement” and find our joy in serving the King of Kings, for the future joy that lies ahead and to hear Jesus say, “Well done, good and faithful servant”!!!!!!!

Joshua said it best...*as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord*