

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John**

Chapter 16- The Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Error

168. Testing the Spirits- Part 19

WAOY Friday-Monday 03/14-17/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today I want to continue to examine what John taught about "Testing the Spirits". So let's open our Bibles and read **1John 4: 1-6-** again together:

1 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.

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, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.

4 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.

5 They are from the world; therefore they speak *as* from the world, and the world listens to them.

6 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.

Now on the last broadcast- we were looking at verse 5- so I want to read that verse again together:

They are from the world; therefore they speak *as* from the world, and the world listens to them.

Now on the last broadcast- we were going over the danger of worldliness and we saw how that the antichrists teach and preach about things that are "**from the world**". But then John draws a distinction between what the antichrists teach and what the men of God

teach and so I want to look at verses 5& 6 together- so let's read those two verses:

5 They are from the world; therefore they speak *as* from the world, and the world listens to them.

6 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.

Here John says that the way that we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error is based upon what is taught and who listens. If you are "**from the world**" you hear what the antichrists teach because John says that these heretics speak "**from the world**". But if you are "**from God**"- you will hear what John and Peter and Paul and James and David and Moses and Jesus taught.

This is the great divide; this is the great distinction. Who you listen to and what you hear is the difference between the children of God and the children of the devil; between those fish on the right side and those on the left; between the children of light and the children of darkness; between those who are of this world and those who have been born from above.

So I ask you this question: Who do you listen to? Who feeds your soul? Who instructs your life? Young ladies- do you seek wisdom and guidance from older godly ladies who teach you to love your husbands and love your children and to keep your homes and obey your husbands or do you or do you feed on information that teaches you something else from people who do not believe God and who do not serve Him?

Young men, do you listen to older godly men who will teach you to be sober minded and to develop a pattern of good works and to live a life of gravity and sincerity or are you being taught the ways of the world by people who do not love or serve Jesus?

These are important questions that we all need to look very closely at to be sure that we are not following the teachings of the antichrists but that we are earnestly contending for the Faith that was once delivered to the saints.

Now over the last hundred years or so- we have had a massive shift in the Church as it pertains to Evangelism. Leader after leader has taught us that in order to win the lost- we have to develop some

commonality with the lost- and that developing of our commonality is the biggest and most important factor in the saving of souls.

And I agree with that- but only to a point. I am all in favor of winning souls to Jesus and we must be able to be understood by those we are speaking to so that they will hear and see.

But where I differ with many of the modern techniques of soul winning is that all too often we are willing to cast aside or modify the Gospel in order to develop that commonality and that is simply wrong.

If by developing commonality you mean that you go and have lunch with a lost sinner- then I am all for it. If by developing a common interest you mean that you spend time with that lost soul or help him in some way or perform acts of mercy for him- then I am all for it. That is what is clearly taught in Scripture and you are doing the Lord's work.

But as you are eating with that lost soul; as you are spending time with him and helping him- he should see that there is a world of difference between how you live and what you do and how you view things than the way he does. In your time with him- it won't be long before he should clearly see that you are not like him. You are not better than he is- I'm not saying that- but you have been born again; you don't do what he does; you don't live the way he does; you don't believe what he believes; you don't think like he thinks because Jesus has given you a new heart and a new divine nature and you are a new creature.

For example, we may think that for older and younger men and women to obey what Paul taught in **Titus 2** is simply something that we need to do inside the Church or at home. But Paul taught that by us living the way that God the Holy Spirit prescribes in **Titus 2**- we are actually being an evangelist. Let's see how by reading **Titus 2:4&5**

4 so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,

5 to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.

Now pay close attention to this because this is the key to what John was talking about. Do you see at the end of verse 5 *why* older women are to teach younger women to be sober and to love their husbands and

to love their children and to be discreet and chaste and keepers at home and to be good and obedient to their husbands?

This is not a command to keep women subjugated to chauvinistic men as the women's liberation crowd has taught. Not at all. Look at the end of verse 5 to find out *why* Paul taught this:

... so that the word of God will not be dishonored

When believers live their lives like unbelievers- God's Word is dishonored. When the lost person looks at the saved person and sees the very same chaos in their home that is in his home- he laughs at the Word of God; he mocks God's Word because if Church people don't think enough of God's Word to obey it- then why should he? If people who say that they are saved don't think that God's Word is important enough to obey it- then God's Word must not be very important.

You see, dear friends, when we humbly submit ourselves to the authority of God's Word as bonds slaves of the Lord Christ- we bring honor to God's Word; we testify publicly that God's Word is what governs us; that we think so highly of what God has said that we are willing to live under its authority.

And conversely when we live in direct opposition to Scripture- we testify publicly that we really don't think much about what God has said. And when the lost sinner sees how we view how important God's Word is to us- he will either highly esteem the Word of God or he will blaspheme it- and when we are the cause of his dishonoring- we are doing a great wrong- not only toward God- but also to that person's soul.

Listen, if we who are saved don't think enough of Jesus to obey Him- why in the world are we telling the lost sinner to obey Him?

We have gone out of our way over the last 100 years to try to alter the Gospel enough to make it look attractive to the lost. But I will say to you that it isn't the straight and narrow path that turns people away from the Gospel; it isn't the thought that they might be persecuted that turns the sinner away. What turns sinners away from the Church more than anything else is people in the Church who say that they are saved and yet who do not walk with God. So if we really are serious about winning souls, beloved- we will teach those who are saved to obey the Scriptures.

Read with me **Titus 2:8**:

sound *in* speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

The Bible says here that when we live our lives in humble submission to what God the Holy Spirit inspired in Scripture- those who are of the contrary part- in other words- those who are lost- will be ashamed. Well, why will they be ashamed? Because as we obey what God has said- the Bible says here that will have nothing evil to say of us.

Now look at **Titus 2:10:**

not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.

God's Word says here that when God's people live in accordance with God' Word- that we are able then to **“adorn the Doctrine of God our Savior in every respect”**. Now that is just a fancy way of saying that talk is cheap.

You see, when we as God's people live like the world- we are testifying in no uncertain terms that we really don't believe what we preach. When we live in accordance with the ways of unsaved men- we are saying that the Doctrine of God as spelled out in Scripture is absolutely worthless to us and we have to do what everybody else has to do about the issues of life because we really don't believe that we have a higher law to follow.

But when we do submit to the authority of God's Word; when we do humble ourselves under the mighty Hand of God- we are testifying that God's Way is higher and more important than our way and that it works and that it is right; and that we really do believe it enough to actually follow it.

So you see, dear friends, by living in accordance to what God says- we are being effective souls winners- regardless of what we say and when we don't live according to God's ways- we are being real bad soul winners- regardless of what we say.

Now how all this ties in is that the antichrists of John's day were specifically undermining all that the Apostles taught and were teaching older and younger men and women that they didn't have to submit themselves to the authority of Scripture. The Gnostics hated Scripture and wrote volumes of fictitious books like the Gospel of Thomas and the

Gospel of Judas which completely tears apart holy living and the concept of Salvation by Faith alone.

The Gnostics taught that women' bodies were community property and that wives not only didn't have to love their husbands and children and didn't have to obey their husbands- but the Gnostics actually taught that they women were wrong for doing so.

Some Gnostic groups even taught that women should run the homes instead of the men and that free sex between all people was the desired way of God. To the Gnostic antichrists- Marriage was bondage and fidelity was legalism. We need to know that antichrist still teach that today. Some antichrists taught that Jesus was not a real human being while others taught that He was a good man but was not God. We need to know that the antichrists still teach that today.

This is what John meant when he says here that these antichrists are of the world and spoke of the world and this is why he was so faithful to warn us of their evil and to encourage us to obey the Word of God.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

© 2007- 2023 by Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America
Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. PO Box 147 Saucier, Mississippi 39574 www.covenantofpeace.net

Scripture quotations, except those noted otherwise, are from The New American Standard Bible © 1995 by The Lockmann Foundation. Used by permission.

This is a single transcript in a larger series of teachings taken from a verse by verse Journey through the Epistle of 1John. You are free to reproduce it and distribute it as the Lord leads you- without cost or reimbursement to us with the stipulation that you may not add anything or take anything away from this transcript without the express written permission of The Covenant of Peace Church and that this complete copyright statement be at the end of all copies.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.