

TESTING THE SPIRITS

1 John 4:1-6 Jeff Schreve

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. 1 John 4:1

Do you put teachers and their teaching to the test?

1. Test their doctrine concerning Christ.

By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. 1 John 4:2-3

A. False teachers will always have a false Christology.

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. 2 Corinthians 11:4

- They will deny His full deity and humanity.

B. False teachers will not submit to Christ as Lord.

Therefore I make known to you, that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:3

2. Test their doctrine concerning salvation.

But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil. 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22

A. Do they preach the word and emphasize salvation?

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 2 Corinthians 5:20

B. Do they add works to faith in Christ?

- C. Do they remove repentance from faith in Christ?
... unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Luke 13:3, 5

3. Test their audience to see who is listening.

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. They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them. 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. 1 John 4:4-6

- A. Does the world embrace them?

*“If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.”
John 15:18-19*

- B. Do the apostles embrace them?

Will you ask God to make you spiritually discerning?