

#5 How To Handle *Temptation*. BOOK REVIEW

*No temptation has overtaken you
that is not common to man.*

God is faithful,

*and he will not let you be tempted
beyond your ability,*

but with the temptation he will also provide

the way of escape,

that you may be able to endure it.

1 Corinthians 10:13

How Do You “Test” The Spirit’s?

- **JOHN UNDERSTANDS** how important it is to realize that you can't believe everything you hear, you can't believe everything that is purported to come from God, you can't believe everything that is supposedly biblical. Cannot believe all teachers of religion, you cannot believe all Christian preachers, or Christian evangelists or teachers. You cannot believe all who came...who claim to speak for God and claim to have a prophetic voice that is set loose in the world.
- **Notice: (1 Jn. 4:1-6)** *“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.”*

- **There is the SPIRIT OF TRUTH**, the Holy Spirit, and there is the spirit of error who would be Satan and his demons. Nothing is benign. All spiritual truth either comes from a divine source or a demonic source. And we know that God speaks truth and reveals truth and Satan speaks a lie and is a deceiver and so it is critical that we be able to discern the difference. God's truth must be guarded very, very carefully. It is always under attack. It is relentlessly under attack.
- **This is why the APOSTLE PAUL instructed TIMOTHY at the end of his first letter to him, Notice: (1 Tim. 6 :20) *“O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called “knowledge”—***
- **Here’s how PAUL began his second letter to TIMOTHY. Notice: (2 Tim. 1:13-15) *“Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 14 Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you. 15 You are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.”* Paul is saying to Timothy, **“DON'T BE LIKE THEM, DON'T ABANDON THE TRUTH, DON'T ABANDON ME THE TRUE APOSTLE.”****

- **IT'S THE *GUARDIANSHIP* THAT IS SO IMPORTANT.** There are always false religionists, cultists. There are always those who come along with their deceptive schemes that purport to be biblical, that quote Bible verses, that say they have a message from God, that have a better way to understand the Bible and apply the Bible to make the Bible acceptable, to make the gospel acceptable. There are those who in outright fashion attack the Bible and then there are those who are much more subtle than that. But we are constantly being called to the defense of the Scripture and the defense of the truth.

TWO REQUIREMENTS ARE NEEDED TO “GUARD” THE TRUTH.

1. **FIRST**, you have to *“know the truth.”* That's why Paul said to Timothy, *“Hold on to sound doctrine.”* You can't guard what you don't understand. If a minister or a pastor does not know sound doctrine, he can't guard it. So, first of all, it requires the knowledge of sound doctrine, and
2. **SECONDLY**, it requires the *“Recognition of error.”* **SOUND DOCTRINE** and **SOUND DISCERNMENT**, are essential in the church. This is our primary responsibility, and it runs parallel to our teaching. How can we teach sound doctrine if we don't know it, how can we teach our people to avoid error if we don't recognize it. Sound doctrine and sound discernment go side by side and are the primary responsibility of every preacher, every elder, every shepherd and pastor in the church. And **JOHN** discharges that responsibility. John knows sound doctrine and he articulates it, and John also possesses sound discernment, and he provides helpful warnings to aid others to do the same.

- **IN (1 JN. 4,) JOHN COMMANDS BELIEVERS TO TEST THE SPIRITS.**

This is necessary if you're going to discern between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. You have to know whatever information is coming to you by **its source**. And again, I say, error is not benign, it is malignant. It is not human, it is demonic. We saw last time, spiritual truth comes from the Holy Spirit, and it is **LIFE-GIVING, LIFE-SUSTAINING, LIFE-PRODUCING, GOD-GLORIFYING**, or it comes from demons. It is either the doctrine of God or the doctrine of demons. It is either that word which is sent and energized by the Holy Spirit, or it is that which comes from seducing spirits. And teachers are either the true teachers of God, or hypocritical liars, espousing the doctrine of demons fostered by seducing spirits. We must know the difference because of the malignancy of error because of the power of truth. **THE TRUTH GIVES LIFE, ERROR KILLS.**

- **FIRST**, John gives us a ***“command” to test, “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God.”***
- **SECONDLY**, is the ***“reason” for the test.*** And the reason is found at the end of V. :1, ***“Because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”***

Proof Is In The TEST!

- **THIRDLY**, is the **“way to test,”** or the **“How”** to test.
- We need to know **“how”** to know that something comes from the Spirit of God. And he tells us, **“By this..”** and then goes on to identify what **“this”** refers to.
- Here are the **“Three Tests”** that will reveal that something is coming from the Spirit of God, and not a demon spirit.

1. **THE FIRST TEST, “THE CONFESSION OF THE DIVINE LORD.”**

(1 Jn. 4:2) again, **“Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.”** There's one thing demons will inevitably deny in all their demonic systems, and that is they will deny the **DEITY** of Jesus Christ. They will deny God in human flesh. In a word, they deny the **INCARNATION**. When someone comes and affirms that Jesus Christ is God in flesh, that is divine truth. If you have somebody who denies the Trinity, you have a problem because Jesus Christ cannot be God come in the flesh, the second person of the Trinity in the fullness of what the New Testament teaches about Him if in fact there is not a Trinity.

Notice: (1 Jn. 2:22-23) “Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the *antichrist*, the one who denies the Father and the Son. (23) Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.”

- I hope you understand how very, important one's **CHRISTOLOGY** is. If one errors on the identity of Jesus Christ, that is not from the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesses Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. That's the first proposition about Jesus, that He is God, He is the eternal life that came from dwelling in the very presence of God the Father and God the Spirit down to earth. You're confessing that Jesus is a person, not just a proposition. You're confessing that Jesus as a person is God in human flesh, not a created being, as the *Mormons* and the *Jehovah's Witnesses* and *others say*. You are saying He is come from God. That is implying the necessity for Him to come into this world in human form to carry out His redemptive work as a substitute for men. We believe then that the human Jesus and the divine Christ are one and the same. When someone has that *Christology*, they are speaking a message that comes from the Holy Spirit.

The “Jesus” of The Cults.

- IN MATTHEW CHAPTER 24, Jesus’ disciples came to him and asked, *“Tell us, when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”* In responding to this question, it’s very interesting what Jesus identified as the foremost sign of his second coming and of the end of the age, *“Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.”*
- Today we are seeing the fulfillment of this warning sign as never before. Our world is literally flooded with **false “christs”** and **false messiahs**. It is estimated that there are over **1,000 cults in America** alone with some **25-30 million followers!** And each of these false cults promotes their own man-made version of “Jesus Christ” **WHO IS NOT THE JESUS OF THE BIBLE.**
- SO, WHO IS THE “JESUS” OF THE CULTS?

1. **JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES**: They say that Jesus is actually Michael, the Archangel. He was the first creation of God. He came to Earth as a man, died on a stake, and rose from the grave invisibly as a spirit. Jesus then returned invisibly to Brooklyn, N.Y. in 1914 to head-up the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.
2. **MORMONS (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints)**: They teach that Jesus is the spirit brother of Satan. He was once a human being like you and I, but through good works he evolved spiritually to become a god. However, Jesus is just one god amongst a pantheon of gods, all of whom were once human and evolved to become gods themselves. Jesus was born to Mary through physical incest when his father god had sexual relations with her. And Mormons teach that the blood and cross of Christ is foolishness and cannot fully atone for our sins (ever notice how there's no cross on any Mormon church or temple?).

3. **CHRISTIAN SCIENCE: and Mary Baker Eddy:** say that Jesus was only a man, and that Christ is a Divine idea. Furthermore, Jesus never did any supernatural miracles; he simply showed people their mental illusions of sin, evil, illness and disease. Christian Science says that Jesus did not die and his resurrection was only in a spiritual sense.
4. **SUN MYUNG MOON: (the Korean messiah):** claims that Jesus was a man who failed his divine mission and he, Rev. Moon, is the second coming of Christ to unite the world under the banner of the **UNIFICATION CHURCH.**
5. **UNITARIANS:** believe that Jesus was a good man who was mistakenly deified by his followers.
6. **SCIENTOLOGY: and L. Ron Hubbard:** claim that Jesus is a false dream.
7. **SPIRITISTS:** say that Jesus is an advanced medium in the 6th sphere of the astrological projection (wherever that is?).

So, who is the real Jesus?

- **Notice:** (John 1:1) *“In the beginning was the Word (Jesus), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”* A few verses later in (John 1:14) we learn, *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*
- **Notice:** (Col. 1:15) Paul tells us that Jesus *“is the visible image of the invisible God...”* In (Col. 2:9) Paul says, *“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form...”*
- **THE REAL JESUS IS THE ONE TRUE GOD OF ALL CREATION**. He is the second person of the eternal Triune Godhead. He loves us so much that He broke into human history and split history into B.C. and A.D. to personally reveal Himself to us. The Bible says that Jesus came to *“seek and to save the lost”* (Luke 19:10; John 3:16-17; Ephesians 2:8-9). And as (Acts 4:12) declares, *“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”*