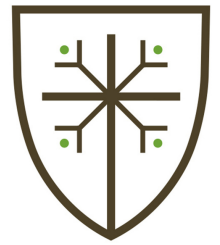


SERMON NOTES



October 9, 2022

SERMONS ON FIRST JOHN

Reasons to Stay

All Saints Presbyterian Church

SERMON INFO

TITLE

Reasons to Stay: Testing the
Spirits

PREACHER

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

TEXTS

Deuteronomy 13:1-5
1 John 4:1-4, 5:1-5
Matthew 7:15-20

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the messages of the world that would not align with John's doctrinal test?
2. Are there commands of God that you have found burdensome in the past that the Spirit has transformed to be beautiful?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

In today's sermon, we looked at John's encouragement to "overcome the world." How do we do that? Tim talked about two tests laid out in 1 John. We live in a supernatural world in which there are no spiritually neutral souls, no spiritually neutral messages. So, we must test the spirits if we are to know if they are from God. The first test is the doctrinal test which John sums up as "Jesus Christ has come in the flesh." Do the messages we are hearing align with this truth? Do the relationships we have, the media we consume, or the way we treat our body align with the gospel of a God who gave his only Son, who took on flesh, who died and rose again to overcome the world? In test#1 our faith helps us overcome the world.

Test#2 is what Tim called the supernatural test. Being reborn, and, as a result, God the Holy Spirit living in us, changes everything. While the doctrinal test discerns between messages we receive, the supernatural test discerns evidence of the Spirit at work within us. Do we love well? In particular, do we love other Christians well? Tim used the example of the early church in Antioch. Antioch was the most ethnically and culturally diverse city in the world, filled with groups who were constantly fighting and bickering with one another. But the church in Antioch transformed the lives of those from every corner of the city. Even the name "Christians" arose in Antioch because this new thing was unlike any other religion which had previously been tied to ethnicity, or region. This is the degree to which rebirth in the family of God transforms lives.

Finally, for those who have been reborn, in whom the spirit lies and grows, the commandments of God are transformed from being burdensome to being beautiful. That all too familiar concept of "I'll deal with God later. It's just too hard right now," is changed by the indwelling of God's Spirit. So, as Tim exhorted us, test the spirits against the grace of God to you.