



1 John: Awakened to Love Jason Shawa "It's Time for a Test" November 6, 2022

Key Verses: 1 John 4:1-6

Key Thought: Before we open ourselves to the influence of someone, we are commanded to evaluate them according to what they believe and proclaim about Jesus Christ.

Points to Consider:

- The hearers have already been instructed to evaluate people according to their obedience and their love for other Christians.
- 4:1: We are commanded to "test" people, rather than believe whatever we hear.
 - i. We are inundated with both positive *and* negative influences.
 - ii. Everyone (including you) is accountable to God's word.
 - iii. While Christians are *not* to condemn people (which is God's right alone), Christians *are* to make evaluations about people, based on truth that God has revealed in his word.
- 4:2-3: The "test" pertains to a person's position on Jesus Christ.
 - i. The orthodox formula of the early church is that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully human.
 - ii. We can trust God while having incomplete understanding, such as when we trust an airplane to function without knowing how it works.
 - iii. We reject relativism, because God has revealed what is true in his word.
- 4:4: Those who faithfully confess Jesus Christ are victorious over antichristian forces, because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
- 4:5-6: We must listen to God's word so that we can discern truth from error.

Discussion Prompts:

- What is "relativism," and why is it incompatible with Christianity?
- Discuss the difference between how Christians are not supposed to "judge" someone and how Christians are supposed to "judge" someone.
- Why is a person's position on Jesus Christ so important?
- What beliefs do people have that contradict the orthodox formula (i.e., Jesus Christ is fully God and fully human)? Do you confess the formula? Why or why not?
- Where are you most vulnerable to be influenced by antichristian forces?