

Sermon Notes 4/26/2026

Learning as God's Children

How should we learn as children of God?
¿Cómo deberíamos aprender como hijos de Dios?

1. Let's learn from _____.

Aprendamos del _____.

1 John 4:1 (1 Juan 4:1)

Matthew 7:15-20 (Mateo 7:15-20)

2. Let's learn from _____.

Aprendamos de _____.

1 John 4:2-3 (1 Juan 4:2-3)

Galatians 1:8-9 (Gálatas 1:8-9)

Matthew 24:10-14 (Mateo 24:10-14)

3. Let's learn from the _____.

Aprendamos del _____.

1 John 4:4 (1 Juan 4:4)

John 14:16-17 (Juan 14:16-17)

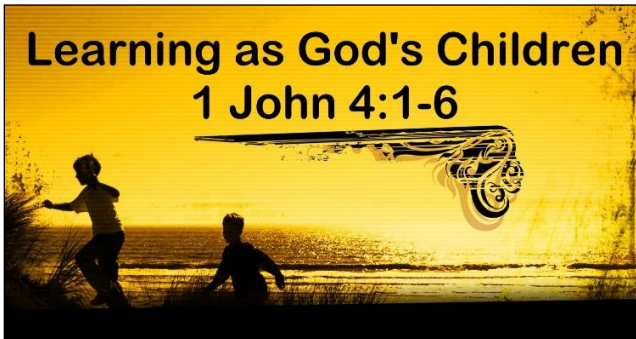
4. Let's learn from the _____.

Aprendamos de la _____.

1 John 4:5-6 (1 Juan 4:5-6)

2 Timothy 4:2-4 (2 Timoteo 2:4)

John 17:14-17 (Juan 17:14-17)



Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 8: April 26-May 3

Scripture: 1 John 4:1-6

The main problem that John was addressing throughout First John was Gnosticism. The Gnostics believed that everything physical was bad and everything spiritual was good. They thought that Christ was just a spirit with no physical body, and they denied the physical death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. They claimed that their physical sins were not really their sins because the physical actions of their body were not the true actions of their spirit. They also claimed to have special knowledge that everyone needed to be saved, and no one could get that secret knowledge except through them.

John knew that these were not the first false teachers to attack the Christian faith, and he knew they wouldn't be the last. So, he gives all Christians some important and practical principles to help us learn the truth and not be deceived by false teachers.

In 1 John 4, John is giving us a warning to test or examine both the message and the messenger. Whenever someone claims to be teaching the truth we have to be careful because there are many false teachers in the world trying to deceive God's people.

Read 1 John 4:1-6

1. What did John instruct his readers to do? (4:1)

Robert Yarbrough notes,

The verb δοκιμάζω (*dokimazō*, to examine, put to the test) occurs imperatively twice in the LXX (Pss. 26:1 [25:2 LXX]; 139:23 [138:23 LXX]) ... In NT usage the same verb is used as an imperative in connection with doctrinal or ethical self-assessment (1 Cor. 11:28; 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 6:4). Prospective deacons, Paul tells Timothy, are to be "tested" (1 Tim. 3:10). Likewise, in 1 John 4:1, when spirits manifest themselves, they are to be scrutinized closely. (Yarbrough, 220)

2. Who did John say had gone into the world? (4:1)

3. How is the Spirit of God recognized? (4:2)

4. What kind of spirit does not acknowledge Jesus? (4:3)

Morris Womack observes,

This is not the only identifying mark of a true prophet or the teaching of the Spirit of God. This is only in reference to the false teaching that John is addressing, Gnosticism, or specifically, Docetism. There were other elements of the gnostic philosophy that would be contrary to the teachings from God; this is the one addressed here. (Womack, 99-100)

5. What did John say that Christians have overcome? Why? (4:4)

Those who are “from the world” are under the influence of Satan. The Bible describes Satan as “the ruler of this world” (1 John 5:19; John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). Christians, however, are under the influence of the Holy Spirit. The Bible says that the Holy Spirit lives in Christians (John 14:16-17; Acts 2:38; Rom. 8:9-11; 1 Cor. 6:19).

Womack writes,

The one who is in you, without question, refers to the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit of God. The gender in this expression in the Greek has changed from the neuter gender in earlier references to “spirit” to the masculine gender, referring to the Holy Spirit. This inner power provided by the Holy Spirit enables us to be more successful in our struggle against the devil and his false teachings. (Womack, 102)

6. How did John describe the viewpoint of the false teachers in verse 5?

7. Who listens to the false teachers in verse 5?

8. Who is the “we” in verse 6? (See also 1 John 1:1-4)

John Stott comments,

The we of this verse is in direct antithesis to the they of the previous verse. So, if they means the false teachers, we must mean the true teachers, namely the apostles. But how can it be known that we are from God and are teaching the truth? You can tell that our message is God’s message, John explains, because God’s people listen to it and receive it. This statement sounds the height of arrogance. So, it would be if uttered by an individual Christian... But this is what John says. For he is writing in the name neither of himself nor of the church but of Christ, as one of his chosen apostles. (Stott, 158)

9. How are the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood recognized?
(4:6)

Colin Kruse writes,

He and his readers must not be surprised if they cannot get a hearing for the original gospel from the secessionists, or from others who are not from God. A persistent acceptance of the gospel proclaimed by the author and his community marks those who are from God, and a persistent rejection of their gospel marks those who are not from God. (Kruse, 149)

10. How can we “test the spirits” today?

11. Where do you see the influence of the spirit of the antichrist today?

12. Why is it important to believe that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh?

The incarnation is the doctrine that God, the Son, became a physical human being. This is important because it was necessary for Jesus to become fully human in order to redeem mankind and to give us assurance that He really is a faithful High Priest who can sympathize with our weaknesses. (See Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:15)

13. In what way have you overcome the world?

14. Why is it important for us to remember and meditate on the fact that Christ is greater than any of the evil forces in the world?

15. What is your response when people don't want to hear the truth?

16. What is your response when people want to learn more about God?

17. What influences in your life (teachers, books, movies, music, etc.) will you “put to the test” to see whether they are from God?

18. How will you guard yourself against false ideas this week?

Sources cited:

- Kruse, Colin. *The Letters of John*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000.
Stott, John. *The Letters of John*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2009.
Womack, Morris. *1, 2, & 3 John*. Joplin, MO: College Press, 1998.
Yarbrough, Robert. *1-3 John*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.