



The Book of First JOHN

Chapter 4:1-6

“Beloved, Do Not Believe Every Spirit!”

(v1a) **TEST THE SPIRITS** - Do not believe every spirit!

Literally - *“Stop believing every spirit.”* (Acts 16:16-18) (“spirit”- Gk. - *pneuma*- wind) Thayer the Greek scholar writes - The word as used here refers to “one in whom a spirit is manifest or embodied, hence one actuated by a spirit, whether divine or demonical.” Thus these spirits are human beings actuated either by demons or the Holy Spirit. In this case they would be the teachers, pastors and evangelists who circulated around the local churches. - Kenneth Wuest (Paul declares in 1 Timothy 4:1- *“Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons”* Scofield comments- Satanic deception which caused the fall of man will characterize the end of the age (Mt. 24:4-5; Mk. 13:6; 1 John 2:18-26; 2 John 7; Rev. 13:14; 19:20; 20:7-10). Satan is the one “who deceives the whole world” (Rev. 12:9) and is the power behind the beast and the false prophet (Rev. 13:4,7,12-15; 19:20; 20:3,7-10).

(v1b) **QUESTION AUTHORITY**: Are they of God? The word *test or try* is *dokimazo* “to put to the test for the purpose of approving, and finding that the person put to the test meets the specifications laid down, to put one’s approval upon him.” I’ve heard it said in the church today “Doctrine divides, but love unites.” That’s a slogan from the devil’s bag of lies. **TRUTH UNITES; LOVE EDIFIES! WE MUST LOVE GOD AND HIS WORD FIRST, THEN AND ONLY THEN WILL WE HAVE LOVING UNITY!**

> (v2) **EXAMINE** - Beware of false prophets?

- > IDENTIFY: Deuteronomy 13:1-5;
- > JESUS WARNS: Matthew 24:3-28;
- > THEY’RE IN THE CHURCH: 2 Timothy 3:10 – 4:7
- > 2 Peter 2:1-22 (Satan’s MMA)

> (v3a) **SPIRITUAL WARFARE** - Test their confession regarding Jesus?

- Did Jesus come in the flesh?
- Is Jesus the eternal Son of God?
- Is Jesus the one & only Savior of the world?
- Is Jesus the Second person of the Trinity?
- Is Jesus death on the cross, the shedding of His blood our atonement?
- Does faith in Jesus Christ alone save us?

> (v3b) **The spirit of ANTICHRIST is:** Against Christ, or an opposition to Christ, or a rival of Christ. The word is used only by the apostle John. Referring to false teachers, he says (1 John 1:18, 22; 4:3 2 John 7). 1 John 2:18 reads, *“Even now many antichrists have come.”*

~ **THE SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST WILL BRING:**

- **RELIGIOUS DECEPTION!** – 2 Corinthians 11:3-4 - *But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted — you may well put up with it!*

- The Lukewarm church of the last days is found in Revelation 3:14-22 - *“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’ — and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked — I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”’”* (ref. Chapters 17 & 19)

(2) **GLOBAL DECEPTION!** – Through the ANTICHRIST - 2 Thessalonians Ch. 2:9-12 (Beware of signs & wonders!)

- **Ten titles are given to the ANTICHRIST:**

- 1 – *The Little Horn (Daniel 7:8)*
- 2 – *A king, insolent and skilled in intrigue (Daniel 8:23)*
- 3 – *The prince who is to come (Daniel 9:26)*
- 4 – *The one who makes desolate (Daniel 9:27)*
- 5 – *The king who does as he pleases (Daniel 11:36-45)*
- 6 – *A foolish shepherd (Zechariah 11:15-17)*
- 7 – *The son of destruction (2 Thessalonians 2:8)*
- 8 – *The Lawless One (2 Thessalonians 2:8)*
- 9 – *The rider on the white horse (Revelation 6:2)*
- 10 – *The beast out of the sea (Revelation 13:1-2)*

(3) PERSONAL DECEPTION! – Romans 1:16-32

- **Be comforted with these words from John**, *“You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.”*- 1 John 4:4 (Christians cannot be demon possessed.)

Jesus said in John 17:14-19 - *I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.*

> TRUTH - The Spirit of Truth & the Spirit of Error (v5-6)

- Hearing God's Word is the spirit of truth!
- Not hearing God's Word is the spirit of error!

-HIS TRUTH WILL SET US FREE! John 8:31-32 - *Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*
(ref. Revelation 3:7-14 – Philadelphia)