

CG - Gathering

Sermon Series: The Letters of John
Sermon Title: Love that discerns — 1 John 4:1-6



Call to Worship (Read Romans 5:8)

'For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. '

Pray

"Father, thank You for loving us while we were still sinners. Let that love now shape how we love each other tonight. Amen."

Questions for Discussion: (Read: 1 John 4:1-6)

1. **Read 1 John 3:23–24 and 4:1 together.** Why does the call to "test the spirits" follow directly after the promise that the Spirit already lives in us? What does it look like practically to test spirits *out of* confidence in the Spirit's presence, rather than out of anxiety that we might get deceived?
2. We often evaluate teaching by passion, charisma, or how something "hits" us emotionally — but none of those are the test he actually gives (vv. 2–3). Be honest: what usually draws you to a teacher, book, or voice online? How is that different from asking, "What does this do with Jesus?"
3. **Discernment grows from spending time with the genuine article (John referenced a Bank-teller illustration), not from studying counterfeits.** What's one practical way you could get more "familiar with Christ's voice" this week, so that counterfeit voices become less attractive by comparison?
4. **Verse 4 says believers "have overcome" — past tense, already accomplished — because "he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."** Where in your life right now are you tempted to find your security in your own discernment, knowledge, or spiritual maturity rather than in Christ? What would it look like to rest in him instead?
5. OF the two opposite temptations; cynicism and gullibility, which one are you more prone to, and why? How might this text correct you toward "discerning confidence" instead?

Gospel community Challenge: This week, spend more time with Jesus in the Gospels than you do with any other voice claiming to speak truth into your life. Tell someone in your CG what gospel passage you have been reading and what how it has spoken truth to you. The goal isn't to become an expert in error — it's to become so familiar with the real Christ that every counterfeit grows easier to spot.

Sermon - Notes

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1. Don't Believe Every Spiritual Claim

The Call to Discernment (v. 1 John 4:1)

2. Test Every Voice by Jesus

The Test of Discernment (vv. 1 John 4:2-3)

3. Rest in the Greater One Who Lives in You

The Confidence for Discernment (vv. 1 John 4:4-6)