

SERIES: LESSONS ON THE LOVE OF CHRIST IN US

Lesson #9: “Love is Willing to Test Everything”

1 John 4:1-6

Announcements and opening prayer.



Connect: an opportunity for people to immediately interact and connect with each other; icebreaker/attention getters. **Icebreaker:** What do you think of when I say the word, “spirit?”

Transition: Do ALL Christians have a responsibility to know the truth of God’s Word for themselves?

The Bottom Line: Today’s bottom line deals with the fact that the love of Christ drives us to test all teaching in life against the holy Word of God. Why? Because God’s Word alone has been proven trustworthy, to be worthy of full belief and acceptance.

LESSON PLAN



Denotes “Apply”

Spirit, in today’s text as John uses it is = PNEUMA, πνευμα, pronounced (pah-new-mah) the part within us that influences our thoughts and actions, separate from the body. It is the will within us we choose to allow to guide us.

Read 1 John 4:1-6

1. What does John urge Christians to test and why?
2. What did John previously warn them about in chapter 3?

John begins the 3rd part of his letter. In 1:5 he talked about the importance of walking in the light of the Word of God. That walk creates fellowship with God and man. He pointed out that sincere faith is driven by love for our fellow man and for our God. In 2:18 he began the 2nd thought in his letter warning about the antichrist that had gone out from among them and were distorting the truth of God’s Word. They were teaching something that was setting them up against Christ by denying that Jesus was truly the Messiah sent from the Father. That is the sign of someone who is antichrist. They have a spirit that is not from God and therefore their teaching is not from God. He tells them, “You have it right. Don’t let anyone teach you otherwise!” He points out that it is the love of Christ that completes us and allows for the love to flow among us. Now comes the 3rd part of John’s teaching. He declares the need for them to

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test every spirit to see if it is from God before accepting any ideas.)

- ⑥ Obviously some of the teaching they were dealing with had to do with the restoration of Israel by the Messiah who was promised. What might some of the teachings from false spirits within people have been?

- Read Jeremiah 29:8

Notice that previously there had been false prophets and people with magical powers who would try to mislead people claiming they were from God, His messengers. This was nothing new and it is still happening in the early church. Satan uses many people and ideas to distort truth. He often uses God's truth against God. Jesus' temptation by Satan was a perfect example.

- Read Ephesians 5:8-16. How does this relate to the testing of spirits?
 - Read 1 Timothy 4:1-5. Where did these wacked out ideas of faith come from?

- ⑥ What are some teaching being taught today that do not stand the test of God's Word?

3. How does John say we can recognize the Holy Spirit of God is in the teaching?

Every teaching that is true MUST acknowledge that Jesus came from God in the flesh as our Messiah. If they do not, it is not from the Holy Spirit of God, but the spirit of the antichrist. The teaching is evil even IF it is accompanied by miraculous signs, as many magicians and occult teachers were able to do. Pharaoh's magicians, Simon the Sorcerer, etc.

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Interactive Teaching Ideas: ideas for learner-focused teaching. Ask the class to discuss at each table the following assignment and then share the results from each table: *(Be sure to allow plenty of time for this exercise)* Groups 1 - Hebrews 2:14-15; Group 2 - Mark 10:32-33; Group 3 - John 8:42-47; How does each of these teachings help us understand the importance of knowing what the concept of the antichrist truly is?

Anyone who denies that Jesus is both God and man, savior and Creator, is not from God and should never be listened to. It is a deceiving spirit that guides them and that spirit is not from God and is evil.

- ⑥ It is critical to see that teachings on God's truth come from either God or from the devil. What religious teachings specifically claim that Jesus did not come from God in the flesh and refuses to acknowledge Jesus as Lord and Messiah?
- 4. How does John say this false teaching is overcome by Christians?
- 5. What if we are just too lazy to study the Bible so we can listen to the Holy Spirit in the Words God ordained the Apostles to record for us?
- ⑥ How is being apathetic about studying God's Word dangerous?



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Going Deeper/Homework:

Memory Verse: “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:13).

Next Week’s Scripture: 1 John 4:7-21 – “Understanding True Love”