

Three questions believer can ask to “test the spirits to determine if they are from God?”

#1 Does the Teaching CELEBRATE CHRIST?

- 1 John 4:2 By this you know the Spirit of God:
Every spirit that confesses
that Jesus Christ
has come in the flesh is of God,
- 3 and every spirit
that does not confess
that Jesus Christ
has come in the flesh is not of God.
And this is the *spirit* of the Antichrist,
which you have heard was coming,
and is now already in the world.

Antichrists

John wrote to his readers that “many antichrists have come.” Although many Bible students see some difference from the figurehead, “the Antichrist,” who is the adversary of God’s Messiah to come in the last days, the antichrists in 1 John nonetheless exhibited the spirit of antichrist in their actions in opposition to Christ. John equated them with the false teachers not only questioning Jesus as the incarnate Christ, but attempting to cause a rift among believers. Jesus Himself warned against their appearance in the following two passages of scripture:

Matthew 24:24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. (see also Mark 13:22)

Believers should likewise be on the lookout for anyone denying crucial truths about Jesus found in God’s Word, reject their teaching, and avoid joining any movement with them.

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#2 Does the Teaching CONFRONT the WORLD?

There are pastors and churches today that seek to be “politically correct” and “seeker friendly” by preaching a “watered down” gospel that avoids addressing biblical issues such as sin, hell, and other lifestyle issues that many in our society would label as offensive and controversial.

- 1 John 4:4 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.
- 5 They are of the world.
Therefore they speak
as of the world,
and the world hears them.

#3 Does the Teaching CONFORM to the BIBLE?

As an Apostle of Christ writing under the divine inspiration of God, John urged his readers to “hear” his words of “truth” so that they could avoid the “error” being taught by false prophets.

- 1 John 4:6 We are of God.
He who knows God hears us;
he who is not of God
does not hear us.
By this we know the spirit of truth
and the spirit of error.

Today’s sermon’s outline was taken from the June 21, 2009
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“GROUNDED IN TRUTH”