

**- Order of Service -**

**Call to Worship**

**Welcoming Prayer**

- *Christ our hope in life and death*
- *Jesus your mercy*
- *268, Redeemed how I love to proclaim it*
- *526, He Lives!*

**Announcements and Prayer requests**

**Greeting**

**Message in the Word -**

**John's call to Grow in Fellowship with God - #13**

**Testing the spirits - Who's behind the beliefs?**

**1 John 4:1-6**

**Sending prayer**

**You may notice we don't pass an offering plate**

We invite you to participate in the ministry, and the offering box in the foyer is for your gifts and offerings for the Lord's work.

**- 2 Corinthians 9:7-8, Galatians 6:6 -**

**Grace Bible Fellowship**

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love. truth. grace.

*“We are identified with Jesus Christ in his crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and heavenly seating”*



**- Teaching -**

**Eric Peterman**

**John's call to Grow in Fellowship with God - #13**

**Testing the spirits - Who's behind the beliefs?**

**1 John 4:1-6**

**- November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022 -**

## ***John's call to Grow in Fellowship with God - #13***

### ***Testing the spirits – Who's behind the beliefs?***

#### ***1 John 4:1-6***

“Test the spirits.” A snippet of a verse that we all know. What on earth does it mean? Is John pointing out some extra-sensory perception that special Christians have? Are believers to tune up some special, spiritual gift-given antennae with which they can discern the unseen world of demonic forces and beings? Or is John pointing out something more more mundane, something that is the routine duty and capability of every believer?

V1, Taken by itself, that snippet could mean many things. Let's read the whole verse to see where John is going. “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

- **believe**, to have *knowledge*, then *assent* to it, then *real trust* in it. Christians here are exhorted to believe, but only believe/receive to themselves things that are true, factual, reliable. They are to *believe not* falsehoods that come from the spiritual realm! (See Acts 17:11, note the attitude: *Yes* to the truth. But verify by the Word of God.)
- **To see whether they are from God** They are to reject claims about spiritual matters and persons that are not from God, only accepting those that are verifiably from God. (See 1 Thessalonians 5:20-21)
- **many false prophets... into the world** Ah! Now we see that these spirits operate **through people!** It is the *message, the declarations and teachings of people* who claim spiritual revelation that is to be tested. They are prophets.
- **We know from Scripture that there are essentially three different categories of spirits who might speak to a prophet:**  
1) *God the Holy Spirit*, 2) *spirits who are holy angels sent from God*, 3) and *spirits who are fallen/evil angels sent from Satan*. So a human prophet can receive and relay teaching or claims from those three categories.
- Look at **2 Corinthians 11:4**, and **13-15**, and **Gal 1:8** for insight into this issue!
- This indicates that humans, including believers, are targets of demonic/fallen disinformation campaigns, making claims about spiritual matters! We are to be on guard and not gullible!

V2-3, The test of the spirits to be applied by believers!

*Confesses – homologeo* here we get the idea of a truth acknowledged, a common confession, a creed shared.

*Jesus Christ has come in the flesh:* The question for the prophet's message is, “Is it consistent with, does it acknowledge the common confession, the creed already revealed by the Bible and the apostles about the nature of the divine Son of God, (the Lord) Jesus Christ, having come in human flesh with a true human nature?” Is the savior, Jesus, the promised old testament Messiah (*Maschiach*) the Son of God truly incarnate as a man (the God/Man in one Person), is He confessed, or is something contrary, detracted, subtracted about Him or His gospel relayed by the prophet. (Regardless of accompanying miracles, signs, wonders, testimonies, healings, etc).

V3b, The Anti-Christ will be the ultimate denial,

See **Daniel 11:36-39**, **2 Thessalonians 2:1-10**

But already his messengers were corrupting the revelation of The Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ 2,000 years ago! They work until today to *detract, distract, discourage* and *corrupt* the image and identity of The Lord Jesus Christ. **See 2:23-25**

v4, John encourages his readers to remind them that they have *overcome* the false prophets in the past by sticking to the truth and the True and Living Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ! *Overcome – to conquer, to press down*. So they can do so now and in the future. Why? ***Greater is He (The Holy Spirit) that is in you, than he (the evil spirit/Satan) who is in the world. Friends, here is true encouragement!*** We can cleave to Christ because His Spirit of truth and love cleaves to us. We need not despair if the world believes the spiritual and moral lies of the Liar. Be believe in and trust the Living and ever Faithful One. We can rest in that assurance. We are in Him, safe. So we can discern the true message from the false! Because the true message comes from true lover of our souls.

V5-6, The two spheres, the two spirits, the two “worlds”. One is Life, the other death. One is true, the other subject to a Liar. One is eternal, the other corruptible and temporary and under judgment. ***Let us share the joy of the gospel of the True Christ, our Savior, Lord, Redeemer and Friend!***