

TRY THE SPIRITS

I John 4:1-6

Introduction:

- A. John gives a command.
 - 1. "believe not every spirit"
 - 2. "try the spirits."

- B. Why would John give such a command?
 - 1. "many false prophets are gone out into the world."
 - 2. There are two spirits in the world.
 - a. "the spirit of truth" vs. 6
 - b. "the spirit of error." vs. 6

I . PUT RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS TEACHERS ON TRIAL.

- A. "try the spirits whether they are of God."
 - 1. try = assay, to make trial, put to the proof, examine, as metals by fire.
 - 2. Never feel intimidated or guilty because your question and investigate religion.

- B. Try the spirits by the Bible.
 - 1. What did the Bible teach?
 - 2. Jesus of Nazareth was God in flesh!
 - 3. The test. vs. 2,3
 - a. confess = to say the same with another, to say the same things.
 - 4. Today there are more issues than one.

- C. Try the spirits by their fruits.
 - 1. Matthew 7:15-20
 - 2. Some fruit is judged by its appearance, but not all.
 - 3. You may have to watch a "tree" for a while.

"The days of visitation are come, the days of recompense are come; Israel shall know it; the prophet is a fool."

- C. The need is great today to test the spirits. For all false teaching is of Satan.
 - 1. There are those teaching salvation other than by grace - repentance and faith - lulling the people to sleep by a false sense of security. (Don't want to be disturbed.)
 - 2. Disturbing message of Jesus was what led to the cross.
 - 3. Jesus knocked the people out from under traditionalism and formalism.

I I . HOW TO TEST THE SPIRITS .

I John 4:2-3

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

- A. John says a belief in the incarnation necessary.
 - 1. The Knostics taught differently.
 - 2. There are those today that say Jesus was only a teacher, prophet, humanitarian.
 - 3. The Bible teaches that he was God manifest in the flesh.
 - a. II Cor. 5:19

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

4. There was a time when Christ left heaven and took on the form of flesh. He became every whit a man.
5. You and I have our beginning but not God. I might add we have no end.
6. John just simply says to deny the incarnation is to be antichrist.

B. Spirit of antichrist at work in the world.

1. The evil and evil teaching are directed by a satanic spirit.

I I I . THE NATURE OF THE TEST .

A. Doctrinal.

1. We shy away from such a test. We usually say, "Oh, well they don't believe like us, but we are all going to the same place."

I V . CONTRAST BETWEEN CHRISTIAN AND FALSE PROPHETS .

I John 4:4-6

"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God; that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."

A. Christian is of God.

1. Born of God.
2. Spirit of God that indwells Christian greater than Satan. No need for us to fall into sin as he leads us.

B. False prophets are of the world.

1. Speak of the world.
 2. World hears them for they speak what the world wants to hear.
- C. Christian hears the true prophets of God. vs.6
1. They are led of the same spirit.
 2. They world rejects the message of God. I speak of the world as a whole.
 3. The spirit of truth and spirit of error can be determined by their reaction to the message of God as it comes from God's messenger.
- D. The Bible teaches that we are either Christ's or antichrist's.
1. Which are you?
 2. It can be Christ's today.

