

SPIRIT OF TRUTH VS SPIRIT OF ERROR!

Scripture reading – I John 4:1-3

Introduction:

John gives concrete proof about everything! He that keeps the commandments will abide in Christ. He that abides will bear much fruits and love one another. He that loves everyone, including his enemies, is the real child of God! Now we will have more proof to see for ourselves, if we belong to Antichrist or Christ our Lord!

1 John 4:1.

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Test the spirits! Don't take it for granted. Just recently, I was talking to a friend about ministry. At that time, he was complaining about his church people having spiritual pride, and constantly focusing on the gift of the Holy Spirit alone, but not on Jesus, or God the Father. He complained that those people are looking down on people who cannot speak in tongue. The worship is becoming more emotional rather than substantive. Prophecy and tongues are given the main importance, and not love! Their demonstration of power and their actual walk in life do not match!

This is a very common problem among our tongue speaking denominations when they push away the doctrine of love and try to go after the power alone. Paul clearly says that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are gifts from God alone, and He gives it by measure to whom He will. They vary from person to person. Not all speak in tongues, not all are healers, not all are prophets! The only thing we must insist is faith, love, and abiding in the Spirit. All the gifts and fruit of the Spirit will vary from person to person!

Do not believe every spirit but test the spirit. If there is no love, and if we see only the spiritual pride, it is not from the Spirit of God! It is from the devil! Many false prophets have gone into the world. Not few, but many false prophets were active even in apostles time. Then how much more we would have! There are so many religions, so many cults, so many denominations, so many teachers that preach their own theology rather than the Word of God! Even among popular preachers, there is prosperity theology, Jesus only theology, salvation by works theology, universalism theology etc. Jesus says, you shall know them by their fruits!

Luke 6:44,45.

44. For each tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a briar bush.

45. "The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart.

1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians have been written for people who go after the gifts of the Holy Spirit alone, and not the fruits of the Spirit! As a matter of fact, Paul dedicates the entire first Corinthian chapter 13 for the fruit of love alone, and chapter 14 for the gift of tongue alone, and how it ought to be used. Paul clearly lets us know that not all speak in tongue. (Do we all speak in tongues? (1 Cor. 12:30 I wish you would all speak in tongues! 1 Cor 14:5). The biggest heresy is going on among some of the charismatic congregations is that you are not a Christian if you do not speak in tongue? There is something seriously wrong with such an extreme doctrine! We must test all the spirits if they are of God or not! Beware, many false prophets have gone out! You shall know them by their fruits. Such people will not have any love at all, they will only divide the body through contention, spiritual pride and arrogance, and with wrong teaching!

1 John 4:2,3.

2By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,

3and 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.

Here we see again. We must have the right belief along with the right doctrine. If you remember, I was talking to you about the Gnostic belief. Those people believed that Jesus Christ was not born of flesh and blood, but of Spirit alone, and according to them, He did not have actual body. He appeared to have a fleshly body. They looked at matter as evil and argued that God could have never taken that incarnation in human body. John argues that Jesus did have actual body. That's why he says that "one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. [35](#)And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe." (John 19:34,35). That is why John started the first John epistle by saying, "we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life— [2](#) the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us. (1 John 1:1,2). This was the reason, John emphatically concluded that that Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (John 1:14). If we become ignorant of Gnosticism and Docetism, we will miss out the true historical picture of John's concerns!

John clearly states that those who do not believe that Jesus Christ was indeed born of the flesh are not from God. As a matter of fact, such people are not controlled by the Spirit of God, but by the spirit of antichrist. Now we are introduced to a new phenomenon. The antichrist is not a person, but a spirit! When Paul talks about antichrist, he explains as a person in 2 Thessalonians 2:8. But Antichrist he depicted did not come in their time. 1 John was written at the end of first century, and there was no individual who appeared as antichrist yet. So, we could see here clearly that the theology of antichrist is evolving as spirit of antichrists!

In the following verse, John spiritualized the Antichrist, and claimed that it is the last hour!

1 John 2:18,19.

18 Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

When there is serious persecution or human tragedy, everyone feels that they live in the last hour. A good sign of last hour is the appearance of the antichrist. The serious question is, is this antichrist just an individual or is it the spirit of antichrist present among a group of people? If we are waiting for a bad dude as antichrist, then he has not come yet, and therefore Christ will come only during this antichrist regime. So, we can almost time the return of Christ. But if the antichrist is the spirit of antichrist, then Christ may come anytime when it is at its worst. It could be even now! So, don't just look for some political leader, as some tv evangelists predict. The antichrist can very well be the spirit of antichrist, and we cannot read his activity with our human wisdom. So be ready for Christ return any time! Yes, every generation must consider their generation as the last generation and watch for Christ's return. If you wait for some real personality as antichrist, there is a very good chance that it may not happen in your lifetime.

These antichrists left the church also. They came in as lambs but left the church as wolves! Amazing! These antichrists not only denied that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, but also denied that Jesus is the Christ, the Lord!

1 John 2:22,23.

22 Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son.

23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

This passage could apply to people who believed only in God, but not His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord!! They may have believed that Jesus as a human prophet, but not as the Son of God, who came down from heaven! They just cannot confess that Jesus Christ is their Lord! For these people, the Messiah has never come. For them, the Christian interpretation of Messiah is just exaggeration, and fiction. Therefore, John emphasizes that he that hath the Son hath the Father also! Only people who have the Holy Spirit can believe that Jesus is indeed Christ, and they will bow down before Him and confess that Jesus is Lord!

1 John 4:4.

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.

Those who have Christ in their heart are from God, and they are indeed the children of God! John refers to his congregation as little children not because they are all actually children, but spiritually speaking, they are all still children because, they still understand like babies, and could drink only the milk of the Word, and not the meat! After finishing all the books of John, I would love to teach from the book of Leviticus. Will you be ready for the real meat of the Word! I am praying for such maturity. We cannot stay always as little children. We ought to grow!

We always overcome the false prophets because we know the truth, and the Spirit of Truth that is within us will always keep us on the straight path! It is a fact! He that is in us, the Holy Spirit, is greater than he that is in the world! If God be for us who can be against us? The anointing that is within us will lead us into all truth! Are you in touch with the Spirit that is within you? Are you abiding in the Spirit? Do you realize, God is so close to us, and as we breathe, we can feel him? Do you realize, we can walk with Him closely just as ADAM and Eve walked? The only time they walked was in the cool of the evening, but we could walk any time of the day, and listen to His voice, and we could talk to Him also. Do you have that kind of a relationship with God? That is the real prayer walk! Who can touch us? No one can!

1 John 4:5,6.

5They are of the world. Therefore, they speak as of the world, and the world hears them.

6We 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.

The false prophets give messages according to what the world wants. What the world wants is the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life, you turn the TV on, and every show will gloat about the pride of life, or lust of the flesh or eyes! The world will not hear the message of God's people, nor God's people should heed to worldly messages! Only God's people will hear our voice, and the world will run away from God's message. This is how we know the difference between the spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of error! Do not take the rejection of worldly people personally. If they rejected the green wood (that is our Lord Jesus), they will do it to dry branches like us too! They reject God's people because they do not have the spirit of error!

2 Timothy 4:3,4.

3For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,

4and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

Conclusion:

Beware of false prophets. Many are roaming around to devour us.

You can know them by their fruits of selfish spirits.

You will spot them through their beliefs about Christ. They may not believe that He is Christ. Nor His divinity as the Son of God! Also, they will deny that He is in flesh.

They will not bear the fruit of the Spirit nor the power of the Holy Spirit!

They will not follow the Word of God. They will be fleshly in their desires!

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