

June 16, 2019

Testing the Spirits

1 John 4:1-6

Pastor Kirk Gambrell

Vol. 9 Num. 24

Using This Study

❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

❷ EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.



This week we start the 4th chapter of 1 John. John has been writing the letter as a response to false teaching. One of the main false teachings seems to be people that deny Jesus. John gives us two important things to understand about the spirits. The first is that the Spirit of God will never deny Jesus. The second is that the Spirit that lives in us, as believers, is greater than any spirit in the world. Often in today's world we don't talk about supernatural spirits. However, the Bible talks about them a great deal. There is no reason for us to think that the spirits are all gone. It just seems that they have little to gain by revealing themselves. Join us this week as we establish how to discern the Spirit of God and how to watch out for false spirits.

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

2 Timothy 1:6-7

1 John 4:1-6 (NASB)

Testing the Spirits

4 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. ²By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; ³and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the *spirit* of the antichrist, of which you

have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. ⁴You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. ⁵They are from the world; therefore they speak *as* from the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

V **EXAMINE His Word (Observation)** (For personal preparation)

What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the foregoing passage.

1. Who is involved in the text? Author, audience, main characters.
2. Where and when is this taking place? Geography and timeline.
3. What actions are carried out or commanded? Look for the verbs.
4. Is there anything repeated?
5. What is emphasized?
6. Is there anything in these passages that is related to other areas of scripture?
7. Are there things to be noted that are alike or unlike such as similes and metaphors?

② **EXPLORE His Word (Interpretation)** (For Community Group discussion)
What does God MEAN?

8. How do we test the spirits to see if they are of God?
9. Are the spirits John is talking about seen, unseen or both?
10. In reference to verse 4, who is in us and who is in the world?
11. Who is the spirit of truth and who is the spirit of error?
12. Who is the spirit of the antichrist? Are there many of these?
13. Why do you think John tells his readers to test the spirits?

③ EMBRACE His Word (Application) (For Community Group discussion)
Why does this MATTER to me?

14. Are there still spirits today that we should be testing?

15. How should we test the spirits today?

16. Why is it important for us to know that the spirit in us is greater? When would this matter?

Summarize your thoughts on the passage

Write about what God wants you to KNOW, to FEEL, and to DO...

Sermon Notes