



9- Know: If It is From God 1 John 4:1-6

1 John 4:1-6 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3 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. 4 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. 5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. 6 We are of God: he 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.

We live in a world filled with illusions, counterfeits, fakes and other deception. The one thing that most of these have in common is that they are based on the distortion of the real or the mimicking of something real.

Most of the times lies have an element of truth that it uses to hide the lie. Remember what Jesus said in *Matthew 24:4-5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. 5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.*

And also what Paul wrote to us in *Ephesians 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.*

Now when we lay this beside verse such as *1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.* As well as the warning Jesus gave us about the lies of this enemy, *John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He*

was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

So it is clear as we string these verses together that we need to be aware that there is a lot of deception and we need to make sure that things we attribute to God indeed are from Him. Remember a lie can be very deceptive.

Now let notice what John has to say to us as we look at, *Know, if it is from God.*

I- Try the Spirits:

1 John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

We are told to not believe every spirit. Remember Jesus told us that many would come in His name that we read in Matthew. There are a lot of times that men claim to be sent from God and by God when in fact they have figured a way or an angle to rook the flock.



The single most important doctrine that we must examine and make sure of some concerning is the doctrine of Christ. **2 John 1:9** *Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.*

So what is this doctrine of Christ? Let me give us a list that is not necessarily exhaustive. First, is the fact that Christ is eternally God. Second, that He was born of a virgin and became a man as well as God. Notice **1 John 4:2** *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3 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.*

There were some that claimed that Jesus did not possess a body of flesh as well as some who claimed that He could not be God because that all flesh is corrupt and God would therefore be sinful.

The doctrine of the manhood of Christ is critically important because by His existence in human flesh there were two things accomplished. First, He kept the law perfect and therefore showed that God was just in demanding that men keep the law. Second, God knew that men were sinful and would not keep the law so by sending Christ to redeem us by His sacrifice He made provision for our failure. If Christ did not come in the flesh and make this sacrifice we do not have hope.

II- Precedence of Prophets Requirement:

In the Old Testament there was a problem with false prophets who claimed to speak for God. The Old Testament is full of these individuals. Some were hired to bring false messages claiming it was from God.

Let's take a quick look at the requirement when a prophet claimed something was from God. **Deuteronomy 13:1ff** *If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, 2 And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; 3 Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams... 5 And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God...*

So the Lord is and has always been serious about deception and those that would deceive.

III- One Greater than the Deceiver in Us:

So how do we keep from being deceived? How do we overcome? May I suggest a key is found in the next verses? The indwelling of the Holy Spirit that is our guide and our ability to hear what He says. Notice **1 John 4:4** *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.*

We should not begin to be presumptuous in thinking that we, by our power, wisdom or any other thing can overcome. It is only by being in Christ, indwelled by the Holy Spirit and enabled by God that we can



overcome. Notice *1 John 5:4-5 ESV For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*

So we need to make sure we are in Christ and that by this we can know when it is of God.

IV- Who You Communicating With?

I ask this in the form of a question to let us see that the next verses makes a clear distinction between the world, meaning the world system that is anti-God and those who know God. Notice *1 John 4:5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. 6 We are of God: he 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.*

Christ made it clear that the world does not hear His message nor recognize His teaching as truth. *John 17:14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*

Jesus taught that He is the door to the sheepfold that protected the sheep and that His sheep hear His voice. Jesus told a

parable and then notice what He said in *John 10:7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. 9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. 10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. 11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. 12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. 13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. 15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.*

So to know something is from God we must first know Christ, be tuned into the Spirit as He leads us and listen for the voice of the master. We also need to lay teaching beside the revealed truth of God's Word to see if it lines up with the truth about Jesus.