

**1 John: The Heart of a Pastor**  
**The Need for Discernment (1 John 3:24 – 4:1-6)**  
**Sunday a.m. 10/29/2017**

- ✚ **I attended a bible study in high school called Reach Out Ranch**
- ✚ Jack and Kay Arthur started a Bible study for teenagers in their home
- ✚ The Bible study grew and the Arthurs purchased a farm in 1970 to accommodate their growing ministry, Reach Out Ranch
- ✚ The name of the ministry was changed from Reach Out to Precept Ministries in 1982
- ✚ Precept material is used in nearly 180 countries and 70 languages
- ✚ **I ate at the Yellow deli back in college**
- ✚ Gene and Marsha Spriggs began an outreach to youth in their home in 1972, The Light Brigade, which led to The Yellow Deli on Brainerd Road in May of 1973
- ✚ Their original motive was “Pass on the love, joy, and peace spoken of in the New Testament.”
- ✚ They attended First Presbyterian Church in downtown Chattanooga, but became discouraged and started Vine Christian Community Church
- ✚ They left Chattanooga in 1978 for Island Pond, Vermont, where they formed The Northeast Kingdom Community Church
- ✚ They are now known as 12 Tribes Community
- ⊗ **Two ministries, two totally different results, both beginning with a desire to reach people for Christ and teach the Word of God**
- ✚ **People were searching for truth, a void in their life**
- ✚ **Could I have ended up in Vermont?**
- ⊗ **How do you identify a false teacher?**

## ■ Do not Believe every Spirit (4:1)

- Look for the Holy Spirit abiding in the person (3:24)

### 1 John 3:24 (NKJV)

Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

**abides** - permanence of relationship between God and the believer

#### ✧ The proof of the abiding Holy Spirit is keeping His commands

- ❖ John said believe in Jesus and love one another (3:23)

#### ✧ Look for the evidence of the Holy Spirit working in an individual

- Do not accept everything you hear (4:1a)

- ❖ Do not give credence to every spirit, do not accept every spirit as true
- ❖ The spirit of antichrist could be there

#### ✧ Beware of “a new teaching” or “a new insight from God”

- Test the spirits (4:1b)

- ❖ Testing is finding the source, the origin, to see if the teacher is of God
- ❖ Jesus said to beware of false prophets, be in a continual state of spiritual alertness (Matthew 7:15)

#### ✧ Do not test doctrine by miracles, test miracles by doctrine

### Jude 1:3 (NKJV)

Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

- ❖ We are to struggle, fight for the faith
- ❖ Jesus said many false prophets will deceive many (Matthew 24:11)

**John Stott** (in testing the spirits)

“It is essential that believers maintain the biblical balance, avoiding on the one hand the extreme, believing everything and on the other hand, the extreme of believing nothing.”

❖ **The Bereans were a great example of testing doctrine**

**Acts 17:11-12 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup> These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. <sup>12</sup> Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men.

✪ **The best way to examine any teaching from anyone is to compare it with Scripture**

**Ray Stedman**

You cannot believe truth without rejecting error. You cannot love righteousness unless you are ready to hate sin. You cannot accept Christ without rejecting self. You cannot follow good unless you are ready to flee from evil. **So, it is not surprising, therefore, that the Scriptures tell us we are not to believe, as well as to believe**

■ **The Evidence of a False Teacher (1 John 4:2-3)**

❖ John tells us how we can recognize the Spirit of God in someone

✪ **They confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh**

**“John's first test of the spirit of a teacher is whether they accept and proclaim the doctrine of the incarnation, God robed in humanity. Fully God and at the same time Fully Man, in a real flesh and blood physical body.”**

✪ **Their confession is not a onetime confession, but a continual confession. But, what does confess mean?**

- ✚ To confess Jesus is to declare agreement with all that Jesus says
- ✚ To confess Jesus implies submitting your life to Him as Lord

✧ **“Merely saying right things about Jesus is no sign of the Holy Spirit's presence”**

**Mark 3:11 (NKJV)**

And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried out, saying, “You are the Son of God.”

**Roy L. Laurin**

“Had there been no incarnation, Christ would have been an apotheosis, a man moving toward God. Christianity would have been only another approach toward God. Christ would have been only a godlike man. But there was an incarnation, God moved toward man. Because of that Christianity is in reality God’s approach to man.”

❖ Paul gave this great defense of the incarnation

**1 Timothy 3:16 (NKJV)**

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

**John 20:30-31 (NKJV)**

<sup>30</sup> And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; <sup>31</sup> but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

■ **The Reason for Victory (1 John 4:4-6)**

• **We have the Spirit of God in us (4)**

❖ We continually overcome, conquer, victorious in the face of obstacles.

✧ **The reason for the victory lies in God, because His Holy spirit abides in us and He is greater than Satan who is in the world**

• **We listen to the right Spirit (5-6)**

❖ The idea of “**listens**” is not simply that they hear the Word, but that they obey the Word

⊗ **People say the sermon was dull, which could be, but it could be that hearers could be dull of hearing**

❖ Either they are not Christians or they are not filled with the spirit

### Close

⊗ **I believe a basic red flag of false teachers “everybody else is wrong and we are right.”**

❖ They have a dislike for the local church and authority

❖ A teacher that teaches without the support of a local church

❖ Which Christ have you put your faith in?

✚ The Christ who was born at Christmas?

✚ The Christ of Easter?

✚ The Christ of history?

✚ The Christ of religion?