

“The Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Error”

(1 John 4:1-6)
March 16, 2017

The outline of this passage will be clearer after we note 6 stark contrasts John draws.

1. Two kinds of **mindsets**
 - a. Gullible (1a)
 - b. Discerning (1b)

2. Two kinds of **Spirits**
 - a. From **God** (1-2) = the Spirit of truth (1, 6) = the Spirit of God (1, 4)
 - b. From antichrist (3) = the spirit of error (6) = the spirit of Satan (4)

3. Two kinds of **prophets**
 - a. False (1, 5)
 - b. True (= apostles, 6)

4. Two kinds of **“Christs”**
 - a. Jesus (2)
 - b. Antichrist (3)

5. Two kinds of **“Worlds”**
 - a. The created world (2, 3)
 - b. The subverted world (4-5)

6. Two kinds of **Tests**
 - a. The **content** of the teaching (1-3) “By this **you** know the Spirit of **God**” (2)
 - b. The **credentials** of the teacher (4-6) “By this **we** know the Spirit of truth” (6)

AMEN Discussion Questions – 1 John 4:1-6

March 16, 2017

1. What is an example you have witnessed, experienced, or heard about of a gullible mindset that believes every “spirit” without questioning or testing? (4:1)

2. How many times does “spirit” or “spirits” occur in these 6 verses, and how many different kinds of spirit or spirits are mentioned? (4:1-6)

3. What is a mouthpiece of a spirit called in verse 1? Where else can you think of in Scripture where the false variety of this mouthpiece is described and what do we learn from those Scriptures?

4. Using a concordance at the back of your Bible or elsewhere in your library, look up other occurrences of the word “antichrist”? (4:3) Is there only one antichrist or are there many?
5. Comparing this passage with John 3:16; John 17:15-18; and 1 John 2:15-16 how do you describe the way John understands the word “world”?
6. Of the two different tests John supplies for recognizing true doctrine versus false (4:1-3 and 4:4-6), which has been more useful in your life and why do you think that is?

GOING DEEPER

1. Are you more prone to flexibility or rigidity in doctrinal matters? For what particular dangers does that inclination set you up?
2. Is there anyone you know whom you fear is succumbing to false teaching about Jesus, such that it threatens his or her salvation? Should you share what you have learned from this chapter with that person or not? Why?