

Sermon: How We Can Recognize God's Spirit

Text: [I John 4:1-6 ESV](#)

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Introduction: It is not always easy to comprehend who has God's Spirit or who may speak for God. [Proverbs 14:12 ESV](#) 12 There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to [of] death.

We all know people who teach correct doctrine generally, but who have fallen morally and ethically, and then can no longer speak for God and be believed. And then we have cults like the Mormons and Jehovah Witnesses who may be right morally and ethically, but speak heresy in their beliefs that Jesus was not God in the flesh - leading people astray.

I. _____ Is Critically Important.

Orthodoxy is the generally accepted doctrine or practice of the Church.

From the beginning the Church believed in the:

A. _____

B. _____ of Jesus Christ as Lord

II. _____ of Knowledge (Epistemology)

So where would it be wise to acquire knowledge unto eternal life?

A. From the _____ (spirit of error)

B. From _____ (Spirit of Truth)

Conclusion: Be careful to whom (Whom) you listen. Just like bad company can corrupt good morals, bad teachers can send you to Hell if their teaching is followed. It bothers me tremendously to see people who are claiming to be followers of Christ or their children who are big fans of immoral pop icons, sports heroes or even false teachers in the media. Not everyone who claims to follow Jesus, does - not even presidents. We need to be careful with our models and who we choose to follow.

Deuteronomy 13:1-5 ESV

1 "If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, 'Let us go after other gods,' which you have not known, 'and let us serve them,' 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. For the Lord your God is testing you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him. 5 But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has taught rebellion against the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of slavery, to make you leave the way in which the Lord your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil[a] from your midst.

Footnote: [a] Deuteronomy 13:5 Or evil person

I John 4:1-6 ESV

Test the Spirits

1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. 4 Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. 5 They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.