

John – Disciple of Jesus at end of ministry & life

- strong words & themes from 'son of thunder'
- addressing a group leaving, false teaching
- loves them, led by Holy Spirit, important message

Themes

Walk in Light not in Darkness

Walk in Love not in Hatred

Walk in Truth not in Lies

Walk in Right living not in Sin

"Now this is his commandment: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he gave us the commandment. And the person who keeps his commandments resides in God, and God in him. Now by this we know that God resides in us: by the Spirit he has given us. Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to determine if they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses Jesus as the Christ who has come in the flesh is from God

"but every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God, and this is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and now is already in the world. You are from God, little children, and have conquered them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world's perspective and the world listens to them. We are from God; the person who knows God listens to us, but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit." 1 John 3:23 - 4:1-6

- 1. Test 'don't just believe...'
 - a) Why we are warned
 - there is truth and lies, light and darkness
 - spiritual forces at work, deceive and destroy
 - we can be led astray
 - b) Word of Caution
 - check your heart & posture
 - cautious or critical
 - love & redemptive vs condemn & destroy
 - seeing people in process

- False Prophet is not someone who
 - misstates, makes an error, correctable
 - disagrees on a secondary issue
 - someone in process so far as I see it
- Some characteristics of False Prophets
 - intentional and unwilling to reconcile
 - compelling others to their point of view away from truth

- 2. Test 1 The Word of God
 - clear that Scripture is inspired and revealed
 - can use it as the standard
 - prophecy from God revealed, tested, true
 - given to us by God, about God & His plan
 - hold what is being taught against the Word
 - is it consistent with clear teaching?
 - is it consistent with clear outcomes?
 - is it adding to or taking away from?

2. Test 2 – Who is Jesus

- several key things to consider
 - Jesus was sent by God, member of trinity
 - Jesus came in the Flesh
 - Jesus was the promised Messiah
 - Jesus raised from the dead, ruling & reigning
 - Jesus returning for His bride
 - Jesus ruling for eternity with us
- those who diminish or displace Jesus & his role, false prophets!

- 3. Test 3 The Holy Spirit
 - a) little children
 - gullible and vulnerable to ideas
 - b) have conquered them
 - no living in fear, you are from God
 - greater is the Spirit of God who is in you
 - know this battle over, living God in you
 - c) worlds wisdom will be in opposition to God's
 - unique perspective, listen to one another

- d) Spirit will bear witness to truth
 - Holy Spirits role
 - illumine & discern
 - direct & empower
 - reveal & equip
 - convict & keep Holy
 - Hearing truth & responding
 - unity with believers

So What

- 1. Test
 - cautious not critical
 - start with my heart & motives 1st
- 2. Be Steeped in the Word
 - living, active, revelation of God to us
 - knowing truth helps you spot the lie
 - spend time

- 3. Clear on Who Jesus Is
 - be ready to give an answer
- know who Jesus is clearly enough to challenge when people suggest otherwise
 - wary of all who challenge the claims of Christ
- 4. You Have the Holy Spirit
 - dispels fear about being led astray
 - greater than all the Spirit of God in You
 - evidence according to 3:24
 - equipping, revealing, empowering