

Daily Devotional, January 30, 2021

“Test the Spirits”, (1 John 4:1-6, NKJV)

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.” (1 John 4:1-6)

Many sincere seekers, and even true believers in Jesus Christ, have been duped and deceived by false teaching that calls itself Christian. We are not to “believe every spirit, but test the spirits.” We test them against the standard of God’s word, the Holy Bible, and nothing else. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). We do not test them against the teachings of any Christian church or denomination. For indeed even today it may be said of many religious systems and institutions, “Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition” (Matthew 15:6). Nor do we “test the spirits” against what seems right to us. “There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death” (Proverbs 14:12).

We learn several principles from today’s Scripture text (1 John 4:1-6). Not everybody who claims to preach spiritual truth can be trusted. Any claim by anyone that Jesus Christ is not both fully God and fully Man is false doctrine. You should listen no further to anyone who is teaching this. The “spirit of Antichrist” is in the world, and it energizes the devil’s children. The devil has his evangelists, and they are promoting the satanic agenda. If you are truly saved, having believed that Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, has come into the world and saved you by His blood, died bodily, and is risen from the dead, then you are an overcomer (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). Who you listen to, and what spiritual authority you have, is proof of your spiritual state. Is Jesus your God, and is the Bible your authority? Examine yourself. “Test the spirits” in you. Whose agenda do you promote with your life and speech? Are you listening to and being contaminated by ungodly charismatic teaching?