

I John Lesson 04

I John Chapter 4

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Memory verses for this week: *John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

Introduction: Last week, in Chapter 3, we found that all who know Christ as Savior are ‘sons of God’. As such, we can not sin because Christ has sealed us with the Holy Spirit. We should strive in this flesh to not sin, but perfection will only come when we receive our glorified bodies when we die. We were commanded to love one another, and prove that God does live within us. This week we are warned to not believe every spirit.

I. Believe Not Every Spirit, but Try the Spirits

1 John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

The reason we are to not believe every spirit that comes along is because the spirit of anti-Christ already exists, and there are many false prophets that have gone out into the world. A couple of weeks ago, we talked about those who are anti-Christ. They are those who deny Christ’s virgin birth, deny His deity, find fault in scripture, do not believe the bible is the true Word of God. These may say that they believe God, but if their actions are not backing up their words, we need to see them for who they are. False spirits that will mislead us. These are they who have the spirit of anti-Christ and don’t truly believe God. We know to please God, we must have faith in Him.

Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Rev 2:2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

We see from this verse in Revelation that it is possible to spot those who are false. How do we do it? Check to see if they believe God and the Word of God. Check what they are teaching. Is it consistent with scripture all the way through?

1 Th 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

1 Th 5:22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

1 John 4:2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

1 John 4:3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

Those that have the spirit of God confess that Jesus has come in the flesh. Not only has he come, but he has died, risen from the dead, and is part of the trinity, the three part Godhead. To confess Jesus is come in the flesh implies some additional things.

1. Jesus was born of a virgin according to the scriptures

Isa 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Luke 1:26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

Luke 1:27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

Luke 1:28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

Luke 1:29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

Luke 1:30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

Luke 1:31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

Luke 1:32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

Luke 1:33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Luke 1:34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

Luke 1:36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

Luke 1:37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.

2. To believe Jesus came in the flesh means that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. The only begotten Son of God. Not just a son of God as many claim.

3. Also, it implies That Jesus was in eternity with God before the world was.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

John 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John 1:4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

John 1:5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

John 1:6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

John 1:7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

John 1:8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

John 1:9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

John 1:10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

John 1:11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

John 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

John 1:13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

4. Also, it implies that Jesus led the perfect life and was without sin. No other can claim this.

5. And finally, to believe Christ came in the flesh means that they believe Jesus was crucified, buried, and rose the third day from the grave. And that today, He sits on the right hand of God ever making intercession for us who are saved.

The person who refuses to confess that Jesus came in the flesh is anti-Christ. And if they were already present in John's day, think how many more there are now that the end of times has come.

1 John 4:4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

Why have we over come the anti-Christ? Only because of Jesus Christ. We are over comers because Christ has overcome sin. Verse 4 says that greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. We become the temples of the Holy Spirit once we are saved, and nothing is greater

than God. Satan can not overcome our soul once we have experienced true salvation. Believers have the Spirit in them.

John 7:37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

John 7:38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

John 7:39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

1 Cor 6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

1 Cor 6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

II. Marks of the False Teachers

1 John 4:5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

1 John 4:6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

Are we of the world? Or do we speak of heavenly things? Our hearts and desires should be set on the things above, not the things of earth. The false teachers are of the world, and the world hears them. Those saved will not be found in the congregation of the anti-Christ. The world has nothing to offer for the soul of man. Only God can save our souls. Those who are against God are called the 'spirit of error.' The child of God will hear those who teach and preach the truth. Those who are born of God are of the truth.

In Luke, we find that every tree is known by his own fruits. This is true of the spirit that directs us. Are we following the true Holy Spirit, or are we following a false spirit of anti-Christ?

Luke 6:44 For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

Luke 6:45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

Albert Barne's had a good comment about us knowing the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

He that knoweth God, heareth us—Every one that has a true acquaintance with the character of God will receive our doctrine. John might assume this, for it was not doubted, he presumed, that he was an apostle and a good man; and if this were admitted, it would follow

that those who feared and loved God would receive what he taught.

Hereby—By this; to wit, by the manner in which they receive the doctrines which we have taught.

Know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error—We can distinguish those who embrace the truth from those who do not. Whatever pretensions they might set up for piety, it was clear that if they did not embrace the doctrines taught by the true apostles of God, they could not be regarded as his friends; that is, as true Christians. It may be added that the same test is applicable now. They who do not receive the plain doctrines laid down in the word of God, whatever pretensions they may make to piety, or whatever zeal they may evince in the cause which they have espoused, can have no well-founded claims to the name Christian. One of the clearest evidences of true piety is a readiness to receive all that God has taught.

III. The Love of God

1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

1 John 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

Love is a fruit of the spirit. When we are known for our love, we will exhibit love for one another as Christian brothers and sisters.

Eph 5:9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

Eph 5:10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Gal 5:23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Gal 5:24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

Gal 5:25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

1 John 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

1 John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

When you talk about love, there is no greater love shown than what God did for us on Calvary. To give up your only begotten Son to die for your enemies is hard for us to comprehend. Propitiation speaks of making payment. It is a substitution for our sins. Jesus, who knew no sin, became sin for us that we might be set free.

Rom 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Rom 5:9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from

wrath through him.

Rom 5:10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

Rom 5:11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

These verses in Romans show that we he showed love towards us when we were unworthy and unholy. You can't really count the cost this sacrifice was. It involved an infinite cost and sacrifice that secured our forgiveness of sin. When it comes to love, the truth is that God is love. But the worldly love that we know is not of God. There are many kinds of love, and God's love to us is the greatest and best of all kinds. Just because we show kindness or benevolence to others is not a guarantee that we are children of God. However, when we associate that love with faith and devotion toward Christ, then it is a proof of our 'eternal life.' When we have true love, love that is from God, we will gain confidence toward God and show charity to men.

1 John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

1 John 4:12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

1 John 4:13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

1 John 4:14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

We are truly commanded in several scriptures to love one another. He says in verse 11 that we should love one another.

John 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

John 13:35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

And when we do, God's love is perfected in us. Remember what it says about perfect love over in Romans?

Rom 13:8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

Rom 13:9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Rom 13:10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Perhaps the best verse about 'perfect love' is here in verse 18 of our text. Let's read from verse

15 through 18.

1 John 4:15 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

1 John 4:16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

1 John 4:17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

1 John 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

We see from verse 15 that when we confess Christ as our Savior, God dwells in us. And God makes our love perfect. Verse 18 says that perfect love casteth out fear. Why do we fear? It is because we are not in perfect fellowship with God. When we confess our sins and live with a pure conscience to God, there is no fear. God removes that fear. We are at peace with ourselves and others, because we are at peace with God. The verse says fear hath torment. Sin creates fear. We have either fear of God for having to answer for it, or fear of man that they might find out. God knows all about us, and we need to stay as pure and perfect before God as we possibly can. Satan wants us to live in fear. God wants us to live in perfect peace.

1 John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.

Many think they will come to God in their time. Several years ago, I was visiting in the church where my wife Denise grew up as a child. The older pastor there (who married us nearly 31 years ago) had been working with a family trying to get them into church for years. The man said “Well as soon as I get all straightened out, I’m going to be there at your church.” The preacher said “Brother you are right. If you wait until you get your life straightened out before you come, you will be laying there straightened out in the casket when we preach your funeral.”

I never heard anyone put it quite like that, but it is true. We can’t wait until “WE” get life straightened out. Satan will use that to lure us into hell. What we must do is realize God loved us first, and he calls and draws us to Him. And only Christ can straighten out a life of sin. If you’ve never asked Jesus to save you, I urge you to lower your head and pray and ask God to forgive you of your sins and to save your soul. When you realize you can’t do it on your own, that is when God can save your soul.

1 John 4:20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

1 John 4:21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

Love for God and love for our fellow man is inseparable. It says clearly in verse 20 that if we hate our brother, the love of God is not in us. If we can’t love those we see, how can we possibly love one that we have not seen? When Jesus was asked about the great commandment, he said we were to love God first above all things, and then to love our neighbor as ourselves. On these 2 commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Figure out what commandments or law you

will break if God is truly first in your life and you treat others like you want to be treated.
NONE.

Mat 22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

Mat 22:38 This is the first and great commandment.

Mat 22:39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Mat 22:40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Our love for God should be greater than the love for anyone or anything. The love we have for God when it is perfected will cause us to do more good than all the laws that could ever have been written. Love for God will cause us to be faithful in church and Sunday School. Love will make us give our tithes and offerings with a pure heart and out of generosity. Herein is love perfected, that we love one another with love like the love God bestows to us.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.