

Fundamentals of Faith. - Put it to the Test

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

4 You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 5 They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood. 1 John 4:1-6

Without something to compare it to, the teachings that come from the world can look and sound like the teachings that come from God.

“Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’” Genesis 3:1

“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. Genesis 3:4

“For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” Genesis 3:5

When it comes to sin, it is not a lack of information that causes us to sin, it's disregard for what we do know.

each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. James 1:14

When our desires are not directed by God, they rarely have our best intentions in mind.

God's truth mixed with Satan's error is far easier to swallow than outright lies.

And no wonder, Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. 15 It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve. 2 Corinthians 11:14-15

15 “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. 16 By their fruit you will recognize them. Do

people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. Matthew 7:15-16

Does what I believe motivate me for greater levels of self-expression or greater levels of self-denial?

16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

The Spirit that is of God will live a life that is obedient to the Word of God and lifts Christ's will above our own.

The Spirit that is of the world will tell us that we can make compromises with God's word and live out the life that we choose for ourselves.