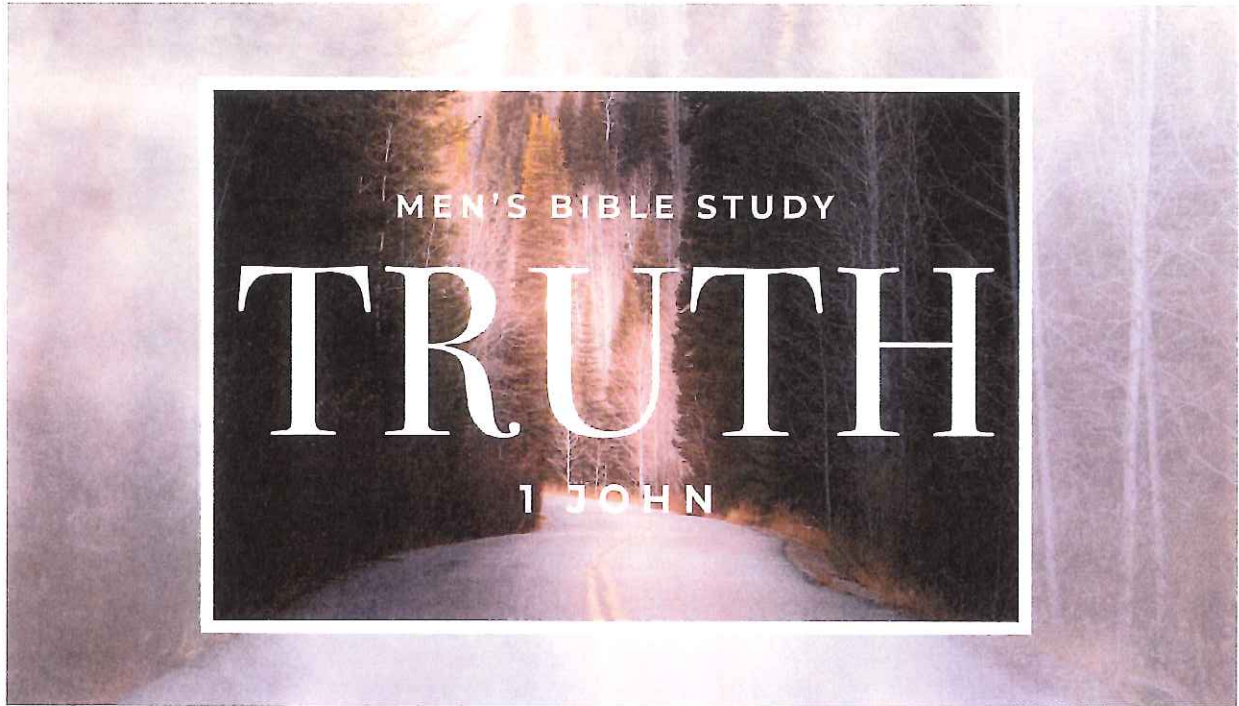


+eastridge church



SESSION SIX:

TESTING THE SPIRITS

1 John 4:1-6

SESSION SIX TEACHING NOTES

Scripture Memory: 1 John 1:1- (NIV)

1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched – this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. **2** The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. **3** We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. **4** We write this to make our joy complete. **5** This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. **6** If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. **7** But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

This Week's Study Passage: 1 John 4:1-6

1 John 4:1 – 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.

- As believers, we need to _____ knowing that we hold a priceless treasure.
- As believers, we have a mandate to take an _____ in what we _____ and what we are _____.

Our Mandate:

- We should _____.
- Listen with _____.
- Grow with the goal of _____ to others.

TESTING THE SPIRITS

1 John 4:2-3 –*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, ³but 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.*

HERESY OF JOHN'S DAY

- Docetism: The doctrine that Jesus did not have a fleshly body, but only a spiritual body that appeared as human.
- Gnosticism: The doctrine that everything physical is evil (or incomplete or flawed), and the spiritual is all that really matters.

1. The Test:

- Jesus was _____.
- Jesus is _____.
- Salvation comes only _____.
- His _____ is true and central to the life of every believer.

2. The Significance:

- This test is not _____.
- All _____ points to Jesus.
- All of _____ points back to Jesus.

3. The Follow-up Test:

- You must also test _____!
- How do _____ acknowledge Jesus?
- How does _____ demonstrate the gospel of grace?

OUR VICTORY IN JESUS

1 John 4:4-6 –⁴You, 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. ⁵They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶We 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^[a] of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

- **When we live with God as the source of our strength, we have**
_____.
- **There are two viewpoints at work: “God” and “The World”**
 - These viewpoints are _____ to each other.
 - God is not _____ to the world (John 3:16-17).
- **When we _____ with the world, we speak in the spirit of**
_____.
- **When we speak _____, we join in unison with the Spirit of**
_____.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

1. Know the _____.
2. Be a _____.
3. Be active in the _____.
4. Speak truth in _____.

SESSION SIX GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

QUICK OVERVIEW

John commands all believers to take an active role in what they are taught, testing everything against the truth of Jesus and the Good News of his life, death, and resurrection. He gives encouragement to all believers, that he who lives in us is greater than he who is in the world, and while the world may not listen to or agree with our message, in the end, truth will win out.

DIGGING DEEPER

John had to deal with Gnosticism in his day, the false doctrine that the physical was inherently flawed and did not matter. This led to widespread debauchery and people committing terrible sin, claiming that it did not matter because it only happened in the physical realm.

What are some of the false doctrines and ideas that we need to watch out for today?

Just before this passage (1 John 3:23-24) and just after (1 John 4:7-12) John emphasizes the importance of showing love to others.

How and why is love an important in dealing with false teachers?

1 John 4:5 says that whoever is not from God does not listen to us.

What do you suppose this verse means in literal application? How can Christians proclaim the gospel if non-believers do not listen to them?

REFLECT AND DISCUSS

- How do you usually respond when you hear someone teaching false doctrine? How *should* you respond?
- Why is acknowledging Jesus coming in the flesh an effective test of a spirit or teacher? Couldn't they just lie or fake it?
- How would you define the "spirit of the antichrist" (1 John 4:3)? Where is it found?
- How is the "world" mentioned in 1 John 4:5 different from the people in the world?
- What technique(s) have you found effective in getting non-believers to listen to the message of the gospel?

