

Discerning True from False

Testing the Spirits · Spirits & Demons

Not every spiritual manifestation is from God. Jesus warned of false prophets in sheep's clothing and taught that we know them by their fruits. John commands testing the spirits: 'Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 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.' The test is Christological—does the teaching honor Christ's person and work? Additionally, fruit of the Spirit versus works of the flesh distinguishes divine from demonic. Sound doctrine and godly character together mark the Spirit's work.

Key Verses

1 John 4:1-3

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 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.

Matthew 7:15-16

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.

Matthew 7:20

Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

1 Corinthians 12:3

Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

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