



**LESSON 4: 1 JOHN 4**

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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,  
<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world,  
and the world listens to them.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> Dear friends,  
let us love one another,  
for love comes from God.  
Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.



# 1 2 3 JOHN

## BIBLE STUDY

<sup>8</sup> Whoever does not love does not know God,  
because God is love.

<sup>9</sup> This is how God showed his love among us:  
He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

<sup>10</sup> This is love:  
not that we loved God,  
but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

<sup>11</sup> Dear friends,  
since God so loved us,  
we also ought to love one another.

<sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God;  
but if we love one another,  
God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

<sup>13</sup> This is how we know that we live in him and he in us:  
He has given us of his Spirit.

<sup>14</sup> And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

<sup>15</sup> If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God,  
God lives in them and they in God.

<sup>16</sup> And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.  
God is love.

Whoever lives in love lives in God,  
and God in them.

<sup>17</sup> This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment:  
In this world we are like Jesus.



# 1 2 3 JOHN

## BIBLE STUDY

<sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love.

But perfect love drives out fear,

because fear has to do with punishment.

The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

<sup>19</sup> We love because he first loved us.

<sup>20</sup> Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar.

For whoever does not love their brother and sister,

whom they have seen,

cannot love God,

whom they have not seen.

<sup>21</sup> And he has given us this command:

Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.



### LOOK at the Text

#### 1) 5 W's & H (Who, What, Where, When, Why, How)

- **Who** are the main characters in this passage? List everything we learn about the individuals or groups.
  - God the Father
  - Jesus Christ
  - The spirits
  - The Spirit
  - You (the recipients)
  - We / Us (believers)

In this chapter, John continues to challenge the believers to evaluate themselves on the basis of the three tests described in Lessons 2 and 3 (moral test / doctrinal test / love test)

More of these themes of testing and proof are in 1 John 4.

- **What** is the proof...
  - That a spirit (or a person) is from God?
  - That a spirit (or a person) is not from God?
  - That we live in him and he lives in us?
- **What** are the commands in this text?
- **What** words are repeated throughout these verses? When anyone repeats words or phrases they generally want you to pay attention to these ideas!
- **Where** did the false prophets go?
  - What does this mean?
- **When** will the Spirit of the antichrist enter the world?
- **When** does John want us to have confidence?
- **Why** does John tell us to test the spirits?
- **Why** does the world listen to false prophets?
- **Why** does John want us to love one another? There are MANY reasons in this text. List as many as you can find.
- **How** do we know that God loves us?
  - Based on this truth, what should we do if we don't feel God's love? Or if we feel weighed down by guilt or if we feel unlovable?
- **How** is love made complete among us?

#### Pulling this all together, then...

- **What** are the main ideas recorded in this chapter? How would you summarize each section?
  - 1 John 4:1-6
  - 1 John 4:7-21



### 2) LEARN from God's Word

**Whole Bible Connections** - Look up the following verses from other parts of scripture and note how they relate to 1 John 4. What do they affirm about what John is saying in this chapter?

- Sometimes people's hunger for the supernatural, and their desire to "experience" spiritual things causes them to simply accept any experience or prophetic word as something which comes from God. In our text today, John warns against this, and in fact, the whole Biblical message raises warning signs to this effect.

Read the following passages and record what different parts of scripture says about how we should respond to the 'spirits':

- The first 5 books of the Bible - **Deuteronomy 13:1-5**
- Near the end of the Old Testament - **Jeremiah 23:8-17**
- Early New Testament writings - **1 Thessalonians 5:12-22**
- The Final New Testament book - **Revelation 2:1-7**
  - How would you summarize the scriptural teaching on evaluating the 'spirits'? How can you test the truthfulness of prophetic words or experiences?
- 1 John 4:12 reads, "No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us." This verse suggests that if we love one another, we show people what God is like! People have never seen God, but they can see God in us and catch a glimpse of his glory and grace if we love one another well. Wow. Scripture gives us different pictures of what it looks like to love one another well. Read the verses below and note what they teach.
  - John 13:34-35
  - Romans 12:9-16
  - 2 Corinthians 13:11
  - Galatians 5:13-26; 6:1-3
  - 1 Peter 1:22-25

### 3) LIVE in light of the Text

- What is God saying to us in this passage about His purpose for our lives?
- How do the main ideas in this passage strengthen or challenge me to repent and change?
  - My Head - thoughts; beliefs; frameworks
  - My Heart - desires; emotions
  - My Hands - behaviours; deeds
- How should these main ideas influence and change my prayers?
  - Adoration - What can I praise and thank God for?
  - Confession - What do I need to repent of?
  - Supplication - What will I ask God for?