

The Essentials of Our Faith – Studies In I John #15

Influences To Seek or Avoid

I John 4:1-6

I. The Need to Think Through Influences VS1

- A.** Not everything is to be believed
- B.** Gullible
- C.** Spirit – generic
 - Wind
 - Influence
- D.** Test
 - Think, examine closely
 - Romans 12:2
 - I Thessalonians 2:4
 - What you hear from all sources, examine – don't just accept
- E.** Because not every "wind" is from God
- F.** Fake prophets
- G.** Be mentally wide awake
 - Where do these influences come from
 - What is the criteria

II. Criteria #1 – What They Say About Jesus VS 2-3

- A.** The Spirit of God always glorifies the Son of God
 - John 15:26
 - John 16:13-15
 - I Corinthians 12:1-3
- B.** What does the "spirit" say about Jesus Christ
 - The man, Jesus, is the divine Word of God
 - Jesus, was fully divine and fully human
 - Jesus is the sole source of eternal life since he alone reveals the Father to us and atones for our sins
- C.** No other options
- D.** Confession – to embrace – a personal response
- E.** Other confession:
 - Spirit of anti-Christ
 - The world

III. Criteria #2: What The World Thinks About Them VS 4-6

- A.** Who listens to this idea, teaching or influence
- B.** The world – anti-Christ
- C.** Believers – Spirit of God
- D.** Don't be intimidated
- E.** You have greater power in you

IV. Application

- A.** The idea of understanding the culture you are in vis a vis the gospel
 - In the first century – philosophical and ethical
 - In 2018 – moral (no absolutes) and theological (God is good for me – resource)
- B.** The church is called to be the custodian of the truth – so what is being taught week by week?
- C.** How do I cultivate a discerning spirit without becoming cynical?
 - So, I become unteachable
 - Discernment is a group process
- D.** The centrality of Christology
- E.** Be aware of false prophets
 - Subtle
 - Examine, think, investigate
- F.** Trust your leaders
 - Ask
 - Pray for
 - Follow