

# The First Epistle of John

## (Week 40 – 1John 4:1-6 part2)

### I. One-Page Mid-book Exam

- A. Hand out exam and give about 5 to 10 minutes for the disciples to do the test
- B. Go over the answers

### II. Review

#### A. John's encouragement to the Church is to preserve God's truths:

- 1. 1John 4:1 (ESV), "*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.*"
  - a. In context:
    - i. The Gnostics:
      - 1. They denied Jesus was the Christ (1John 2:22a)
      - 2. They denied the Father and the Son (1John 22b)
      - 3. They did not believe Jesus came in the flesh
      - 4. For this reason, John goes on to say...
        - 1John 4:2-3 (ESV), "*By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, <sup>3</sup>and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.*"
      - 5. To deny that Jesus came in the flesh is to deny the Christian faith that says He was made human in order to destroy the works of the devil, to become a mercy and faithful high priest and to make propitiation for sins (Hebrews 2:14-17)
    - b. In principle:
    - c. A disciple must learn to discern spiritual truths
      - i. Do this by storing the word of God in your heart (Psalm 119:11, 98, 99)

### III. Spiritual Discernment (part 2)

- A. 1John 4:3, "*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.*"
  - 1. John reveals who the antichrist is:
    - a. It is the Gnostics of his day
    - b. It is interesting to note that John does not say the antichrist was an individual, but rather, it was anyone who taught false doctrines.
  - 2. Yet, today, many believe the antichrist is yet to come – some world leader, but John said the antichrist is already in the world.

3. What is the modern view of the antichrist:
    - a. He is a singular world leader who will bring destruction to Christianity, forcing Christ to “rapture” His Church from the Earth.
      - i. They get this idea from Revelation, but it is interesting to note that the book of Revelation never uses the term “antichrist.”
    - b. As for his origin:
      - i. Some say he will be of Jewish origin, claiming to be Messiah
      - ii. Others say he will be of Arab-decent.
    - c. Some past candidates were:
      - i. Presidents Ronald Reagan; George W. Bush
      - ii. Sinister leaders such as Hitler and Saddam Hussein
    - d. The latest speculation are:
      - i. President Barack Obama
      - ii. Pope Benedict XVI
  4. Who is the antichrist? Is “he” in the world today?
    - a. Definition:
      - i. Anti = Against
      - ii. Christ = The Anointed; The Messiah; the One sent from the Father: The God-man, Jesus
    - b. Anyone who opposes Jesus Christ is the antichrist:
      - i. Jesus said in Matthew 12:30 (ESV), “*Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.*”
        1. It is the person who denies Jesus rose from the dead
        2. It is the person who speaks against Christianity
        3. It is the atheist and the agnostic
        4. It is the sweet, elderly lady who openly teaches the neighborhood kids that Jesus was a myth
- B. 1John 4:4, “*Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*”
1. These true disciples have been born again through the gospel:
    - a. By the hearing of the truth, they have come to believe that:
      - i. Jesus is the Christ
      - ii. Jesus came in the flesh
      - iii. Jesus’ blood brings propitiation, expiation and atonement, and not some secret knowledge!
    - b. By their acceptance of these basic truths, they were not overpowered by these false teachers.
  2. These seducers could not win over those who believed the gospel of Christ!
  3. As a result, these Gnostic followers went out from the fold, unable to influence Christ’s faithful disciples!
  4. The indwelling of God and the truth that comes from His word, the Holy Bible, has a greater influence than Satan’s deceptive teachers!