

1 John 4: 1-21

Introduction.

- A. John attacking in both directions.
 - 1. Against Docetism (2).
 - 2. Against Cerinthianism (15).
- B. Definitions.
 - 1. Ortho = equals right or correct.
 - 2. Hetero = other.
 - 3. Doxa = opinion.
- C. Two tests for orthodox Christianity.
 - 1. The incarnation of Christ.
 - 2. The deity of Christ.
- D. Test the spirits (vs. 1).
 - 1. Not to be gullible.
 - 2. There are many false prophets.
 - 3. Who are the “spirits?”

I. The first test -- the incarnation (1-14).

- A. Jesus became true man (2-3).
 - 1. Those who confess the incarnation are from God.
 - 2. Those who deny the incarnation are not from God.
- B. The spirit of Anti-Christ.
 - 1. The Anti-Christ is coming.
 - 2. His spirit is already in the world (see 2:18).
 - 3. Notable passages: Ep. 6:12; 2 Co. 10:4; Mt. 16:18.
- C. The overcomers (4-6).
 - 1. Have confessed Christ (implied).
 - 2. Have God's power.
 - 3. Overcome the world (cf. He. 4:15).
 - 4. The contrast with the world.
- D. If we truly believe, we love other believers (7-14).
 - 1. Love = action (giving).
 - 2. Based on God's love for us.
 - 3. God lives in us.
 - a. Testimony of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Testimony of the apostles.

II. The second test -- the deity of Christ (15-21).

A. Confess that Jesus is truly God (Son of God = God).

B. Mutual indwelling.

C. Results.

1. Confidence before God.

a. Knowledge.

b. Reliance.

c. Fearlessness.

2. Loving fellow Christians.