

August 24 & 27, 2023

LOVE IS THE BRAND

Love is the Brand - Week #4 Final Exam: The Truth Test (Testing the Spirits)

Recap:

Test of the Hands:

1 John 2:3-4 (NIV)

We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. ⁴ Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person.

Test of the Heart:

1 John 4:20 (NIV)

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.

Test of the Head:

1 John 3:18 (NIV)

Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

1 John 3:24 (NIV)

The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

1 John 4:1-6 (NIV)

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. ² 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, 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. ⁴ 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. ⁵ They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶ 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.

Learning to Test the Spirits:

1. The contradiction test:

- Truth will never contradict scripture!
- "Listen to your heart."

Jeremiah 17:9 (NIV)

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

- "Find your truth."

John 14:6 (NIV)

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

- Remember God is our authority, not our consultant!

2. The fruit test:

Matthew 7:16 (NIV)

By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?

- If there is no fruit in our lives, it is doubtful if there is truth from our lips!
- Truth exalts Christ, not self.
- Everything spiritual isn't from God.
- A lie will often feed our desire for pleasure, possession, or pride!

3. The conviction test:

- Does it bring confirmation or conviction?
- Winning the mind game means learning to take advantage of our most valuable resource!

1 John 3:24 (NIV)

The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

John 16:13-14 (NIV)

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.

John 14:26 (NIV)

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

- To recognize the voice of God we have to spend time in the Word of God.

4. The community test:

- We are guided by the people of God.

Proverbs 12:15 (NIV)

The way of fools seems right to them, but the wise listen to advice.

2 Timothy 4:3 (NIV)

For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.