**Title: Testing the Spirits**

**Text: 1 John 4:1-6**

**CONNECT: July 27, 2025**

**Connect to One Another:**

* During this week’s Mission Moment take time to lift up all of our Missionaries and their families (see if your class can name them all) and then pray for those needs in your Connect group.
* Why is it imperative that we have assurance of salvation as John keeps reminding us? What does having confidence in being a child of God do for you each day?

**Connect to the WORD:** **Read 4:1-6**

In our day, where do false claims and distortions of the truth come from? How are we at risk through social media, internet, books, and even conversations and pulpits?

**I. The Call to Discern (v. 1)** John starts with a firm command: “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” (v. 1). What are some Biblical examples of this both O.T & N.T.?

* Pastor Don shared this statement, “False teachings aren’t harmless—they’re like poison mislabeled as medicine.” Discuss the truth of this statement.
* How are we to “test the spirits?” What did the Berean’s do, even with Paul, in Acts 17:10-12? With what do we test all claims concerning Christ and the gospel?

**II. The Standards for Discernment (vv. 2–4)** Don gave three standards by which to discern the validity of a message, claim, or teacher. Discuss each and how you might apply them.

1. **Affirmation of Christ (vv. 2-3).** The key test is what a teaching says about Jesus. If a teaching redefines Jesus, it fails. Why is the true nature and work of Jesus so important to guard and protect?
2. **Signs of Spiritual Transformation (vv. 4-5).** Look at a teacher’s life: Do they show the Spirit’s work—love for God, repentance, bold interaction with the world, a commitment to Christ? Why must the messenger match the message?
3. **Commitment to God’s Word (v. 6).** Do they submit to its authority, or twist it to fit their ideas? True teachers root their message in Scripture, letting it shape beliefs and actions. How sufficient are the Scriptures? Why must the Word of God be preeminent to every message?

**III. The Blessed Assurance in Christ (v. 6b)**
We’re not alone—the Holy Spirit, stronger than any deceptive influence, lives in us (vs. 4). Do you believe verse 4? How does this identity protect us from being swept away by falsehood? What is it that the Holy Spirit will reveal to you?

**CONNECT to Walk It Out:**

* **A prayer for the week**: Father, thank You for Your Word and Spirit, guiding us into truth. We live in a deceptive world, help us discern teachings with wisdom and humility, clinging to Jesus Christ’s truth. Empower us by Your Spirit to recognize truth, live transformed lives, and share the gospel boldly. Make us a community that guards Your truth for Your glory and others’ good. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

**Meditate on these verses this week:**

**1 John 4:1-6**