

“The Test of Fellowship”

1 John 4:1-6

Introduction

Duck hunters use decoys that look, quack, move, and act like ducks. The ducks think they are ducks, and the real ducks become the dead ducks because they can't tell what's real. The world, like the duck hunter, has many wandering decoys. These decoys are false prophets who speak in God's name but are not speaking truthfully. They deceive Christians and sometimes lead us in the wrong direction, separating us from intimate fellowship with Jesus Christ. As believers, we must view the world and its decoys through a spiritual lens, ever discerning truth from error based on God's Word. When we become intentional about distinguishing between truth and error based on the Word of God, we learn about Christ and maintain fellowship with God.

Scripture reveals that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the second member of the Holy Trinity. He is the Anointed One sent from heaven to earth as the physical representation of God the Father. Jesus became flesh in human form to bring salvation to the entire world. He is uniquely the God-man, fully divine as the Son of God and fully human as the Son of Man. Our confession must align with the teaching of God's Word and the truth of Jesus as God, who is our divine Savior. All other claims about Christ are forms of confusion and deception to steer us away from God and break our fellowship with Him.

We can receive spiritual guidance from God to test worldly perspectives and know the truth from error in multiple ways. The Bible teaches and confirms truth. The indwelling Holy Spirit leads us to discern what is spiritually legitimate and accurate to the Word of God. When the world offers perspectives to the believer that distort the truth of who Jesus is, we must reject them and only believe what God says about Jesus; He is the risen Savior and our Redeemer. Remaining in fellowship with God helps us overrule the world's confusing and deceiving ideas about Christ. We can praise God daily for empowering us to know the truth about Jesus Christ and the salvation He offers the world!

Getting Started

1. What are some non-Christian beliefs about Jesus? Share an example of how the world promotes these false beliefs.
2. Why do you think some people may become more easily deceived and led to believe false beliefs about Jesus?

Let's Get Personal

1. How has walking outside of fellowship with God impacted your ability to distinguish truth from error?

2. When has the world deceived you or someone you know? Give an example of when you or someone you know believed something about God, Jesus Christ, or the Holy Spirit as true when it was false. How was the truth revealed?

Take the Next Step

1. What changes should you make to help you maintain a close relationship and intimate fellowship with God?
2. Are you open to being held accountable to God's standard for your daily living? Who already holds you accountable? If you don't have anyone, how will you pursue accountability this week?
3. Are you praying about your relationship with God? If not, pray to God individually and with others who can support you with this.
4. Want to go deeper? Take time to look at the following passages: Matthew 7:15-20; Matthew 12:33-37; John 14:25-26; John 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 1 Timothy 4:1-4; John 1:1; John 1:14; John 1:18; Hebrews 5:11-14; Colossians 1:15-19; Philippians 2:6-11; Matthew 10:32-33; 1 Timothy 2:5; 2 Peter 1:16-21; John 8:19; Ephesians 1:10-11; Isaiah 9:6

Renew Your Mind

"Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits..."

Matthew 7:15-16
