

A Warning for the Last Days

John warns and instructs us in 1 John 4:1-6, "Beloved, 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. This is how you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and is already in the world. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are of the world, and therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. We are of God, and whoever knows God listens to us. Whoever is not of God does not listen to us. This is how we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error."

To protect ourselves in these last days we are to test the spirits. The enemy's messengers will come especially to those whom they have witnessed do not judge what appears to them, for these people are easy prey for the enemy to devour.

We are not to be gullible, but responsible and try the spirits. Paul warns us in 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, "For such are false apostles and deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also disguise themselves as ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works." He is warning us that there are false prophets and false teachers and that their numbers are increasing in these last days, but they will appear to us to be of Christ. So just because we see or hear something amazing, does not mean it is of God.

Peter also warns us in 2 Peter 2:1-3, "But there were also

false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed they will exploit you with deceptive words. Their judgment, made long ago, does not linger, and their destruction does not slumber.”

As I meditate upon these warnings, I think of a time I was taking a nature walk and enjoying the beauty of the rain forest. I bent down to pick up an old rusty bucket that was in the weeds. As I reached out to grab the bucket, I realized that I was right on top of a venomous snake in the grass. It held its head and upper body so still that it blended in perfectly with the tall surrounding grass. I didn't recognize it until I was very close to it and looked it in the eye. But as soon as it knew I had seen it, it dropped and slithered quickly away, deeper into the thicket of the woods.

Right after my encounter with this snake, our son, Joaquin, was down by the pond and he cried out, “Mom, there is a big snake!” The snake he saw was different from the one I just saw. Then later that morning our son, Andres, was walking down the path and he saw a snake, and it was a different species. Then the next day my husband, David, was working outside and he too came across a snake. We all came across snakes within a two-day span of time, each one a different species, but still they were snakes and we did not spot them until we were right on top of them.

Beware, for there are highly venomous spiritual snakes camouflaged within the body of Christ today. As we draw close to the end of this age, their numbers will increase and their poison will become deadlier than before.

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