

'In Enemy Occupied Territory'

1 John 4:1-6

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Ephesians 2:1-10 “And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, ³ among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. ⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, ⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

- It's clear that we once walked according to the course of this world. Since we are now seated in the heavenly places with Christ, this world is no longer our home.
- We are living in enemy occupied territory!

“Enemy-occupied territory---that is what this world is. Christianity is the story of how the rightful king has landed, you might say landed in disguise, and is calling us to take part in a great campaign of sabotage.”

— C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

So, Beware!

1 John 4:1-3 “¹ Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because **many false prophets have gone out into the world.** ² By this you know the Spirit of God: **Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,** ³ and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.”

- *Problem* – Believers as well as unbelievers are susceptible to deceit.
 - *Many false prophets and brethren exist*

- *False Prophet* – acting the part of a divinely inspired prophet
 - **Matthew 13:24-30** ²⁴ The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while men slept, **his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.** ²⁶ But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, **then the tares also appeared.** ²⁷ So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' ²⁸ He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' ²⁹ But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."'
 - **2 Corinthians 11:13-15** ¹³ For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. ¹⁵ **Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness,** whose end will be according to their works."
- *How can we tell them apart?*
 - John gives us a way to tell.
 - Every spirit that claims Jesus Christ came '*in the flesh*' is of God.
 - Every spirit that denies Jesus Christ came '*in the flesh*' is NOT of God.
 - They make Jesus less than God.
 - The Gnostics believed that everything material was evil and that God could not have created the material universe.
 - They didn't believe God came in the flesh because they believed all material was evil.
 - They also believed it didn't really matter what you did in the flesh.
- *What the false brethren were teaching.*
 - **Acts 15:1** "...certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "**Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.**"
 - They were teaching salvation by works.

- *What's their goal?*
 - **Acts 20:29-30** ^{“29} For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, **to draw away the disciples after themselves.**”
 - To gain a following of people
 - To lead people away from Jesus

- *Solution*

- **Believe not every spirit**
 - There have been, there are, and there will be those that appear to be genuine believers that are not.
 - They SEEM to teach what is true, but there will always be some pull to follow them away from the church.
 - They will always undermine the church leadership.
 - They will always have some scriptures that they spout about not having to go to church to be a Christian.

“Once, when a stubborn disputer seemed unconvinced, Lincoln said, “Well, let’s see how many legs has a cow?” “Four, of course,” came the reply disgustedly. “That’s right,” agreed Lincoln. “Now suppose you call the cow’s tail a leg; how many legs would the cow have?” “Why, five, of course,” was the confident reply. “Now, that’s where you’re wrong,” said Lincoln. “Calling a cow’s tail a leg doesn’t make it a leg.”

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- *Test the Spirits*
 - *Test* –
 - “To assay or test metals, to see if they be pure, to put to the test, make trial of, scrutinize.” ¹ Liddell, H. G. (1996). *A lexicon: Abridged from Liddell and Scott’s Greek-English lexicon* (p. 208). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.
 - The question is, “**Who do you say Jesus is?**”
 - **Matthew 16:13-16** ^{“13} When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “**Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?**” ¹⁴ So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” ¹⁵ He said to them, “**But who do you say that I am?**” ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered and said, “**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**”
 - No matter how spiritual someone may seem, no matter how much scripture they can quote, **NEVER! NEVER! NEVER!** Follow them if they don’t believe that Jesus came in the flesh!
- **1 Thessalonians 5:21-22** ^{“21} Test all things; hold fast what is good. ²² Abstain from every form of evil.”
 - Test by asking questions.

- Hold fast what is true!

"It is important that you stay with the truth of God's Word. The Word (or message) Christians have "heard from the beginning" is all you need to keep you true to the faith. The Christian life continues just as it began: through faith in the Bible's message. A religious leader who comes along with "something new," something that contradicts what Christians have "heard from the beginning," is not to be trusted. "Try the spirits, whether they are of God" (1 John 4:1). Let the Word abide in you (1 John 2:24), and abide in Christ (1 John 2:28); otherwise you will be led astray by the spirit of Antichrist. No matter what false teachers may promise, you have the sure promise of eternal life (1 John 2:25). You need nothing more!" Warren Weirsbe

- *The Spirit of Anti-Christ*

- John says is already in the world.
 - **1 John 2:18-19** ¹⁸ Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.”
 - **1 John 2:22-23** ²² Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is Antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. ²³ Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.”

- *The Anti-Christ*

- Is coming.
 - Scoffers today will say the idea isn't in the Bible or in other books of the Bible.
 - Here are a few references and other names for him.
 - *He*
 - **Daniel 9:27** “Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.”
 - *King*
 - **Daniel 11:36** “Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done.”
 - *Man of sin and Son of perdition*
 - **2 Thessalonians 2:3-4** ³ Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling

away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, ⁴ who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”

- *Lawless one*

- **2 Thessalonians 2:7-12** ⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way. ⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. ⁹ The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

- *The Beast*

- **Revelation 13:1-10** “Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. ² Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like *the feet of* a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. ³ And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. ⁴ So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who *is* like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” ⁵ And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. ⁶ Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. ⁷ It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. ⁸ All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the

foundation of the world. ⁹ If anyone has an ear, let him hear. ¹⁰ He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.”

So, Be Strong!

1 John 4:4-6 “⁴ *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.* ⁵ They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. ⁶ **We are of God.** He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.”

- *But not in your strength!*
 - **Zechariah 4:6** “Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,..”
 - **2 Corinthians 10:4-5** “⁴ For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”
- *Overcome –*
 - Because the message that we have is TRUE.
 - **John 16:33** “*These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*”
 - **1 John 5:4-5** “⁴ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. ⁵ Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”
- *Greater is God in us than the Devil himself*
 - **God** is greater than the Devil.
 - **We are not greater than Satan**
 - **God IN us is greater than Satan.**
 - **Jude 9-10** “Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!”
- *By this we know*
 - **The Spirit of truth vs. The Spirit of Error**
 - That’s how to tell the real from the fake.
 - Do they agree and listen to the world?
 - Do they agree and listen to you?
 - The difference between the real deal and a poser, is the poser never does what he says he will or can do.

- **You are of God, Little Children**

- **John 1:10-13** ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. ¹¹ He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. ¹² But **as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God**, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”
 - They, like many of you, were born-again and have become God’s children, and are able because of His Spirit to discern false Christians.
 - Be careful and avoid them, don’t be taken captive by their deceptive philosophies.

2 Timothy 3:12-15 ¹² Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. ¹³ But evil men and **impostors** will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴ But **you must continue in the things which you have learned** and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them...”

- Do NOT give up! Do NOT give in!
- Stand FAST!!!!
 - 1 Corinthians 16:13-14 ¹³ Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. ¹⁴ Let all *that you do* be done with love.”
- Don’t grow weary
 - **2 Thessalonians 3:13** “...do not grow weary *in* doing good.”
 - **Galatians 6:9** “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”

For now, we live in *enemy occupied territory*. But we look forward to the day we will be home with Jesus!

Hebrews 11:13-16 ¹³ These all died in faith, ^snot having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴ For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. ¹⁵ And truly if they had called to mind that *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.”