

## “The Indwelling God” – Part I

### *He is Truth*

(I John 4:1-6)

#### Introduction:

1. John begins to focus his attention on the Holy Spirit (The Third Person of the Trinity) and the significant role that He plays in the life of a believer (one who follows Jesus Christ). John writes these words; “This is His commandment, **that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ**, and love one another just as He commanded us. **The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him** and He in Him. **We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us**” (I John 3:23-24)
2. This teaching about the Holy Spirit (The Counselor/Comforter) came directly from Jesus to the apostles (John 14-16)
  - As Jesus prepared the apostles for the eventual reality of His death He made several significant promises or declarations that brought comfort to them:
    - 1) “Do not let your hearts be troubled, believe in God, believe also in Me” (John 14:1)
    - 2) “I will ask the Father and He will give you another, Helper, that He may be with you forever, that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, **but you know Him because He abides with you** and will be in you” (John 14:17)
    - 3) “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you” (John 14:26)

- Jesus also stressed the importance of a “right relationship” (John 15:1-11)
  - 1) Jesus identifies Himself as the “true \_\_\_\_\_”, the source from which good fruit is produced.
  - 2) The gardener (vinedresser) is God, who cares for and protects the vine
  - 3) Those who are **genuine followers of Jesus** are identified as branches that produce \_\_\_\_\_ fruit (i.e. an obedient life).
  - 4) Those who are not genuine followers of Jesus are identified as branches that produce no fruit at all. **They do not “abide in the vine”** and are unable to draw the necessary nutrients from the vine in order to produce fruit. They are therefore pruned away from the vine.
  - 5) The genuine follower of Christ will recognize that Jesus is the source of sustenance and will remain/abide in him. This relationship will naturally produce good fruit.
  - 6) Living a life of obedience to Christ is proof that we are His disciples.
  - 7) So when John writes; “The one who keeps His commands abides in Him, and He in Him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us” (I John 4:24), He is declaring that the Holy Spirit indwells the life of a genuine follower of Christ. They both go hand in hand.
  - 8) John is merely teaching to his followers what he himself learned from the Master, which is that God sent the Holy Spirit to indwell the genuine follower of Christ and He is the seal/proof that we belong to Him. (Ephesian 1:13-14)
- Jesus brought comfort to the disciples when He let them know they would not be alone for He said; “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth.....” (John 16:13a)
- 3. John will now focus his attention on the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead as he distinguishes the difference between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

## **Why Should We Know the Difference between Truth and Error: (I John 4:1)**

1. Because the source of \_\_\_\_\_ is God
  - John makes a clear distinction between the Spirit of God and those spirits which are false.
  - God is Truth and therefore the Holy Spirit who is God, is Truth
  - “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak and He will disclose to you what is to come” (John 16:13)
  - Since the Holy Spirit indwells the believer (I John 3:23-24), the believer knows the truth and the truth \_\_\_\_\_ . (John 8:31-32)
2. Because the source of \_\_\_\_\_ is Satan
  - John tells us that false prophets exist and since they are false their source cannot be from God, thus their source must be from Satan. (John 8:44)
  - Satan will often masquerade his lies as truth (Matthew 7:15-17, II Peter 2:1-2, II Corinthians 11:14-15), and thus all the more reason that the believer should test all that they hear and then weigh it against what has been revealed in the Word of God which is our perfect standard of truth. (John 17:7-8, Hebrews 4:12)
3. Knowing that truth and error exist, John spells out the importance of discerning and testing what is true and what is false, which is why he declares to the reader;  
“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.”
4. John will now set a clear and concise test to determine those who promote and teach truth from those who promote and teach error.

## **How to Test what is True and what is False (I John 4:2-3)**

1. **“By this 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 Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that is coming, and now it is already in the world” (I John 4:2-3)

- Every “spirit” (human teacher) who claims to be from God, must agree and proclaim that Jesus Christ is God incarnate (“in the flesh”) which is the truth taught by the Holy Spirit who indwells all believers.
- What is it that we confess:
  - 1) “That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation” (Romans 10:9-10)
  - 2) “What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life – and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us – what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His son Jesus Christ. These things we write to you that our joy may be complete” (I Jn. 4:1-4)
- A person cannot be saved without believing and confessing that Jesus is God and the Holy Spirit only indwells those who are saved. **On this there can be no room for error!**
  - 1) The true and genuine test of a person’s professed faith is in their understanding and acceptance that Jesus is who He claimed to be.
  - 2) Those that understand this and choose to live their lives in agreement, as well as to proclaim and teach the same in an accurate manner, prove that they possess the Spirit of truth. (Lk. 10:16, Jn. 14:6, Acts 4:12, I Jn. 2:23)

2. “By this 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 Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that is coming, and now it is already in the world**” (I John 4:2-3)
- Every “spirit” (human teacher) who claims to be from God, that does not agree and does not proclaim that Jesus Christ is God incarnate (“in the flesh”) is not from God and therefore a false teacher (antichrist).
  - The words of the false teacher (antichrists) cannot be trusted because they have no basis for truth as the Holy Spirit does not indwell those who do not believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate.
  - This is why we must “test the spirits”; because Satan is deceptive, and he not only develops lies to deny biblical truth, but he will attempt to cause doubt by mixing truth with error. We must be on guard to see this deception at all times. (Jude 4, II Corinthians 11:14-15, II Peter 2:1, Matthew 7:15-17)

### **How to Know You Are a Child of God (I John 4:4-6)**

1. “**You are from God little children**, and have overcome them, **because greater is He who is in you**, than he who is in the world. They are from the world, and the world listens to them. **We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us**. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error” (I John 4:4-6)
- “**Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God** and whoever loves the Father, loves the child born of Him” (I John 5:1)
  - “**By this we know** that we abide in Him and He in us, **because He has given us His Spirit**. We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. **Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him and he in God**” (I John 4:13-15)

2. It is the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer that provides the \_\_\_\_\_ that we belong to God.

- It is through faith in Jesus Christ in which this transformation/regeneration by the Holy Spirit takes place and \_\_\_\_\_ (*sanctification*) by allowing us to become \_\_\_\_\_ of the divine nature. ( I Peter 1:1-4)

- ***This is how we can know for sure that we belong to God, because God's Word is true;*** "You are from God, little children. And have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world" (I John 4:4)

1) "But you have an anointing from the Holy One and you all know. I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth. **Who is the liar, but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ?** This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son" (I John 4:20-22)

2) "This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life. These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you. As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you, but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him" (I John 2:25-27)

3. It is the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer that provides us with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

- This protects a believer from being fooled by false teachers (Hebrews 10:39, I Corinthians 2:12-16. Galatians 4:9-11, Colossians 2:20-23)

- **"Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on the things that are on the earth"** (Colossians 3:1-2)

- It is because of Jesus Christ and what He accomplished on the cross, and by His resurrection, that true believers (in Him) can be sure that He has overcome the world and as such we too are overcomers who believe in Him. (John 16:33)

4. We can be sure that we are a child of God because we \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ with a true teacher of God's Word. (I John 4:6)
- Those who "**know God**" will \_\_\_\_\_ to those who were given authority to speak/teach the Truth of God's Word. (I Timothy 2:7, I Peter 1:1, II Peter 1:1, James 1:1, I John 1:1-4, II John 1-4, Titus 1:3, **John 18:37**)
  - **Those who are not from God will not listen** to those who speak/teach the Truth of God's Word. (John 8:47)
  - The word of God is the \_\_\_\_\_ and it is completely \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. (II Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12)
  - The true teacher of God's Word will be in agreement with what it declares and the believer who listens will be able to discern, through the help of the Holy Spirit (John 14:17, 15:26, 16:13), that what they are declaring is true.
  - In the same manner, if a false teacher claims to teach the truth, yet is not in agreement with the Word of God, the believer who listens will be able to discern, through the help of the Holy Spirit, that what they are declaring is error.

#### Concluding Thoughts:

1. We must continue to preserve and to guard this Truth for ourselves and those who come after us. We must heed the words of Jude who wrote; "Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you, appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints" (Jude 3)
2. We have everything we need to understand and follow the One who is Truth; "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:30-31)