

1 JOHN: DISCERNING TRUE FROM FALSE SPIRITUALITY
Part XI: True Spirituality's Discernment Of False And True Spirits
B. Discerning False And True Spirits By Their Spiritual Realms
(1 John 4:3b-6)

I. Introduction

- A. Many believers unknowingly fall into error by assuming that only obvious cults err, but cults are not all that err or even promote error! (Dave Hunt & T. A. McMahon in The Seduction of Christianity, 1985, p. 7-8)
- B. The whole world is ruled by Satan (1 John 5:19 NIV), and many false messengers of Satan have permanently gone out into the world as we learned in our study of 1 John 4:1, so 1 John 4:3b-6 provides invaluable insight on discerning true from false spirits behind all messengers by their spiritual realms (as follows):

II. Discerning False And True Spirits By Their Spiritual Realms, 1 John 4:3b-6.

- A. The Apostle John claimed that the spirit of the coming antichrist is already in the world (1 John 4:3b), the spirit that does not confess Christ's permanent incarnation as we learned in 1 John 4:3a in our last lesson.
- B. Yet, that evil spirit can be discerned from the Holy Spirit by their **differing realms** as follows, 1 John 4:3b-6:
 - 1. 1 John 4:4-6 contains a series of emphatic pronouns in the Greek text -- "you," being John's Christian readers, "they (them)" the antichrists and "we (us)" Christ's original apostles, B. K. C., N. T., p. 898.
 - 2. Utilizing these emphatic pronouns, John marked off sharp boundaries or **spiritual realms** as follows:
 - a. John's readers, children of God, were of God as to spiritual source, and had overcome the antichrists by resisting their error of failing to confess Christ's permanent incarnation, 1 John 4:4a, 3a.
 - b. This victory was gained by the power of the Holy Spirit who indwells believers, for He Who was in John's readers was greater than Satan who was in the world, 1 John 4:4b; 5:19; *Ibid.*
 - c. The antichrists are of the world as to source, being under Satan's influence (1 Jn. 4:5a), so they speak of the world's ideology, and the world hears them because it is under Satan's rule, 1 Jn. 4:4b, 5b; 2 Cor. 4:3-4.
 - d. Conversely, Christ's original apostles, signified by the emphatic pronoun "we" in 1 John 4:6a (*Ibid.*) are from God, and the believer who knows God heeds Christ's original apostles, but he who is not of God does not heed "us," that is, he does not heed Christ's original apostles, 1 John 4:6b.
 - e. Thus, we discern the **realm** of God's Holy Spirit versus the Satanic **realm** existing in the world as follows: one who heeds Christ's original apostles' words is of the realm of the Holy Spirit while one who does not heed these apostles is of the spiritual realm of the antichrists, the world and Satan.
 - 3. However, even **believers** can turn aside from following Christ to follow after Satan (1 Timothy 5:14-15; Matthew 16:13-24), so we can discern Satanic and Holy Spirit realms even relative to **believers'** functions as follows: if a believer heeds Christ's original apostles, he functions in the realm of the Holy Spirit, but if he fails to heed Christ's original apostles, he follows after the realm of the world, the antichrists and Satan.
 - 4. This application is enhanced by considering the authoritative words of Christ's original apostles as follows:
 - a. From the authoritative written words of Christ's initial apostles, we can prove the canonicity of the 66-book Protestant canon of Scripture as follows: Matthew 23:35 with Genesis 4:8 & 2 Chronicles 24:20-22 [for the 39-book O. T., since the Jewish 39-book canon order began with Genesis and ran to 2 Chronicles]; John 17:20 [for Peter's 1 & 2 Peter epistles]; 2 Peter 3:15-16 [for Peter's calling Paul's 13 epistles canonical]; 1 Timothy 5:8 [for citing Luke as Scripture, & hence covering the canonicity of Luke's writing of Acts]; Luke 6:12-16 with John 17:20 [for Matthew, John, 1, 2 & 3 John, Revelation]; Matthew 13:55 with Acts 1:12-14 [for Jude]; 1 Peter 5:13 [for Mark]; Revelation 2:10 with James 1:12 [for citing James as Scripture]; Revelation 1:16; 2:12, 16 with Hebrews 4:12 [for citing Hebrews as Scripture].
 - b. This canon is closed according to 2 Timothy 3:15-4:2; no more revelation will be given to the rapture.
 - c. Jude 3 NIV, ESV claims the apostolic faith was given once-for-all, so the canon cannot be altered.
 - d. If a believer thus heeds the closed, unalterable, 66-book canon of Scripture, he functions in the Holy Spirit's realm; if he fails to heed this authority, he operates in the realm of the world, antichrists and Satan.

Lesson: *God the Holy Spirit's spiritual realm is identified by the heeding of the written, closed, unalterable, 66-book canon of Scripture where Satan's spiritual realm is identified by the failure to heed that Scripture.*

Application: *(1) May we believe in Christ in obedience to John 3:16 of Christ's original apostle John for eternal life. (2) May we then heed the closed, unalterable, 66-book canon of Scripture to avoid functioning in the spiritual realm of the world, antichrists and Satan, but rather function in the Holy Spirit's realm.*