

## Watch What We Hear!

Intro: This may be the part of our service to Christ that we might consider to be “over our heads”. John says we must “test the spirits” and “do not believe every spirit”. When someone tries to sell us a product on TV, it may not matter whether we believe the claims or not. When it comes to our relationship with God, it deeply matters. Text: 1 John 3:24-4:6

1. What characteristics of the faithful disciple have been mentioned to this point?
  - A. Listen to the Apostles: They were the ones to see and hear.
  - B. Acknowledge sin and confess it.
  - C. One can't know God and not do what he commands.
  - D. Love your brother.
  - E. Do not love the world (the things that draw us away from God). If you have the “complete package”, the world will not like you.
  - F. Have an extremely negative attitude toward sin.
  - G. Make loving sacrifices for a brother. Love in deed, not in word.
  - H. Why is it that John calls us to such a noble life?
  
2. We can't believe everything we hear. (1 John 3:24-4:6)
  - A. We can remain part of God by keeping his commandments which come from his Spirit. (Remember Acts 2 and connect with 1 Corinthians 12)
  - B. Not every “spirit” is “of God”.
  - C. We must test. This takes a certain amount of energy. (See Acts 17)
  - D. Perceived miraculous power is no guarantee that a teacher is “of God”.  
See Exodus 7:22; 8:7, 18-19 7 & Acts 8.
  - E. Moses offered a test in Old Testament that deserves some consideration.  
Deuteronomy 18:21-22 (But it does have its limits)
  - F. Moses said the content of a teacher's speech is key. Deut. 13:1-5  
(We are far too impressed with how it is said.)
  - G. John was saying the “anti-Christ” teachers were denying what had been originally taught about Jesus.
  - H. 1 Jn. 4:5 tells us to beware of those who teach things that the worldly folks find endearing. (Consider response to the “Papal Night Club”.)

Conclusion: We live at a time when “truth” is determined by consensus of opinion. Surely we can see how antithetical this thinking is to the teaching by and about Jesus. It is only by receiving the Apostles' teaching and living a life that agrees with that truth that we can really know God. We just can't accept any substitutes.