

Sermon: We Know Truth from Error

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[0 : 0 0] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Why sit down and stand right back up, right? This is our way of being reminded that the only person in this place tonight that has authority is God through His Word.

No one else, not anything that I say has authority unless it is consistent with the Word of God. John writes under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This is 1 John 4, verse 1.

[1 : 5 9] Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God. For many false prophets have gone out into the world.

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 Antichrist, which you heard was coming and is now in the world already.

Little children, you are from God and have overcome them. For he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

They are from the world. Therefore, they speak from the world and the world listens to them. We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us.

[3 : 0 1] Whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the Spirit of error.

This is God's word. Pray with me and for me. And let's ask God to truly speak to us tonight. God, I'm very aware of my inability to do anything of significance in these moments.

I really am. Jesus said it would be the Spirit of truth that would come and guide us into truth. And so we need that to happen tonight. And this is such an important word for us to understand, to know, to apply.

And so Holy Spirit, guide us. Open our eyes, our minds. May we be receptive to what you say to us tonight. And we want all the glory to be for the name of Jesus.

And we pray it in his name. And God's people said, amen. Amen. You can be seated. Faith family, do not believe everything you see on TV.

[4 : 0 2] That was a lesson that an entire viewing audience learned back in 1957.

That's when the British Broadcasting Corporation, known as BBC, which at the time was a very serious and respectable news channel. It was always reporting on factual events and factual stories.

Well, they pulled a prank on their entire viewing audience. They ran a news report about a crop in Switzerland.

And they did so with seriousness. They presented this as a factual thing. And rather than explain what their report was, I'll just let you watch it.

It isn't only in Britain that spring this year has taken everyone by surprise.

[5 : 03] Here, in the Ticino, on the borders of Switzerland and Italy, the slopes overlooking Lake Lugano have already burst into flower, at least a fortnight earlier than usual. But what, you may ask, has the early and welcome arrival of bees and blossom to do with food?

Well, it's simply that the past winter, one of the mildest in living memory, has had its effect in other ways as well. Most important of all, it's resulted in an exceptionally heavy spaghetti crop.

The last two weeks of March are an anxious time for the spaghetti farmer. There's always the chance of a late frost, which, while not entirely ruining the crop, generally impairs the flavour and makes it difficult for him to obtain top prices in world markets.

But now these dangers are over and the spaghetti harvest goes forward. Spaghetti cultivation here in Switzerland is not, of course, carried out on anything like the tremendous scale of the Italian industry.

Many of you, I'm sure, will have seen pictures of the vast spaghetti plantations in the Po Valley. For the Swiss, however, it tends to be more of a family affair. Another reason why this may be a bumper year lies in the virtual disappearance of the spaghetti weevil, the tiny creature whose depredations have caused much concern in the past.

[6 : 24] After picking, the spaghetti is laid out to dry in the warm, alpine sun. Many people are often puzzled by the fact that spaghetti is produced at such uniform length.

But this is the result of many years of patient endeavour by plant breeders, who've succeeded in producing the perfect spaghetti. And now the harvest is marked by a traditional meal.

Toasts to the new crop are drunk in these poccolinos. And then the waiters enter, bearing the ceremonial dish. And it is, of course, spaghetti. Picked earlier in the day, dried in the sun, and so brought fresh from garden to table at the very peak of condition.

For those who love this dish, there's nothing like real homegrown spaghetti. Spaghetti weevil? Plantation breeding?

There's nothing like homegrown spaghetti? Now, as crazy as that story is, what's even more crazy is people actually fell for it.

[7 : 32] When that report aired on television, the network was flooded with calls, and viewers wanted to know, one, is it true? And two, how can we grow our own spaghetti?

To which they were told, and I quote, place a string of spaghetti in a tin of tomato sauce and hope for the best, close quote. I mean, good Lord only knows how many people actually tried that.

In fact, the BBC's general director, a man by the name of Ian Jacob, who had not been given a heads up about the prank, had to research spaghetti harvesting in three different books before he realized it was a hoax.

And I know some of you are like, seriously, how can people be so stupid? Well, that's a great question for a lot of people sometimes, but keep in mind that spaghetti and pasta in general is not that well known in the United Kingdom at this point, but the main reason people fell for it was because it was on TV.

And everything you see on TV is right. Amen? That's right. And so they fell for one of the greatest TV pranks in history.

[8 : 51] Now, most of us would never fall for something as ridiculous as spaghetti growing on trees, but I guarantee you that everybody here tonight has fallen for something.

In one way or another, you have fallen for something. Maybe you fell for the April Fool's prank, the old toothpaste and the Oreo. Or maybe you actually believed that the timeshare presentation would only last 90 minutes.

Or maybe you believed the pastor when he said he was almost done with the sermon. Maybe you believed your parents on the road trip when they said it's only going to be five more minutes.

Or maybe you believed something because you saw it on the Internet and everything is true on the Internet. But maybe for you it wasn't silly. Maybe it was serious.

You really believed that she loved you. You really believed that Dad would show up this time.

[9 : 56] You really believed that they were your friends. Whether it's silly or serious, I guarantee you that almost everyone here has made this statement before.

I can't believe I fell for that. I can't believe I believed that. And it's one thing to lack discernment on pranks and people, but Faith Family, listen, and for those of you watching online, it is deadly to lack discernment on matters of the truth.

And that is exactly what John, the Apostle John, is addressing here in 1 John chapter 4. And I've reminded you each week that John is writing in a context where a group of Christians have been influenced by a false teaching.

And that false teaching is known as Gnosticism. We've talked about this at great length, so I'll only summarize. One of the main elements of Gnosticism was that they denied the incarnation.

That is, they denied that God came in the flesh. You will remember that Gnosticism had its root in Plato. And Plato believed that the spirit was good, but everything physical was evil.

[11 : 23] And so how could God, which is divine, take on a bod, which is evil? That didn't make any sense. And so Gnosticism taught that there was no God in the flesh.

There was no physical resurrection of Jesus Christ. They denied God the man. And this is swirling and circulating during the time of John's writing this.

And there are people that are doubting the very core of Christianity. That's why the first song that we sang was, I believe, and I believe, and I believe, declaring what is core to the Christian faith.

John does not want these Christians to be tossed around. He wants them to know. And that's what the whole book has been about, to teach them what they know and how they could be confident in that and to have spiritual discernment.

Faith family, listen to me tonight. You are surrounded, and I am surrounded all the time, every day, by ideas, worldviews, truth claims, philosophies.

[12 : 31] And listen to me. They are not all the same. And they are not all true. And we must be a discerning people.

Paul says it this way in Ephesians 4, verse 11. He gave apostles and prophets and evangelists and shepherds and teachers to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ, until we all attain the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Here's why. So that we will not be children tossed to and fro by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness and deceitful schemes.

That's the exact same idea that John has here in 1 John chapter 4. Notice how it begins, verse 1. Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God.

Now what John gives here is what we call a positive negative. A positive negative. The negative is this. Do not believe every spirit. Do you see the negative?

[13 : 49] Do not. There's the negative. Do not believe every spirit. Negative. Positive is, but test the spirits.

Negative. Positive. Don't believe everything you hear and examine closely what you do. Do you see what John is saying? Don't believe everything you hear.

Examine carefully what you do because you can't be the kind of Christian that just floats around in the world of ideas where there's all kinds of teaching and philosophies like this.

Notice this guy kind of floating around. Like this is not how we're supposed to be in our faith. Just drifting out there, accepting everything that we hear.

And I'm amazed at how spiritually gullible on matters of faith in Christian doctrine sometimes Christians can be. Well, the preacher said it on TV.

[14 : 47] There are heretics on TV. You know this, right? Well, it was on the bookshelf at the Christian bookstore. It had good reviews on Amazon. My friend said they had a personal experience.

Yeah, and I once saw a TV report about spaghetti growing from trees. Do you see? You can't believe everything you hear because there are things out there that are false.

Think of it this way. For those of you that are parents, have you ever noticed that children love to put everything in their mouth? Like you leave the room for a second and you come back in and they're chewing on a sock or they've got the dog bone in their mouth, right?

And you've got to teach them as a parent what? There's a huge difference between eating real food and batteries, okay?

Drinking milk, good. Drinking out of the toilet, bad, right? You have to teach them these things. And John is writing saying, listen, spiritually we have to learn the same thing.

[15 : 50] We have to learn this is truth and it's good for me and this is error, this is false and it's deadly. We can't be the kind of children that just puts everything in our mouths without any discernment at all.

Like Paul in Acts chapter 17, one of my favorite passages in the book of Acts where he's in Athens and he discerns the culture. And you remember when he sees all their idols, he sees all their false gods and he discerns their culture.

Do you do that with American culture? Are you able to do that when you watch a movie? When you read a book? If someone gives you advice? Can you discern the worldview that's coming from?

That is something we must be able to do, beloved. We must be able to do, dear Christian. I mean, I remember the big thing when I was growing up with Star Wars.

Huge Star Wars fan, right? As I've shared with some of you before, I wanted to be Luke Skywalker. Thought Princess Leia would make a perfect pastor's wife, right? I mean, nothing more modest and attractive than hair buns, amen?

[17 : 03] Can I get a hallelujah? And I was devastated to find out they were brother and sister, but being from Tennessee, it didn't really matter, right? So, not a big deal.

But I grew up watching Star Wars and just ate it up, thought it was the thing, but as I grew later in life, I began to learn as I grew in my faith the worldview behind Star Wars, which is Eastern mysticism, that all is one, and light and dark are equal, which is contrary to the Christian worldview.

Now, I'm not saying don't watch Star Wars. What I'm saying is if you watch a movie, discern the worldview behind it. I remember taking my kids to Moana and realizing, remember that Disney movie?

Knowing that in that movie, you have pantheism and polytheism and individualism, like it is everywhere throughout the movie. It doesn't mean don't watch the movie.

I'm not one of those guys that's like, you know, don't go to movies in the name of Jesus and burn your tapes for him. No, I'm not saying that. I'm just saying test the spirits and don't believe everything you hear.

[18 : 17] That's what John's saying. He's not saying disengage from the world, but he's saying have discernment as you live in the world. And these things slip into the church.

I mean, self-help preaching has become the thing. Health, wealth, and prosperity rather than seeing Jesus as your treasure. You know, use Jesus to get treasure rather than Jesus is the treasure.

These are things that are big churches and major TV programs that host these messages. And there are many, many more. The point here is, Faith Family, what John is saying is you have to discern.

You have to test what is true. Notice this on the screen. This will preach. Just because it uses Christian terms does not mean it's Christian truth. Just because it uses Christian terms does not mean it's Christian truth.

And by the way, I'm not talking about out there. Some of you are like, you know, you shouldn't pick on other people or whatever. Listen, I'm talking about in here. The day you hear a sermon from me where it does not seem as though I have tried my best to say what the text says, you should find a different person to listen to.

[19 : 38] And you should find a different church to attend. Because here at Faith Family, all we want to do, and it doesn't mean that we aren't wrong, but we're doing our best to say, what does God's word say?

Not what do I think would be a great idea or how could I entertain you tonight and make you laugh? It's what does the scripture say so that we can discern what is right and wrong.

If you're with me, say amen. This is John's point. Now, let me give you a few implications of this before we continue. I've pastored long enough to know that people will love to take something and take it to an extreme.

And what we've done in 1 John is we've tried to keep a good balance of things. So let me balance what I've just said by this. Number one, notice this implication. Thinking critically does not mean becoming a critic.

Okay, now just let me preach for just a minute. Thinking critically does not mean becoming a critic. What I mean is, because I have pastored as long as I have, I have seen so many Christians take passages like this and use it as an excuse to nitpick every single area of doctrine.

[20 : 51] And they'll do it in the name of testing the spirits. And so like everything's a hill to die on, the tent of Christianity is so small and very few are welcome in over little matters of doctrine.

Remember the context here is that John is talking about what? The doctrine of Christ. Amen? That's what the text is saying. If anyone says this about Jesus, that's antichrist.

If somebody says this about Jesus, that's of God. So John in the context here is talking about what Christianity rises and falls on, namely Jesus. That's not true of when the rapture happens.

That's the response I figured I would get, okay? It's like there are important matters of theology that we can disagree on. But what you should not become is like those grumpy old men in the Muppets that just kind of sat back there and I don't like this and you just nitpick everything.

Thinking critically doesn't mean becoming a critic. Okay? Don't be grumpy and angry and bitter. Just discern the gospel and that which is a false gospel.

[22 : 03] Number two is that conviction does not mean lacking compassion. Conviction, which is what John's calling us to, does not mean lacking compassion. Isn't it interesting that this command, do not believe everything you hear but examine closely what you do, that command, watch, comes right after a passage on love.

Right? If you were with us last week, that's what we talked about. And guess what this command comes right before? We'll talk about it next week. Love. Here's my point.

And I think this is a very important point. Most people will say that loving others means accepting all their views. So all views of truth are welcome.

No, no, no. That's not what John is saying. He's saying actually holding the truth of the gospel is loving because he puts the command of having conviction and discernment right in the middle of passages on love.

John commands these Christians and us to be a discerning people on matters of truth.

[23 : 18] To not believe everything you hear but to test the spirits to make sure they are from God. Why? Why must we test these things? Look back at verse 1.

Beloved, do not believe every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they are from God. Now we have the reason. You see the word for. For many false prophets have gone out into the world.

So John gives reasons for why this discernment is so important and that reason is because spiritual deception is real. False teaching exists. Spiritual warfare is a real thing.

I have so, so loved teaching through the book of Revelation. It has been so much fun and I know some of you have been a part of that study and one of the things that we've talked about in the book of Revelation is how there is a dragon, Satan, who wants to destroy Christians, you and he uses different agents in the world to try to do that.

And here's a summary of what we've talked about in Revelation. Satan, the dragon of Revelation 12, uses worldly powers, the beast, in John's day government, oftentimes in our day as well, and worldly prosperity, that's the prostitute that we just looked at, and now this is what John is talking about in 1 John 4, and worldly philosophies, the false prophet to attack the people of God.

[24 : 50] Listen, John mentions here Antichrist and when he mentions Antichrist, he's not talking about, as I've said before, 666 and watch out for those people whose eyes glow red, you know, and they show up at your doorstep and there's horns growing out.

Be what, that's not what John's talking about at all. He's talking about a spirit, a false teaching that is in the world. You've heard me say this in Revelation as well.

Antichrist are not only individuals, that's what most people think when they think Antichrist, and not only institutions, like government can be, but they're also ideas.

Antichrist, clearly from 1 John 4, are not just individuals and not just institutions, they are ideas, and they're subtle. This is what makes the deception of false teaching so easy to be sucked into.

Here's the imagery that Revelation gives us. This is Revelation 13, 11. Then I saw another beast, this is the false prophet, rising out of the earth.

[25 : 58] It had, watch, watch, it had two horns like a lamb, and it spoke like a dragon. Do you see? It looked, oh, that's a cute little lamb.

It's so precious, right? So cute and cuddly, and we'll pet it, but behind that cuteness is a dragon. That's what John is saying. This second beast, this false prophet, these ideologies that exist in the world, these spirit of Antichrist, they come at you like a lamb, but behind them is the death of a dragon.

They don't come to you in red suits and pitchforks jumping out behind the bushes trying to scare you like it's Halloween. They say things like, you should probably find a church that doesn't use so much Bible.

You should probably find a place that has more relevant messages. I mean, Jesus is good, but we should talk about how to build a healthy business or be fit or whatever.

It's like, we don't make so much about Jesus, but why? Because the spirit of Antichrist is always going to want to drift away from Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus.

[27 : 13] You with me? We must discern because there are false prophets in the world. It's like the way you give your dog medicine. The best way to do it is what?

Just mix it with their regular food. And then they eat it and don't even notice it. Now, I could spend a lot of time, I was tempted, like this was one of those areas that's like, okay, do I cut a bunch of this stuff out?

In my course on church history, I do an entire lecture on the history of heresies. The history of heresies. And I think this is really relevant for the text tonight.

And so I'm just going to kind of give you a snapshot. I'm not going to take long doing this. And my point isn't even that you're going to have an exam at the end of the night to see how well you do. It's just, I want you to know that the gospel has always been attacked.

Always. And it still is today. And that's why we must test the spirits. So for instance, you can go back in the Old Testament to warnings against false prophets.

[28 : 16] Lots of passages on that. And then in the New Testament, there are warnings against false teachers. Here are just a few of them. Jesus in Matthew 24, verse 4. Jesus answered and said to them, See to it that no one misleads you, for many will come in my name, saying, I am the Christ and will mislead many.

Paul in Galatians chapter 1, verse 6. I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting him who called you by the grace of Christ for a different gospel, which is really not another.

Only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. And in the letter to Hebrews, Hebrews 13, 9. Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited.

In other words, the New Testament, and there are many more, is constantly warning you against this. This is going to happen. This will be a reality in the world, and that prediction has been true.

Gnosticism, which we're talking about in 1 John, from at least up to about 300 A.D., that denied God came in the flesh and the physical resurrection of Jesus.

[29 : 31] Put your seatbelt on because I'm going fast. Docetism, which was condemned as heresy in the Council of Chalcedon in 431 A.D., rejected that Jesus was a real man.

He only appeared to be human, but wasn't really human. The Judaizers, which Paul dealt with in Galatians, were adding things to faith alone. They were saying, it's not just faith in Jesus, but it's faith plus the law.

Arianism, in the 4th century, did not believe that Jesus was eternal. The famous line from Arius was, there was a time when he was not, which is present-day Jehovah's Witnesses.

Montanism, which was in the 2nd and 3rd century, rejected the authority of Scripture, did not believe that the Old Testament was from God. Marcionism, from 100 to about 200 A.D., rejected the Old Testament as well and didn't believe that God created.

Pelagian, in about 300 to 400, rejected original sin and he and Augustine battled it out. Modalism, in the 3rd century with Sibelius, said God is not three in one, He's just one that expresses Himself in three different ways, three different modes.

- [30 : 51] And some of you have heard the example, which is heresy and most people don't even know. God is like water, ice, and vapor. Right?
- But that's modalism. That's not biblical Christianity. That's not Trinity where there are three persons distinct in one. One God in three persons.
- And how many of you remember the real famous book called The Shack? Okay. Nobody, right? Maybe saw the movie. Well, that was based off of modalism. Or the Enlightenment in the 1800s that truth is inside you.
- Which gave birth to relativism in the early 1900s that there really is no certain reality. Which gave birth to postmodernism that truth is whatever you want truth to be.
- Which has given birth to redefining gender and marriage and biology because all that matters is how you feel, not any kind of absolute reality in the world.
- [31 : 52] Moral therapeutic deism, which is that God exists, but He's not involved in the world at all and so the best thing for you to do is be the best person you can. I'll stop.
- We could go on and on and on. The point, faith family, is this. Are you listening? The essence of the Christian faith. The essence of the Christian faith. Be it the person of Christ, the authority of Scripture, the doctrine of sin has always been under attack.
- Why? Because there have always been false prophets in the world. And that's true today. It's happening this very day in our culture and that is why right here, right here, don't believe everything you hear and test, examine what you do.
- Some of you may say, that's your job, buddy. You're the pastor. Okay, your mister went to seminary. Right? You've got the degrees.
- Like, this is intimidating. I know, like, some of you may not say it out loud, but I know that there are people watching this and in this place tonight you're saying, I can't do this.
- [33 : 03] I'm not a good debater. I don't have a lot of knowledge. I didn't go to seminary. I'm not a pastor. I don't really know what to say. I get really nervous when things of the faith get brought up.
- I'm still learning a whole lot. Like, this must be for big boy Christians, not just common Christian like me. Wrong. Look what John says in verse 4.
- Little children. Not big, adult, mature, rock-solid, apostle-like Christian. No. Little children, you are from God.
- You're from God. And you have overcome them. And then this is one of my favorite lines in all of Scripture. For he who is in you is greater than he that's in the world.
- What are you scared of? Like, stop saying, oh, not me. Like, I'm not equipped enough. I don't know what. You've got Jesus in you.
- [34 : 07] Like, and he that's in you, it's greater than any spirit, any power, any principality that is in the world.
- You have confidence. Amen. Like, you've got to have discernment because there are false prophets. And if that intimidates you, what you need to remember is what you know.
- Where have we heard that before? It's the whole point of the book. Here's what you know. So here's three things, quickly, again, the text that we see. Number one, you know the real Jesus.
- You know the real Christ. This is how John started the book. Go back to 1 John chapter 1. 1 John chapter 1 beginning at verse 1.
- That which was from the beginning. Now, who's that talking about? Jesus. Because remember in John 1, in the beginning was the Word.

[35 : 09] And the Word was with God. And the Word was God. And the Word became flesh. So, Jesus is the one which was from the beginning which we have heard and we have seen with our eyes and we have looked upon and we've touched with our hands concerning the Word of life, the life that's been manifest.

We have seen it. We've testified to it. We proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us.

Right? John's whole point, the very introduction to his book was this. We know the real Christ. You know the real Christ. If you keep your eyes on the real thing, you don't have to be afraid of counterfeits.

It's a great place for an amen. You missed it but that's alright. It's kind of like what we talked about in Revelation on Tuesday night. Like the way idols fall in your life is not focusing on your idols.

It's worshiping the real God. Like in the presence of the real God, idols fall. So, the wrong way to approach idolatry is figure out all your idols and stop worshiping them.

[36 : 20] No! That's a terrible approach to overcoming idolatry. The approach to overcoming idolatry is worship God. Because when you worship God, all the other idols fall.

Well, in the same thing, if you will just keep your eyes on Jesus and stay in the Word wanting to know more about Jesus and reading and studying and praying and meditating on Jesus and thinking daily on the gospel of Jesus, you won't have to worry about the counterfeit Jesus.

You know the real Christ. So, when you're discerning truth, this is big, don't measure what you believe on emotion.

don't measure what you believe on who gave the advice. Don't measure what you believe because you saw it in a vision.

Don't measure what you believe because what preacher said it. Measure what you believe based on what does it say about Jesus Christ. because if it's a vision or if it's advice or it's a preacher or it's whatever it is, if it's not pointing me to the real revealed Jesus, I will have nothing to do with it.

[37 : 42] It is the spirit of error. So, number one, you have the real Christ. Number two, you have the Holy Spirit. You have the Holy Spirit.

Now, don't get excited about Jesus and not be excited about the Holy Spirit. All right? We have the Holy Spirit. Look at what he says in 1 John 2 verse 20. This is 1 John 2 verse 20.

But you have been anointed by the Holy One. You, Christians, you've been anointed by the Holy One and you have all knowledge. It doesn't mean you know everything and that you can answer everything.

It just means that you have full knowledge of the Spirit. You have full access to the things of God. Look at 1 John chapter 3 verse 24.

Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God and God in him and by this we know that he abides in us by the Spirit whom he has given us.

[38 : 47] Can I blow your minds for just a minute? Here's the mind-blowing reality. Listen, listen, listen. The same Spirit that came upon Jesus has come upon you.

And we take it another step further. The same Spirit that guided Jesus in his earthly life guides you in your earthly life.

What are you afraid of? What are you afraid of? You have the Holy Spirit. You know the real Jesus and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth and so if you will be in the Word because the Word and the Spirit always go together.

If you will be in the Word you'll be able to discern the spirit of error and not be led astray. You with me? You got the real Jesus, you have the Holy Spirit and then thirdly you have the Holy Scriptures.

You have the Holy Scriptures. Now you may say well where is this in the text? But notice what John says. This is important for us. Look at 1 John chapter 4 verse 6.

[39 : 56] 1 John chapter 4 verse 6. He says we are from God that is we apostles whoever knows God listens to us that is to the apostles whoever is not from God does not listen to us the apostles by this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Here is my point. When John says listen to us that is the exact same thing as listen to the word of God. Why?

Because what is the New Testament? It is the apostolic witness of Jesus. It is Peter and Paul and John and Mark and Matthew it is those that had eyewitness accounts of Jesus the apostolic witness which is what has become the word of God is the basis of our faith.

So it is the exact parallel for me to say to you when John says then listen to us it is the exact same thing for me to say to you listen to the word of God because what we are studying is what John was saying to them and Jesus is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

So what is the summary of our passage tonight? Did you learn anything? Are you challenged by God's word? Here is what John is saying to them and to us you must have spiritual discernment in this world you must it is not an option you have to be discerning why?

[41 : 36] Because there is real false prophets in the world but don't be afraid don't be intimidated don't feel overwhelmed don't feel like you are not equipped enough don't feel like there is no way I can do this well I know you can't do this that's why God gave you Jesus he put his Holy Spirit in you and he made sure you had the word of God which is a lamp!

greater is he that's in you than he that is in the world Amen So Faith family we live in a world we live in a world and we know this you can't believe everything you hear you just can't believe everything you hear we're surrounded by fake news everywhere we look but it's not on issues that are as silly as spaghetti growing on trees I'm talking world views that deny that Jesus died physically on a tree that's the spirit of antichrist and it is in the world and we must not fall for it we will not fall for it because greater is he that's in us than he that is in the world and all God's people said amen amen let's pray together let's pray let's pray

God give us this discernment help us not believe everything we hear but we test the spirits and again we're not talking about people and pranks those are important things we're talking about gospel we're talking about the truth of your word and we don't want to be the kind of Christian that just believes every book in the Christian bookstore and every preacher on TV or even this one if what I say is not faithful to your word if what we're preaching is not the gospel of Jesus Christ God we must be a people that discern what does this say about Jesus and you have given us not only the opportunity to know him but you've given us the spirit and your word that we would not be led astray so thank you for this word tonight it is deeply challenging and now help us by your strength guided by your spirit to be discerning in this world we have a dragon an enemy who wants to destroy us may we see him from a mile away in

Jesus name amen he