

# We Must Test The Spirits

We are in a time of moral and religious confusion and sometimes it is hard to distinguish the false from the truth.

It is prophesied in God's Word [the Christian Bible] that there will be a time of increased religious [spiritual] activity and a frenzied expectation as the result of the turbulent conditions prevailing among the nations of this world.

**Matthew 24:3-14** [Message Bible] *“Later as he was sitting on Mount Olives, his disciples approached and asked him, ‘Tell us, when are these things going to happen? What will be the sign of your coming, that the time’s up?’ Jesus said, ‘**Watch out for doomsday deceivers. Many leaders are going to show up with forged identities, claiming, ‘I am Christ, the Messiah.’ They will deceive a lot of people. When reports come in of wars and rumoured wars, keep your head and don’t panic. This is routine history; this is no sign of the end. Nation will fight nation and ruler fight ruler, over and over. Famines and earthquakes will occur in various places. This is nothing compared to what is coming. They are going to throw you to the wolves and kill you, everyone hating you because you carry my name. And then, going from bad to worse, it will be dog-eat-dog, everyone at each other’s throat, everyone hating each other. In the confusion, lying preachers will come forward and deceive a lot of people. For many others, the overwhelming spread of evil will do them in, nothing left of their love but a mound of ashes. Staying with it, that’s what God requires. Stay with it to the end. You won’t be sorry, and you’ll be saved. All during this time, the good news, the Message of the kingdom, will be preached all over the world, a witness staked out in every country. And then the end will come.**”*

Many people in such conditions fear to question any person or organisation that comes along wearing the cloak of Christianity and using the name of Jesus.

Many people will dare not examine the credentials of the latest prophet in case they are guilty of rejecting something which may be of God.

Many Christians will timidly remember that the Pharisees, depicting the established church, refused to accept Christ when He came, and do not wish to be caught in the same snare.

## So how will the general public and Christians react?

They will reserve judgement or shut their eyes and accept everything without question.

**However gullibility is NOT synonymous with mature spirituality.**

**Faith is NOT accepting all that is coloured with the supernatural.**

**1 John 4:1** [Message Bible] *“My dear friends, don’t believe everything you hear. Carefully weigh and examine what people tell you. Not everyone who talks about God comes from God. There are a lot of lying preachers loose in the world.”*

We are commanded by the Holy Spirit to test the spirit of the person who is preaching.

We may sin as certainly by approving the false as by rejecting the genuine.

## How can we tell whether or not a person or a religious denomination is of God?

**1 John 4:2-6** [Message Bible] *“Here’s how you test for the genuine Spirit of God. Everyone who confesses openly his faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who came as an actual flesh-and-blood person, comes from God and belongs to God. And everyone who refuses to confess faith in Jesus has nothing in common with God. This is the spirit of antichrist that you heard was coming. Well, here it is, sooner than we thought! My dear children, you come from God and belong to God. You have already won a big victory over those false teachers, for the Spirit in you is far stronger than anything in the world. These people belong to the Christ-denying world. They talk the world’s language and the world eats it up. But we come from God and belong to God. Anyone who knows God, understands us and listens. The person who has nothing to do with God will, of course, not listen to us. This is another test for telling the Spirit of Truth from the spirit of deception.”*

A person who is a messenger of God will always honour Jesus Christ and point you to Him as your Saviour.

Such a genuine messenger of God must also be a good person full of the Holy Spirit.

Genuine Christianity is nothing if not moral.

The genuine messenger of God is **not confirmed** by tricks of theology, or demonstration of supernatural wonders.

Every genuine servant of God must also be a **servant** to those they lead.

**Matthew 20:25-28** [Message Bible] *“He said, ‘You’ve observed how godless rulers throw their weight around, how quickly a little power goes to their heads. It’s not going to be that way with you. Whoever wants to be great must become a servant. Whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave. That is what the Son of Man has done. He came to serve, not be served.”*

Willing to lay down his life [time] for those God has given him to teach and lead.

Every genuine servant of God must be pure of heart and Holy of life.

While sinless perfection is impossible while we are still humans, still a leader who is to be trusted must be one who lives as near as possible to the example set by his Master Jesus Christ.

A genuine servant of God must repent in deep sorrow of heart when in human weakness he sins in act or word.

A genuine servant of God will be humble, modest, free from the love of money, eager to promote honour and praise of God and just as eager to disclaim any credit or praise on his own part.

The genuine servant of God must live a personal life that is above reproach.

## But such a test of moral goodness is not enough

Every genuine servant of God must submit his work to the scriptural test.

**It is not enough to be able to quote from the Christian Bible at great length or claim for himself great experiences with God.**

Every genuine servant of God must speak only according to the Word of God.

**Isaiah 8:19-20** [Living Bible] *“So why are you trying to find out the future by consulting witches and mediums? Don’t listen to their whisperings and mutterings. Can the living find out the future from the dead? Why not ask your God? **“Check these witches’ words against the Word of God!”** he says. “If their messages are different than mine, it is because I have not sent them; for they have no light or truth in them.”*

**We all have the solemn obligation to test the message of any person claiming to be a servant of God to see if they speak according to the Word of God.**

Just weaving in an occasional scripture to their discourse or dramatically holding up the Christian Bible before the eyes of his hearers is **not** enough, they must preach according to the words within that Christian Bible.

The price of wrong advice in business may be bankruptcy.

The price of trusting a “*quack doctor*” may be permanent loss of health.

**The price of putting confidence in a pseudo-prophet may end up becoming a moral and spiritual tragedy.**

Let us all take heed that no person deceives us.

Check out the spirit that is motivating that person who claims to be a messenger of God to confirm it is the Holy Spirit or another spirit **not** from God that is influencing His message.