

When Unbelief is Right

Ray Stedman

I. Introduction.

- A. Text: I John 4:1-6.
- B. Christianity puts great stress on believing facts.
- C. Every Christian is called to be an unbeliever toward certain things, as well.
- D. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the life manifests the qualities of love, which give us assurance that we are in the truth.

II. There is one true Spirit, but we are not to believe every spirit because there are false spirits.

- A. This warning comes in John's discourse about love. Every cult reaches out in the name of love—the oldest trick in Satan's book is to appear to offer concern and love.
- B. A mark of maturity is unbelief in certain things.

- 1. This is a widespread problem—many false prophets have gone out into the world.
- 2. We are to test the spirits.

C. False prophets speak out of an evil spirit.

- 1. Today we take this for granted and therefore we are more in danger of being exposed.
- 2. The only way to know these spirits is to test them.

III. The test.

- A. The acknowledgement that Jesus is the Christ incarnate. (John 10)
- B. A commitment to this great truth. Demons believe the facts, but they do not trust the man.

IV. Few would pass the test today.

Application questions:

1. How is love twisted in the world today by unbelievers?

2. Why is the test of Jesus identity and one's relationship to Him so potent?

3. Who are false teachers in your context? How should you respond to them when they come teaching false ideas?
