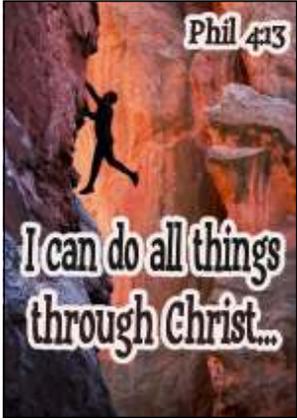


The Word of the Overcomer



Greater is He

We shouldn't believe everything we hear just because someone says it is a message from God. We are to test the messenger to see if their message is truly from the Lord. Check to see if their words match what God says in the Bible. Other tests include their commitment to the body of believers, their life styles, and the fruit of their ministries. But the most important test of all, says John, is what they believe about Christ.

A. Overcoming Spiritual Deception *1 John 4:1-3a*

1. **Deceiving a generation:** John uses 'spirit' [pneuma] (small 's') in its generic word sense; "wind", meaning we are to test the various winds of our generation. In the Church and out.
2. **Test:** The word "test" is a strong word. Its root, dokeō, means to think, to examine closely. Here's what to test:
 - a. **Doctrine:** [:2] The 'incarnation' is the bench mark of Christology. John probably has in mind the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension.
 - b. **Conduct:** 'Fruit inspecting' is one way of testing for deceivers. *Matthew 7:15-20* [see side bar] reveals the truth about a 'tree and its fruit.' *See back page!*
3. **Discerning of spirits:** One of the 'gifts of the Spirit' is spiritual discernment. *1 Cor 12:10* Distinguishing between the different prophetic utterances, whether they proceed from true or false spirits.

B. Overcoming the Spirit of Antichrist *1 John 4:3b-6*

Many believers spend hours looking for and guessing who will be the antichrist while missing the fact that the 'spirit' of antichrist is already here. **We see the spirit of antichrist in:**

1. **Opposition:** Those who oppose Biblical values in governments and society.
2. **Another gospel:** They teach 'a different' gospel under the cloak of 'spirituality' or even a Christian banner.

Overcomers and the World

Of God and His Spirit	Of the World and the Spirit of Error
Christ in us.....	Christ NOT in them
Not of the world.....	Of the world
Think-speak a	
Biblical world view.....	Non-Biblical world view
We are of God.....	Not of God
Hear the word of God.....	Do NOT hear the word of God
We know the	
Spirit of truth.....	Walk in the spirit of error

As followers of Christ, we need to mature to the point where we do not allow the opinions of those around us to negatively shape our own convictions or behaviors. We are called to look to Christ and Him alone. *See Matt 27:22 where Pilate follows the crowd.*

1 John 4:1-6 (NKJV)

- :1** Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.
- :2** By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,
- :3** and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God.

And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

- :4** You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.
- :5** They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them.
- :6** We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Matthew 7:15-20 (NKJV)

- :15** "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.
- :16** You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?
- :17** Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.
- :18** A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.
- :19** Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.
- :20** Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

See the back page for a comparison between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the spirit.

**In Christ, I am
transformed from**

This



**Works of the flesh
Galatians 5:19-21**

Now the works of the flesh are evident,
which are:

Adultery
Fornication
Uncleanness
Lewdness
Idolatry
Sorcery
Hatred
Contentions
Jealousies
Outbursts of wrath [anger]
selfish ambitions
Dissensions
Heresies
Envy
Murders
Drunkenness
Revelries

...and the like; of which I tell you
beforehand, just as I also told you in
time past, that those who practice such
things will not inherit the kingdom of
God.

to

This



**Fruit of the Spirit
Galatians 5:22-23**

But the fruit of the Spirit is

Love
Joy
Peace
Longsuffering
Kindness
Goodness
Faithfulness
Gentleness
Self-control

...Against such there is no law.

Galatians 5:24-26

And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with
its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us
also walk in the Spirit. **Let us not become...**

Conceited
Provoking one another
Envyng one another.