

“Those people belong to this world, so they speak from the world’s viewpoint, and the world listens to them. But we belong to God, and those who know God listen to us. If they do not belong to God, they do not listen to us. That is how we know if someone has the Spirit of truth or the spirit of deception.” 1 John 4:5-6 NLT

lectio // 1 John 4:1-6

John’s litmus test: if people believe that Christ physically came in a real body, they are “of” God. If not, they are a part of the anti-christ. John thought it was simple. It was simple because the “prophets” or “spokespersons” for God were traveling around with some great credentials and had amassed followers. One problem, they denied the deity of Christ. It’s too much to get into here, but if Christ did not physically live, die and resurrect from the dead, then the whole Bible is nullified - a waste. It’s an all or nothing kind of belief. There are absolute truths that are worth defending (as to faith) and this is primary. Humans have always wanted to pick their own flavors of truth. This allows us to have autonomy, a sense of self and a that freedom that sets us a part from all other creation. But do we really pick our own truth when God is absolute and his ways are always just, right and true? We wouldn’t even have the ability to know him if he didn’t first love us, first reach out to pursue us. And, God is a jealous lover, he will not share himself with another. Whether that’s a person, a false-god, a current cause or even an idea - he will not share. The anti-christ or the “spirit of the age” is always wanting to distract humans from the truth. The evil one is always and forever asking the question, “did God really say...” John mentions these phrases that really arrest me, “Spirit of truth,” or “spirit of deception.” Which do I follow? Which do I promote? Which do I live my whole life based on?

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Dad,

I get that “truth” was considered to be a commodity that people peddled like a cheap set of kitchenware, but it has always been so difficult to hold to your absolute, unchanging truth verses the roller-coaster ride of human truth that leans to selfishness and self-promotion. These human truths can never fulfill what they promise! Because they are not only based on a subtle distortion of who you are, but their destructiveness is not apparent right away. Our human truths may last for several generations, resulting in massive damage to the soul and spirit for those who fall for them. We (the Church) do not seem to be protected from these master manipulations of “truth,” these shades of grey with shards of death. Help us oh God. Help us for the sake of your great name and mercy!

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root