



Reflection and Discussion Guide - Week 8

1 John 3:19-4:6

By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. 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.

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 the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is 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; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

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1. In this passage, John referenced the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers. One of the things he talked about is how the Spirit gives us **confident assurance** (v. 3:19-24). In what way(s) does the Spirit do this? How does the confidence and assurance the Spirit provides help us overcome self-condemnation? How does it help our prayer life?
 2. Another thing John talked about in this passage is how the Holy Spirit gives us **discernment** (v. 4:1-3,5-6). What did John mean when he said that we should “test the spirits” to see whether they are from God, and why is this important? What are some of the testing criteria we need to evaluate?
 3. John also indicated that the Holy Spirit gives us **victory** over sin and evil (v. 4:4). Discuss the significance of how John spoke about our victory in the present tense, and not just as a future promise. How did Jesus secure our victory? Would you describe your own life as one of living in victory or defeat? Why? What are some keys to living victoriously right now?