



LIVING THE LIFE "Walking in Truth" 1 John 4:1-21

No. 3448

Stuart Briscoe

The Christian church in its early days was very conscious of the struggle for the souls of men and women between "the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood." Modern culture tends to disregard such concepts, but the church must take them seriously, as John did.

I. Recognizing the Importance of Truth.

- A. The claim of Jesus—"I came into the world to testify to the truth." John 18:37
- B. The ministry of the Spirit—"He will guide you into all truth." John 16:13
- C. The basis of worship—"We must worship in spirit and in truth." John 4:24
- D. The pathway to freedom—"the truth will set you free." John 8:32
- E. The means of sanctification—"Sanctify them by the truth." John 17:17
- F. The principle of life—"My children are walking in truth." 3 John 4

II. Evaluating the Claims to Truth.

- A. "Do not believe every spirit." v. 1
 - 1. The dangers of naively believing everything you hear.
 - 2. Those who speak may be motivated by different spirits.
 - 3. If "the Spirit of God is working," so too is "the spirit of antichrist."
- B. "Test the spirits to see whether they are from God." v. 1
 - 1. The test of acknowledging. vv. 2-3
 - a. Acknowledging that Jesus is Christ.
 - b. Acknowledging that Christ came from God. See 1:1
 - c. Acknowledging Christ "has come in the flesh."
 - 2. The test of associating. vv. 5-6
 - a. If the listeners are godly—the message is "from God."
 - b. If the listeners are worldly—the message is "from the world."

III. Enjoying the Fruits of Truth.

- A. Knowing what it is to "overcome" the opponents of the truth. v. 4
- B. Enjoying the resources of the indwelling Spirit.

IV. Applying the Message of Truth.

- A. Changing attitudes towards truth.
 - 1. Truth in "pre-modern" times.
 - 2. Truth in the modern age—Enlightenment thinking.
 - 3. Truth in post-modernism.
- B. Contemporary insistence on tolerance.
 - 1. The decision that knowledge of "truth" is not attainable.
 - 2. The conclusion that tolerance of all "truths" is virtuous.
 - 3. "Tolerance is the virtue of the man without convictions." G.K.C.

Point to Ponder: Was Jesus lying, mistaken, or right when he said, "I am...the truth?"