

# God is Greater

*Ray Stedman*

I. Introduction. Text: I John 4:4-6.

II. We are to test the spirits to see whether they are from God.

A. The test is that Jesus is the Christ.

B. It must be more than acknowledged—it must be confessed or lived by.

III. Three distinct groups.

A. Little children who overcame the false teaching of their time.

1. They overcame the false teaching by the greatness of God.

2. Despite all appearances, God is incomparably greater than His enemies are.

3. In these days of darkness, people need to lift up their eyes on high. (Isaiah 40)

4. All this incomparable wisdom is available to the humblest believer.

5. You do not have to understand all the wisdom and intelligence of God to understand it—trust it in childlike faith.

6. It is necessary for man to examine things, but we must measure everything by the Word of God because man's thinking is blinded.

a. Only God has presented His credentials through resurrection—we are to accept the Word of God having come to Christ.

b. We must come to the Scriptures always with the attitude of a little child. (Proverbs 3:4-5)

B. The false teachers who listen to the world.

1. They say what the world wants to hear.

2. They are invariably popular.

3. Everything they say is a basic assumption of the greatness of man.

4. Man can have terrible intellectual pride in the face of appalling failure.

5. The test is whether something glorifies man or God.

C. "We" refers to the Apostles.

1. They have the task of declaring authoritatively the task of God.
2. The Apostles watched Jesus and heard all that He did—they beheld His glory.
3. The test of truth and error is whether men receive the Apostolic testimony or not.

IV. Testing spirits has nothing to do with how we treat people—it has to do with discerning what teaching to follow.

**Application questions:**

1. What is the proper attitude to have towards the Word of God? How is it characterized?

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2. What are two tests of truth spoken of in the message?

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3. Was there ever a time when you needed to test a situation or teaching for truth? What did you do? Would you have done anything different? Explain.

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