

First John 4:1-6

First John 4:1 – “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.”

27 [e]	3361 [e]	3956 [e]	4151 [e]	4100 [e]	235 [e]	1381 [e]	3588 [e]	4151 [e]		
Agapētoi	mē	panti	pneumati	pisteuete	alla	dokimazete	ta	pneumata		
1 Ἀγαπητοί ,	μὴ	παντὶ	πνεύματι	πιστεύετε ,	ἀλλὰ	δοκιμάζετε	τὰ	πνεύματα ,		
Beloved	not	every	spirit	believe	but	test	the	spirits		
Adj-VMP	Adv	Adj-DNS	N-DNS	V-PMA-2P	Conj	V-PMA-2P	Art-ANP	N-ANP		

1487 [e]	1537 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	1510 [e]	3754 [e]	4183 [e]	5578 [e]	1831 [e]	1519 [e]	3588 [e]
ei	ek	tou	Theou	estin	hoti	polloi	pseudoprophētai	exelēlythasin	eis	ton
εἰ	ἐκ	τοῦ	Θεοῦ	ἐστίν ,	ὅτι	πολλοὶ	ψευδοπροφήται	ἐξεληλύθασιν	εἰς	τὸν
whether	of	-	God	they are	because	many	false prophets	have gone out	into	the
Conj	Prep	Art-GMS	N-GMS	V-PIA-3S	Conj	Adj-NMP	N-NMP	V-RIA-3P	Prep	Art-AMS

2889 [e]
kosmon
κόσμον .
world
N-AMS

1. The two commands:
 - a. 3:23 – believe in the name of God’s Son Jesus Christ
 - b. 4:1 – do NOT believe every spirit
2. True faith is not blind faith. True faith is placed in an object that has been tested.
3. “do not believe every spirit” is in the present tense which indicates the readers were tending to think uncritically and accept false teaching.
4. The secessionists also claimed to have the Spirit as John had told his readers in the previous verse they did.
5. If the person claims to have the Spirit of God the readers are to show discernment and test them.
6. Testing the spirits means to evaluate their utterances, their teaching or their doctrine.
7. There were already existing among the church MANY false prophets.
 - a. False prophets are convincing – Matt. 24:24 and Rev. 13:13
 - b. False prophets appear genuine – Matthew 7:15 wolves in sheep’s clothing
 - c. False prophets lead people away – Acts 20:28-30
 - d. False prophets introduce serious heresies – 2 Peter 2:1
 - e. False prophets “have gone out into the world” to evangelize – 1 John 4:1
 - f. False prophets find success in the world because they speak like the world – 1 John 4:5
8. Test by:
 - a. Fruit – Matthew 7:15-20
 - i. Righteousness 1 John 3:10
 - ii. Love 1 John 4:8
 - b. Doctrine – 1 John 4:1-6
 - i. Deuteronomy 13:1-5
 - c. Accuracy – Deuteronomy 18:22

i. Jeremiah 23:9-40 and 28 (Hananiah)

9. Similar command in 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22

First John 4:2 – “By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God,”

1722 [e]	3778 [e]	1097 [e]	3588 [e]	4151 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	3956 [e]	4151 [e]	3739 [e]	3670 [e]	
En	toutō	ginōskete	to	Pneuma	tu	Theou	pan	pneuma	ho	homologeī	
2 Ἐν	τούτῳ	γινώσκετε	τὸ	Πνεῦμα	τοῦ	Θεοῦ	:	πᾶν	πνεῦμα	ὃ	ὁμολογεῖ
By	this	you know	the	Spirit	-	of God	:	every	spirit	that	confesses
Prep	DPro-DNS	V-PIA-2P	Art-ANS	N-ANS	Art-GMS	N-GMS		Adj-NNS	N-NNS	RelPro-NNS	V-PIA-3S

2424 [e]	5547 [e]	1722 [e]	4561 [e]	2064 [e]	1537 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	1510 [e]		
Iēsun	Christon	en	sarki	elēlythota	ek	tu	Theou	estin		
Ἰησοῦν	Χριστὸν	ἐν	σαρκὶ	ἐληλυθότα	,	ἐκ	τοῦ	Θεοῦ	ἐστίν	;
Jesus	Christ	in	[the] flesh	having come	,	of	-	God	is	
N-AMS	N-AMS	Prep	N-DFS	V-RPA-AMS		Prep	Art-GMS	N-GMS	V-PIA-3S	

1. John provides the test for believers to use
 - a. It is Christological – Who do you say Jesus is?
2. “acknowledges” or “confesses” – from *homologeī* means “profess,” “acknowledge,” “praise”. It means “to voice the same conclusion” and “to align with,” to “endorse”. It is an unwavering confession that is more than verbal acknowledgment but includes an alignment that indicates this is the declaration of your position as well.
3. John’s use of “Jesus Christ” is important.
 - a. This is the name of the MAN who is the MESSIAH who is DIETY.
 - b. Jesus Christ is the Man who is God and the God who became Man.
 - c. This union is a reality and is eternally enduring.
 - d. John uses “Jesus Christ” 8x – 1 John 1:3; 2:1; 3:23; 4:2; 5:6; 5:20; 2 John 3 and 7
4. The Spirit of God was sent to give glory to Jesus Christ and to reveal him as said in John 16:14. So, any spirit that does not do this is the spirit that will also empower AntiChrist.
5. 1 Corinthians 12:3
6. “that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh” is perfect form of the verb “to come” meaning that this is a reference to Christ’s status as the eternal God who is in the flesh as a man and more than a historical reference to Jesus having lived in the flesh.
 - a. Jesus came in water and in blood in 1 John 5:6 which would contradict the secessionist who could accept Jesus as coming/appearing in a body (water), but not dying (blood) for the salvation of mankind.

First John 4:3 – “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.”

2532 [e]	3956 [e]	4151 [e]	3739 [e]	3361 [e]	3670 [e]	3588 [e]	2424 [e]	5547 [e]	1722 [e]	4561 [e]
kai	pan	pneuma	ho	mē	homologeī	ton	lēsou	christon	en	sarki
3 καὶ	πᾶν	πνεῦμα	ὁ	μὴ	ὁμολογεῖ	τὸν	Ἰησοῦν	, χριστὸν	ἐν	σαρκὶ
and	any	spirit	that	not	confesses	-	Jesus	Christ	in the	flesh
Conj	Adj-NNS	N-NNS	RelPro-NNS	Adv	V-PIA-3S	Art-AMS	N-AMS	N-AMS	Prep	N-DFS

2064 [e]	1537 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	3756 [e]	1510 [e]	2532 [e]	3778 [e]	1510 [e]	3588 [e]	3588 [e]	500 [e]
elēlythota	ek	tou	Theou	ouk	estin	kai	touto	estin	to	tou	antichristou
ἐληλυθότα	ἐκ	τοῦ	Θεοῦ	οὐκ	ἔστιν	καὶ	τοῦτό	ἔστιν	τὸ	τοῦ	ἀντιχρίστου
has come	of	-	God	not	is	and	this	is	that	of the	antichrist
V-RPA-AMS	Prep	Art-GMS	N-GMS	Adv	V-PIA-3S	Conj	DPro-NNS	V-PIA-3S	Art-NNS	Art-GMS	N-GMS

3739 [e]	191 [e]	3754 [e]	2064 [e]	2532 [e]	3568 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	2889 [e]	1510 [e]	2235 [e]
ho	akēkoate	hoti	erchetai	kai	nyn	en	tō	kosmō	estin	ēdē
ὁ	ἀκηκόατε	ὅτι	ἔρχεται	, καὶ	νῦν	ἐν	τῷ	κόσμῳ	ἔστιν	ἤδη
which	you heard	that	is coming	and	now	in	the	world	is	already
RelPro-ANS	V-RIA-2P	Conj	V-PIM/P-3S	Conj	Adv	Prep	Art-DMS	N-DMS	V-PIA-3S	Adv

1. 1 John says believers are from God and indwelt by God (4:12, 13, 15)
2. The spirit of antichrist operates in the secessionists is from the world which is where Satan operates (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11)
3. The secessionists have gone out from the believers and joined the world

First John 4:4 – “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.”

4771 [e]	1537 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	1510 [e]	5040 [e]	2532 [e]	3528 [e]	846 [e]	3754 [e]	3173 [e]
Hymeis	ek	tou	Theou	este	teknia	kai	nenikēkate	autous	hoti	meizōn
4 Ὑμεῖς	ἐκ	τοῦ	Θεοῦ	ἐστε	, τεκνία	, καὶ	νενικήκατε	αὐτούς	, ὅτι	μείζων
You	of	-	God	are	little children	and	have overcome	them	because	greater
PPro-N2P	Prep	Art-GMS	N-GMS	V-PIA-2P	N-VNP	Conj	V-RIA-2P	PPro-AM3P	Conj	Adj-NMS-C

1510 [e]	3588 [e]	1722 [e]	4771 [e]	2228 [e]	3588 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	2889 [e]
estin	ho	en	hymīn	ē	ho	en	tō	kosmō
ἔστιν	ὁ	ἐν	ὑμῖν	, ἢ	ὁ	ἐν	τῷ	κόσμῳ
is	he who [is]	in	you	than	he who [is]	in	the	world
V-PIA-3S	Art-NMS	Prep	PPro-D2P	Conj	Art-NMS	Prep	Art-DMS	N-DMS

1. This does not mean John’s readers have won an intellectual debate, are better educated, or more articulate. It means John’s readers have NOT given into the false teaching. The false teaching may still be spreading and increasing converts, but it did not spread into the hearts and minds of John’s readers. In that way John’s readers have overcome.
2. “have overcome” – *nenikekate* – is perfect tense which is a past victory that continues into the present.
3. The enemy is the prince of the power of the air that dominates the kosmos (world).
 - a. The world expresses the philosophy, the values, the worldview and the agenda of the devil.

- b. Satan (and, the world) cannot express a commitment to Jesus Christ. That is against everything Satan and the world are working with and working for.
- 4. “speak from the viewpoint of the world” – *ek tou kosmou* – means their teaching about the person of Christ is shaped by the world and cannot rise to the original meaning of the gospel message. The secessionist may be religious and philosophical, but they cannot rise to the level of God’s revelation.

First John 4:5 – “They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them.”

846 [e]	1537 [e]	3588 [e]	2889 [e]	1510 [e]	1223 [e]	3778 [e]	1537 [e]	3588 [e]	2889 [e]	2980 [e]
autoi	ek	tou	kosmou	eisin	dia	touto	ek	tou	kosmou	lalousin
5 αὐτοὶ	ἐκ	τοῦ	κόσμου	εἰσὶν ;	διὰ	τοῦτο	ἐκ	τοῦ	κόσμου	λαλοῦσιν ,
They	of	the	world	are	because of	this	out from	the	world	they speak
PPro-NM3P	Prep	Art-GMS	N-GMS	V-PIA-3P	Prep	DPro-ANS	Prep	Art-GMS	N-GMS	V-PIA-3P

2532 [e]	3588 [e]	2889 [e]	846 [e]	191 [e]
kai	ho	kosmos	autōn	akouei
καὶ	ὁ	κόσμος	αὐτῶν	ἀκούει .
and	the	world	them	listens to
Conj	Art-NMS	N-NMS	PPro-GM3P	V-PIA-3S

1. There is unity between the false teachers and the kosmos (and, Satan)
2. “speak” – *lalousin* – is present tense which means they speak continually.
 - a. The false teachers are continually speaking from the kosmos.
 - b. Their source is the world system. This is revealed:
 - i. In their concepts
 - ii. In who listens (agrees, follows) them
3. If the false teacher’s source is the world then they can never speak or act higher than the world system. The stream (false teachers) can never rise or hold a higher level of commitment than the source (the world). This is why many people start out claiming Christian truth, but in the end they sink to the level of their source which is the world.

First John 4:6 – “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.”

1473 [e]	1537 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	1510 [e]	3588 [e]	1097 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	191 [e]	1473 [e]
hēmeis	ek	tou	Theou	esmen	ho	ginōskōn	ton	Theon	akouei	hēmōn
6 ἡμεῖς	ἐκ	τοῦ	Θεοῦ	ἐσμεν	ὁ	γινώσκων	τὸν	Θεὸν	, ἀκούει	ἡμῶν
We	of	-	God	are	the [one]	knowing	-	God	listens to	us
PPro-N1P	Prep	Art-GMS	N-GMS	V-PIA-1P	Art-NMS	V-PPA-NMS	Art-AMS	N-AMS	V-PIA-3S	PPro-G1P

3739 [e]	3756 [e]	1510 [e]	1537 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	3756 [e]	191 [e]	1473 [e]	1537 [e]	3778 [e]	1097 [e]
hos	ouk	estin	ek	tou	Theou	ouk	akouei	hēmōn	ek	toutou	ginōskomen
ὃς	οὐκ	ἔστιν	ἐκ	τοῦ	Θεοῦ	, οὐκ	ἀκούει	ἡμῶν	· ἐκ	τούτου	γινώσκομεν
he who	not	is	of	-	God	not	listens to	us	By	this	we know
RelPro-NMS	Adv	V-PIA-3S	Prep	Art-GMS	N-GMS	Adv	V-PIA-3S	FPro-G1P	Prep	DPro-GNS	V-PIA-1P

3588 [e]	4151 [e]	3588 [e]	225 [e]	2532 [e]	3588 [e]	4151 [e]	3588 [e]	4106 [e]
to	pneuma	tēs	alētheias	kai	to	pneuma	tēs	planēs
τὸ	πνεῦμα	τῆς	ἀληθείας	καὶ	τὸ	πνεῦμα	τῆς	πλάνης
the	spirit	-	of truth	and	the	spirit	-	of falsehood
Art-ANS	N-ANS	Art-GFS	N-GFS	Conj	Art-ANS	N-ANS	Art-GFS	N-GFS