

Worksheet #10: 1 John 4:1–11 (NKJV)

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.² By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,³ and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the *spirit* of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

⁴ You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.⁵ They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them.⁶ We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.⁹ In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Interpretation: Read through the passage, and then review and make notes under the questions below.

1. How does 3:24 help us understand the reference to the “spirits” in 4:1? Explain the relationship between the “spirits” and the “false prophets” in 4:1.

 2. Based on the test for spirits prescribed in 4:2–3a, what seems to have been part of the message taught by the “false prophets”? Specifically, what truth about Christ is denied, and in what sense would this denial be in “the spirit of antichrist” (4:3b)?

 3. Who is the person described as “He who is in you” who has overcome “he who is in the world” (4:4)? How does John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11, 33 affect the way you read this verse?

 4. Who are the individuals (“they”) described as being “of the world” in verse 5? With whom does John contrast these individuals in verse 6, and what is the characteristic that distinguishes between “he who knows God” and “he who is not of God”?

 5. Why is it so important to John that we love one another (4:7)?

 6. What does it mean to be “born of” and “know” God (4:7)? How are these two ideas related?

 7. Why does John use the statement “God is love” as the reason behind his observation that “he who does not love does not know God” (4:8)?

 8. What does it mean to “live through Him” (4:9)?

 9. Review your notes on the meaning of the term “propitiation” (4:10) from your study of 1 John 2:2. You may want to consult a study Bible, commentary or Bible dictionary for some additional background on this term.

- Application:** Take time to reflect on the implications of this passage for your own life today.
10. What does this passage mean for your walk with the Lord?
