



LOVE SO AMAZING

"The Majesty of God's So Amazing Love"

2022 THEME

1 Jn. 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

This morning, we begin a mini-series regarding “*The Majesty of God’s So Amazing Love*,” as found in chapter four of John’s First Epistle. The presentation of God’s love in this chapter is truly “so amazing.” Before we observe the majesty and magnitude of God’s love, we must consider the spiritual opposition that will be encountered. We will begin by observing “A SERIOUS WARNING TO CONSIDER” in 1 Jn. 4:1-6.

I. A SERIOUS WARNING TO CONSIDER, 4:1-6

❖ A wonderful introduction to this warning is found in the previous chapter:

1 Jn. 3:18 My little children, **let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.**

19 And hereby **we know that we are of the truth**, and shall assure our hearts before him.

20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, *then* **have we confidence toward God.**

22 And **whatsoever we ask, we receive of him,**
because we keep his commandments, and do those
things that are pleasing in his sight.

23 And this is his commandment, That we should
believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love
one another, as he gave us commandment.

24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth
in him, and he in him. And **hereby we know that he
abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.**

- ❖ Love for God is to be genuine, not just lip-service, “but in deed and in truth.”
- ❖ Salvation is assured by knowing truth that affects the heart.
- ❖ Believers, assured with truth, have confidence that produces fellowship with God.
- ❖ Such confidence toward God is manifested in knowing several things:

❖ Believers are...

- Confident of His love;
- Confident of knowing we are of the truth;
- Confident of knowing that because we are obedient, we receive from God what we ask;
- Confident of knowing that we have fellowship with Him by the power of the Holy Spirit that indwells the believer.

- ❖ Having such confidence does not preclude spiritual challenges from our adversary.
- ❖ As we begin chapter four, we are reminded to keep our guard up against spirits that are deceitful:

2 Cor. 11:13 For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

14 And **no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.**

15 **Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness;** whose end shall be according to their works.

2 Cor. 2:11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us:
for **we are not ignorant of his devices.**

A.The Wicked Spirit, 4:1-4

2 Cor. 4:4 In whom **the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not**, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

1 Jn. 5:19 *And* we know that we are of God, and **the whole world lieth in wickedness.**

❖ The Lord Jesus warned that many make professions, but some are false:

Mt. 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.
22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?
23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

- ❖ How many regular churchgoing believers who might describe themselves as born again Christians are not saved?
- ❖ The consensus seems to be around 70 to 75%.
- ❖ Over the years, many prominent preachers have given startling opinions regarding their perception of the percentage of lost church members:
 - Bob Jones, Sr. ...in the 1940's he also fixed the estimate at 50%.

- Dr. B. R. Lakin estimated that 75% are lost.
- W. A. Criswell would be surprised to see even 25% of his church members in heaven.
- Dr. Bob Gray, longtime pastor of the prestigious Trinity Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Florida, once said that probably 75% of those he baptized were not saved.
- Billy Graham puts the figure at 85% while A. W. Tozer and Southern Baptist consultant Jim Elliff raise it to 90%.” <https://unsavedbeliever.net/index.php/how-many-are-not-saved/>

- ❖ Overall, the current research revealed that only 9% of all American adults have a biblical worldview. The survey conducted in February 2021 by the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University found that most American adults (69 percent) are "self-identified Christians."
- ❖ While they hold to the basic tenets of the faith, it is also worth noting that self-identified Christians hold to some beliefs that contradict the Bible, such as believing that people are basically good (72 percent) and that there's no absolute truth (52 percent).

- ❖ Additionally, 58 percent of self-identified Christians believe that the Holy Spirit is not a real, living being, 64 percent say all faiths are of equal value and 57 percent believe in karma.

<http://barna.org/research/barna-survey-examines-changes-in-worldview-among-christians-over-the-past-13-years/#>

1.The Sobering Word, 4:1

a.The Requirement, 4:1a “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God...”

- ❖ The message is to the “Beloved,” a gentle reminder to the believers that they are loved.

❖ Don't be gullible and hoodwinked by religious phonies – “Beloved, believe not every spirit...”

❖ We know that Apostolic Age “gifts” were to cease:

1 Cor. 13:8 Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

❖ Believers are commanded to “try the spirits.” Such “trying” is proving what is good, and legitimate.

Original Word: δοκιμάζω

Part of Speech: Verb (**Imperative**)

Transliteration: dokimazo

Definition: to test, by implication to approve

Usage: I put to the test, prove, examine; I distinguish by testing, approve after testing; I am fit.

dokimázō – properly, to try (test) to *show something is acceptable* (real, approved); **put to the test to reveal what is good** (*genuine*)

<https://biblehub.com/greek/1381.htm>

- ❖ The way to spot the counterfeit is to know the true.
- ❖ Believers are to discern if some “spiritual” incident being faced is actually Scriptural?

1 Thess. 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. (“**Prove**” is δοκιμάζω)

b. The Reason, 4:1b “...because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

- ❖ Spiritual opposition and warfare is a reality that must be guarded against.

Eph 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, **that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.**

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but **against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.**

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that **ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.**

❖ Jesus taught His disciples a parable about the deceitful work of the devil:

Mt. 13:36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

37 He answered and said unto them, **He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;**

38 **The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*;**

39 **The enemy that sowed them is the devil;** the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

- ❖ From the time this warning was given, until the present, spiritual wickedness has battled against Christ, Christians, and the truth.
- ❖ The Apostles began preaching the Gospel and false prophets arose called Judaizers, legalizers, and Gnostics.
- ❖ The Anabaptists expanded the Gospel outreach and were martyred by formalized religious persecutors.
- ❖ Martin Luther began the Reformation and Ignatius Loyola and the Jesuits, initiated the Counter-reformation along with the Inquisition.

- ❖ John Wesley began preaching the Gospel and then Deism arose with Voltaire and Thomas Paine.
- ❖ Charles Spurgeon was mightily used of God and then Robert Ingersoll began propagating his atheism and hatred of Christianity. Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Charles Taze Russell, and Mary Baker Eddy were contemporaries that arose with their cults and false doctrine.
- ❖ God stirred the hearts of William Carey, Adoniram Judson, Hudson Taylor, David Livingstone, and other missionaries to evangelize the world, and then Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, H. G. Wells, Bertrand Russell, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and Charles Darwin gained popularity to infect the world.

- ❖ The King James Bible was produced and then came contemporaries, Westcott and Hort, and their influence to produce perverted Bibles.
- ❖ Today, Bible believers proclaim the truth and modern Christianity counters it with a worldly, easy believe-ism, producing counterfeit “Christians.”

Luke 18:8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.
Nevertheless **when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?**

Summary

- ❖ The Holy Spirit indwells the believers and provides knowledge that produces confidence of spiritual truth, enabling believers to live a victorious life in Christ.
- ❖ The spiritual reality includes a warning about spiritual warfare, requiring believers to test or try the spirits that are confrontational.
- ❖ Believers need to remember that overcoming spiritual bondage began at salvation and “greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

Conclusion

Heb. 10:22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;)

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Rom. 8:37 Nay, in all these things **we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.**