

FIRST JOHN 3:19–4:6

‘We know that we belong to the truth’

25 & 28 April 2024

Download from <http://1john.currah.download>

Discourse structure

Part 1: Our Fellowship with God 1.1 – 2.17

Part 2: Our Adversaries 2.18 – 3.18

Part 3: Our Christian Faith 3.19 – 5.5

VIII. We Have Assurance 3.19-24

IX. We have God’s Spirit 4:1-6

X. We Have God’s Love 4.7-13

XI. We Have the Saviour 4.14-21

XII. We have the Christ 5.1-5

Part 4: Our Confidence with God 5.6-21

A. We Have Assurance, 3.19-24

The troubled heart, 3.19-20

Jesus said, “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ... My peace I give to you. ...

Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.” *John 14:1, 27 ESV*

- We may believe truth, but we do not own it.
- It is natural to feel shame or guilt,
- because we can hide nothing from God.
- But we calm those feelings with God’s help

The confident heart, 3.21-22

Jesus promised, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth” *John 14:15-17 ESV*

For power through prayer:

- Get confidence before God.
- Keep his commands.
- Do what pleases him.

His commandments, 3.23-24a

- Command: How are two actions really only one command?
- Name: Son (unique) = Jesus (human) = Christ (king forever).

The Spirit whom he gave to us, 3.24b

Jesus promised, “The Spirit of truth... he dwells with you and will be among you.” *John 14:17*

- Lives: ~Dwells. Real Presence. He likes us.
- Spirit: What are some ways in which God’s Spirit operates among us?
- Dwells: What are some ways in which our church could experience more of this?

B. We have God’s Spirit, 4:1-6

Test the spirits, 4.1

Paul exhorted, “Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.” *1 Thess. 5:19-21 ESV*

- Test: How?
- The spirits: What are these?
- False prophets: Who were and are some of these?

The Spirit of God, 4.2

Paul asserted, “No one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.” *1 Cor. 12:3*

- Alternatively: Jesus is Christ come into the world in the flesh.
- Grammar: One confesses what a person is, not only something about that person.
- Logic: To say that Jesus Christ came in the flesh would hardly be a confession of faith, for even atheists and antichristian religions will admit that much.

Traditional translation
 Every spirit | is from God
 which | confesses > **that**
 Jesus Christ | **has** come
 in the flesh

Grammatical translation
 Every spirit | is from God
 which | confesses >
 Jesus | **is** Christ
 having-come
 in the flesh

Red = supplied text

1 John 4:2-3

² πᾶν πνεῦμα ὃ ὁμολογεῖ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἔστιν.

² Every spirit which confesses “Jesus **is** Christ in flesh having-come” from the God is.

³ πᾶν πνεῦμα ὃ μὴ ὁμολογεῖ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν.

³ Every spirit which not confesses **the** Jesus from the God not is.

Greek names can have a definite article, making them more specific. The article with Jesus in verse 3 serves as a demonstrative pointing back to Jesus in verse 2.

The antichrist, 4:3

Paul warned, “In later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons” *1 Tim 4:1*

- spirit: prophets, preachers, teachers, their message, and their inspiration.
- Grammar: “the Jesus” → the Jesus who is Christ come in the flesh (verse 2).

The one who is in you, 4:4-5

Jesus warned, “Many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.” *Matthew 24:11*

- You: who confess that Jesus is the Christ.
- They: who deny that Jesus is the Christ.
- We (4:6): who teach that Jesus is the Christ.

We recognize the Spirit, 4:6

Jesus promised, “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth.” *John 14:16-17*

- We: Jesus apostles who lived with Jesus.
- Cerinthius (c. 50-100 CE): taught that (a) Jesus was only human, (b) received the Christ at baptism, and (c) lost the Christ at his crucifixion.