Blessed Assurance

Discernment in a World of Deception
1 John 4:1-6

Presented by
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The Big Idea: In a world full of deception, we need spiritual discernment.

- *Spiritual Discernment* – The spiritually produced ability to test and distinguish right from wrong, good from evil, in agreement with God's Word.

Here at the beginning of chapter 4, John offers his readers. . .

An Important Warning (v. 1)

- There are many false prophets in the world today! (Matthew 24:11)

A Simple Test (vv. 2-3)

- Does the messenger elevate Christ or creature?
    - The Spirit of God lifts Christ above all creation.
    - The spirit of the Antichrist exalts creature and creation above Creator.

A Helpful Safeguard (vv. 4-6)

- We must learn to recognize and listen to the Father's voice. (John 10:27)

The Bottom Line: A disciple must depend on spiritual discernment to defend against spiritual drift.

Questions:

1. What does John want you to know in this passage?
2. Where do you see competing messages in our culture today? Why do you think we're tempted to accept them without testing?
3. When you hear a sermon, read a book, or listen to a podcast, what are some practical ways to tell whether Christ is being elevated or whether the focus has quietly shifted to the speaker, to self, or to something else?
4. What habits help you become familiar with the Father's voice? How might regular time in Scripture help you recognize what is false? What is one step you can take this week to grow in discernment?

Today's Worship Songs:
This Is Our God
Firm Foundation (He Won't)
We Exalt Thee
Praise the Lord Forever
You Are My King (Amazing Love)