

1 John 4:1-6
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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. By this you know the Spirit of God. every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God. 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 Antichrist, which you have heard was coming and is now already in the world. 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. They are of the world, therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. 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.

Jesus you promised, before you went to the cross, that you would give us the Spirit of truth who would guide us into all truth, and teach us all things. And so Holy Spirit we pray that you do just that today. We certainly are living in a time of competing views, and ideas, and ideologies, and I pray God that you would give us wisdom. That you would give us discernment, to understand what is real, what is true. And Lord, that we would hold tightly to that. And God that by the truth of your word, our lives would be transformed in a way that brings honor and glory to you, but also, Lord, a way that shines brightly in a dark world. So God work in us we pray, we ask this in Jesus name, and all those that agreed said, Amen.

You may be seated.

I think you would probably agree that we are living in an amazing time in history. We have a level of wealth, and the level of well being that is truly extraordinary. And it's not just here in the US, it's not just in the West. When you look at the data, look at the statistics about things like this throughout the world, wealth and well being it's phenomenal to see what has happened, especially in the last 50 years and increased throughout the world. I have long been a student of history and in my studies of history, I'm not sure that I would choose to live at a different time in history. I know sometimes we have a way of romanticizing certain periods of time, we think, "Oh, it'd be so glorious and so great to live during that period of time." But in light of the modern amenities of science and technology, and medicine, and markets, and all of these things that we are privileged to experience in our world today, I can't imagine a better time to be alive.

But one of the drawbacks, and I think as soon as I say it, you're all going to go Yeah, that's that's gonna wash over your go Yeah, that's true. One of the drawbacks of living at this period of time is that we are bombarded by a mass of information constantly that we cannot fully process. It is coming at us so much all the time, it is hard to even quantify the the astounding amount of data and information that comes at us. I was looking at some of the stats on this this week.

There were 300 hours of video uploaded to YouTube every minute. Try and put your mind around that, 300 hours of video every minute that is uploaded to YouTube. 95 million pictures will be uploaded to Instagram today. 63,000 Google searches happen per second. 500 million tweets daily. About half of those from our president

As a result of this constant flow of information, we have had to change the way that we interact with information. Because we, we cannot process all of it, at the same time. And really this is a big part of the reason why the social media that is available to us is so successful, things like Twitter, and Instagram, and Facebook and so forth. They're so successful, because they make it possible for us to just quickly look at a piece of data really fast, and our brains in a fraction of a second, second, they categorize whether or not it's a value to us in the moment, and we just swipe on by and go to the next thing, but we cannot fully process everything that's coming at us. And it's created this horrible feedback loop, because we have the ability to create so much data so quickly, and broadcast it so globally, so fast, that the amount of data increases exponentially and there's no way that we can fully grab onto it and understand everything that's coming at us constantly.

Now, there are some researchers who say that as a result of this, our attention span has been severely affected. And I'm not entirely sure that our attention span has been entirely affected. The reason I say that is that people will go and watch three hour long movies, and they will binge watch eight hours of a Netflix series. So clearly, you have the ability to engage with something for a long period of time. So it's not necessarily the truth that our attention span has been severely affected. It's just that we cannot process all the data that is coming at us at any given time.

And another problem with this is that we are not really sure what information we can trust. So we have come into a new whole thing of what is real and what is fake news. And it's not going to get any better. In fact, everything that is beginning to come into the pipeline is going to make it a lot more difficult to be

able to determine what is genuine and what is not. what is true and what is a counterfeit.

One of these things that is being aided by what's called machine learning, and artificial intelligence, is something that maybe you've heard about, called Deep fakes. And a deep fake is basically video, or audio, or a picture that has been altered through machine learning and artificial intelligence to make you think that it's something that it's not. So one of the ramifications of this is that video can be produced that looks like a world leader, but it's not a world leader saying something that that person is not saying. And it's because it's coming to the point where it's indistinguishable from real. So they're trying to create countermeasures, but here's the problem as they create countermeasures, they're getting better and better at the technology. And so we will very quickly be in a state where it's hard for us to distinguish between what is real and what is false. Counterfeits are going to become more difficult to discern, and those counterfeits can be very, very dangerous.

And this is exactly what John in this letter is dealing with. As we come to this section that we've actually been going through for the last several weeks. Counterfeits are dangerous. And we need to become good at discerning and discriminating between what is real and what is fake. And John is addressing the same thing though it was 2000 years ago, because John in his day, he was seeing that there was a counterfeit worldview that had similarities. I mean, counterfeits, only a counterfeit because it looks similar to the genuine. And so there was a counterfeit gospel, counterfeit truths, what we would now call heresy, that was beginning to confront the church and would only get worse after his death. John wrote this in about the year 90 or 95 AD, somewhere in between there at the end of the first century. And in the second century, these counterfeits became a real big issue. When you came into the third century then the church tried to address it through a number of different councils—ecumenical church councils, things like the Nicean Council—to, to be able to identify what is true and what is false.

And so in this passage, John has been contrasting true and false followers of God. And in contrast them he wrote this in first John 3:24. We saw it a couple of weeks ago. But just look back one verse from first John four, one first John 3:24.

"Now he who keeps God's commandments abides in God, and God in that person. And by this we know that He [God] abides in us, by the Spirit, whom he has given to us."

So John tells his readers—both of then, and now—that we can discern and know what is true, and that God is in us, the Spirit of God is in us by the Spirit whom God has given to us. And in saying this in first John 3:24, John introduces a new concept. Or maybe we should say a new character: the Spirit who dwells in us. And in most English translations, the word "Spirit" is capitalized, because we're talking about the Holy Spirit

Now bringing the discussion of the Spirit into the discussion, this is the first time John mentions this in this book. But bringing the discussion of the Spirit into this, adds a new layer of complexity for us to deal with. And just as in our time people in John's day, 2000 years ago, they had different views about spirit, or spirits. Every single person that you encounter will have a different view on what is spirit and what are spirits in our day. And so John needs to give some clarification about what he's talking about. So that's what first John four one is.

First, John four, one, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit." We have the Spirit who dwells in us, verse 24, chapter three. And then he says, but do not believe every spirit. Why? Because there are counterfeits in this world. And he's contrasting true and false believers. So he says, do not believe every spirit but test the spirits whether they are of God. Why?

Because many false prophets have gone out into the world. So he corresponds false teachers, and there were people who are promulgating a false teaching and his day, he corresponds those false teachers to these many deceiving spirits that are in the world. And so John and bringing this clarification he informs us point number one on your outline: There are deceiving spirits in the world. And John wanted his readers Christians of the first century to understand this truth. And it's imperative that we living 20 centuries later, understand this truth as well. There are deceiving spirits in the world.

In revealing this John informs us that there is more to reality than we can see. There's more to reality than just what we can interact with, according to our senses. When we can see; what we can hear; what we can touch; what we can smell; what we can taste. There's more to reality than what we can see.

Now to adequately deal with this truth of John is revealing here we need to understand what it meant to the original readers, who would have read this 2000 years ago. And we also need to read it in context of our day. What does it mean for us in our day? So in John's day, 2000 years ago, people did not have a

problem with the proposition, the statement, that there is more to reality than what we can see. They believed in a spiritual dimension. They recognize what we would call supernatural and metaphysical as being a reality, in this cosmos that we live in. That's, that's very different to what you're going to interact with, with a lot of people in modern Western culture. But 2000 years ago, that was the take.

Now for a lot of the people that John was interacting with the growing view that was affecting Christians with something that we now call Gnosticism, during that day it was not identified as Gnosticism, it was just identified by the teachers who were beginning to promulgate this view. And under the basic gnostic view, the idea was that there is a material world, which we can interact with with our senses, and then there is an immaterial world is spiritual world. And according to the Gnostic view, the material world is evil. And the spiritual world is good. The material world is defiled, but the spiritual world is pure and never do the two meet. Because there is bifurcation between the two, and one, one is evil, and one is good and pure, and the other defiled. So that was the basic gnostic view of the world.

Now, there's a couple of problems with this immediately as it relates to what John believed and what the Scriptures teach. First ... first problem, is that it does not accord with the reality of divine revelation. That's not what the Scriptures reveal. The Scriptures do reveal that there is a metaphysical, immaterial, spiritual world, and there is a physical world. But it does not reveal that that world is good and pure in this world is not. There are unclean deceiving things in the spiritual realm, which is exactly what John is saying here. Do not trust do not believe every spirit. Why? Because there are false spirits.

Second problem, this view that the material world is bad and the spiritual world is good. It has a problem with the Christian doctrine of the, the incarnation. What is that? That God whose Spirit, came to this physical world, in the form of a human body? So this gnostic view had a real problem with the incarnation. And we'll, we'll talk more about that as we go through this. So John, in this passage is trying to help Christians of his day, and of our day ultimately, to discern and to discriminate between dangerous counterfeits between truth and error.

And though people in our day don't understand the world in the same way that people in John's day did, because a lot of the more secular minded people that are not followers of Christianity or any religion, they don't believe in a metaphysical world. Though we live in a different world, this... this is helpful for us as well. Why? John reveals that there is more to reality than what we can see or

perceive with our senses. People in our day are skeptical of this idea, this concept. 21st century Westerners, they see the world through a materialistic, naturalistic lens. And so they are skeptical of anything that is metaphysical or supernatural. They immediately put up the skepticism, "That can't possibly be true, because we can't test it empirically."

So the culture that we live in, that has been influenced by a scientific worldview over the last 500 years really, now disbelieve anything that is outside of the naturalistic structure. So anything metaphysical is wrong. And if we can't test it, scientifically, through the scientific method, people are apparently disbelieving that it is that it is real, that it is true. There needs to be some sort of empirical, tangible, verifiable thing to say that something is true. Now here's the thing. People hold that view and a lot of the people that you'll interact with—neighbors, maybe family members, co-workers, friends—who hold to a naturalistic view, that has skepticism about anything supernatural, they will not fully adhere to this view that anything that's not verifiable by observation or test scientifically is not real. Why do we say that because they believe in love. You cannot verify love with empiricism. They believe in human dignity. You cannot verify human dignity, the value of a human being, with verifiable empiricism. You just can't do that. There's a lot of things that cannot be tested that we hold to, in a very strong way. Things like beauty, and morality, and ethical judgments. You cannot make an ethical judgment if you are a pure naturalist, and you do not believe that anything outside of what can be proved empirically through observation scientifically is not true. So you cannot make ethical judgments and yet they make ethical judgments all day long. Value judgments; empiricism cannot answer the questions of truth, morality, beauty, love, dignity. All those things are a problem for pure empiricism. So they believe in things that are outside of the empirical purview.

Now, here's the thing, whether you have a first century gnostic view, or a 21st century naturalistic worldview, according to John, those both may very well be counterfeits. And counterfeits can be incredibly dangerous. What was the first century counterfeit? The first century counterfeit said everything physical is evil. Therefore, Jesus did not come in the flesh, that that was the first century counterfeit. What's the problem with that? Well, if Jesus did not come in the flesh, then his death on the cross is insufficient to deal with your sin and my sin. So Jesus becoming a man is really important, but the first century counterfeit says "everything physical is evil, ergo Jesus did not come in the flesh." The 21st century counterfeit says, "Everything is physical. Therefore Jesus is not God."

What's the problem with that? If Jesus is not God, he does not have the sufficient power to save us.

So you can see that both counterfeits are dangerous, because they lead to a wrong understanding about who Jesus is, and that wrong understanding about who Jesus is could be catastrophic, could be really dangerous.

Additionally, as revealed by John in this letter, both counterfeit worldviews—this is really important—both counterfeit worldviews (the first century, the 21st century) both counterfeit worldviews are spiritually derived. What's that mean? It means that they both originate from a spiritual source. Now that that really trips the circuits of 21st century Westerners who don't believe in the metaphysical. They say, "No, that that can't possibly be." And this may seem strange to you that these worldviews are, they originate from another spirit. But it begs the question, Where do your thoughts come from?

Have you ever thought about where your thoughts come from? Sometimes people say things like, "Well, the thought came to me." We talk like that. Why do we talk like that? Because we're not exactly sure where our thoughts come from. Now, the immediate response would be, "Well, I just came up with it." Really? Are you so sure about that? Kinda like you just came up with the dreams that you dreamt last night. Consciousness is a real big sticky issue for empiricists. They don't know how to describe where consciousness comes from. They've been trying to do, philosophers have been trying to do this for centuries. Scientists are trying to do this now especially in neurology research. They're saying, "It's just we have 100 billion neurons in our brain. So as a result of all these cores of thought and chemical reactions, boom! That's where thought comes from." And yet, you can sit down and you have had this experience, I have had this experience. You're trying to figure something out, you're trying to reason something out, and you can't figure out the answer. And maybe you've wrestled with this thought for an entire day. And now you go to sleep, you can't figure out the answer. You ever had this? You wake up in the middle, I don't have the answer. Where did that come from?

According to the way that the scriptures reveal things, it came from another source. Now that might be incredibly frightening to you, but that's what the Christian worldview is. It came from a source outside of you. So John is promoting this concept, that ideas—which are the manifestation of thoughts—ideas, and the ideologies, the worldviews that flow from them, originate from a

spiritual source. And we can't trust every spiritual source because why? Deceiving spirits are in the world.

Point number two, I cannot trust every spirit.

And the way that John describes this he says, "Because many false prophets have gone into the world." Now what is a false prophet? It is a professor of a false ideology. I want to suggest you that we have a lot of prophets, modern day prophets, who are professors of false ideologies. Where did that ideology come from? John says it came from a spiritual source. There are many false prophets in the world and where did they get their professions, their ideas? They came from a spiritual source. Ideas professed by false prophets or ideas that originate from spiritual sources.

And though I don't have enough time to get into it today, maybe a study for another day the primary objective, as revealed by scripture, the primary objective of these false spirits is confusion and disorientation, so that people who are separated from their Creator will not be brought into connection with him, or with one another. So these false spirits exist in the world to bring confusion and disorientation. Think about the confusion, and the disorientation of our culture because of ideology. It seems like these these false spirits are doing a pretty good job.

So he says, "Do not be deceived by counterfeit ideologies from false spirits." The Christian must test the spirits to see whether they be of God. How? Well thankfully, John says, This is how first John chapter four verse two, "By this, you know the Spirit of God, every spirit that confesses Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God. And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of Antichrist, which you have heard was coming and is now already in the world." John gives us the spiritual test.

Point number three, "the Spirit of Truth confesses the incarnation of Christ, Jesus Christ."

You say, "Is it really that easy?" According to John, the Spirit of Truth, confesses the Incarnation. What is that? God, who exists outside of the cosmos, because He is separate from it. He created, spoke it into existence, that God came into the cosmos, in the man Jesus Christ. So this is the test. You go, "Wow, that seems radically simple. But is that really the truth?"

So, by saying this, John again gives us a really stark contrast. Either there's a spirit of truth, or there's a spirit of error. There's the Spirit of God and there's the spirit of Antichrist. Either, or. No fuzzy gray murky middle, either God, anti christ. And it's these kind of stark contrasts that make Americans really uncomfortable. Because then we have to make a category statement. And there's discerning and discrimination that takes place. And those are like major problems for 21st century Westerners. Spirit of God, spirit of error. Spirit of Truth, spirit of error. Antichrist, God. So we have this. So the question is do you believe that Jesus Christ is God? Do you believe that Jesus Christ (i.e., God) came to the earth? If not, then immediately John says, that is of the spirit of error. That is of the spirit of the Antichrist and people can go I can't possibly say such a thing, because that's going to make me really uncomfortable to say such a thing.

Now, side note and I think it's important to make this clarification. If someone does not confess this fundamental axiom—Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. That doesn't mean that everything that they profess is false. So the disbeliever who does not believe Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, they can, in looking at the cosmos, come to right conclusions about things having to do with science, and technology, and medicine, and all kinds of different things. We can come to right conclusions, and we see that that is happening. But as it relates to conclusions having to do with fundamental reality. The deeper issues, things like ultimate reality—values, morality, purpose, identity, origin, destiny—everything that they come up with, is needs to be suspect.

Our culture is possessed by a pathological ideology. And, and we see the effects of it. Jesus said, and this is really important, one of one of the sayings of Jesus that I constantly come back to, "Wisdom is justified by her children." It's a very pragmatic statement, what it means is, you will know the value of an idea by what it produces. And that's a really important thing. Because I think that there is a, a pathological ideology, which John is telling us comes from another spirit, which is antichrist, anti God, that has possessed our culture. And it exists on many different levels. It has different ways in which it's constructed. But ultimately, it comes down to this and this is what this pathological ideology has been teaching for many, many decades. What is our origin? Well, random chance and mutation over billions of years. What is our destiny? Well, the best you can hope for is that you spread along your DNA, but you're going to die and just absorbed in the ground one day, that's it, you know, you're here 70, 80 years best you can hope for is maybe you spread along your DNA and come up with something that helps the human race. Okay, then, what's my identity? Well, you're just the highest form of animal, and we're not even sure that you're the highest form of animal,

because dolphins have bigger brains, and they might be better than us. Okay, then what's my, my purpose, my meaning? Well, you got to come up with your own purpose, you got to find some of your own sustaining meaning because there's no person, God who's directing that. What about morality? What's right and wrong? Well, you know, we're not even really sure about that. That's the postmodern view, "Who can even say what is right and wrong? It's your opinion."

So what do you end up with? Well, you end up with a hopeless nihilism. That produces what? I suggest you it produces outcomes—wisdom is justified by our children—things like Gilroy, California last Sunday. El Paso, Texas yesterday. Fascinatingly, Friedrich Nietzsche, who most people remember him according to a certain ideology. What? God is dead, the death of God.

I've recommended it before go read Nietzsche's, *The Madman*. It'll take you less than five minutes. It's only about, I don't know, eight paragraphs. And in it, he gives the parable of the madman, who goes into the street, saying, "God is dead, and we have killed him, What shall become of us, the murderers of God? How shall we clean up the blood?" And Nietzsche, he proposed this idea that, you know, we basically annihilated God. And he predicted that the 20th century would be the bloodiest century in all centuries. Why? Because we have no accountability, morally speaking, and we have no ultimate purpose or meaning, and and what do we see from the 20th century, that's exactly what it is. And the 21st century, who knows where it could go, we're still the beginning of this whole thing.

But wisdom is justified by her children. And so we should be suspect of ideologies, that don't accord with the truth of who God is, the nature of God. Because if it does not accord with the truth of the nature of God, it's going to be going in a different direction. And the outcomes are not good. Now, that does not mean that people, every person who holds this ideology, the Christian faith or holds to this view is ultimately always going to do perfect good things, because we can look throughout church history and see that people have done bad things in the name of Jesus. Yes, but they were always in conflict with the core teaching of the Scriptures. But when someone does something that is horrible, vile, and they are a naturalistic materialist, it is not in conflict with their worldview. That's the frightening thing. It's not in conflict, when someone takes an AK47, and shoots 20 people, it's not in conflict with the worldview of nihilism. It would be conflict with the worldview, the scriptures. And it comes down to this, "Jesus Christ has come in the flesh." It comes down to the nature of Christ, who is God.

And so this test that John gives, it answers the first century counterfeit, the 21st century counterfeit, and I would say every counterfeit in between. The first century counterfeit was what? "Everything physical is evil. Therefore, Jesus did not come in the flesh." The 21st century counterfeit: "Everything is physical, therefore Jesus is not God."

And this is the test whereby we can judge a worldview, whether or not it is of the Spirit of truth in the spirit of error. "By this you know, the Spirit of God, every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God. And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of antichrist." So John does something that he repeatedly does. He gives us the positive and negative declaration of truth to emphasize, it's important.

So, here's the test. It comes in three parts. Jesus Christ, has come, in the flesh. What's that mean?

Jesus Christ. Well, the very name is important. Now some people misunderstand, and think that Jesus is his first name, and Christ as his last name. Jesus is his name, and Christ is his title, or his office. Jesus means "Jehovah is salvation," God is the Savior. And Christ means that this one Jesus of Nazareth, who bears his name, he is that Savior. He's the one that the prophets of old predicted. So just those two words, "Jesus Christ," tell us something about the nature of this one.

But then the next part, "Jesus Christ has come." And this word has come as is difficult for translators. Some of you may have another English translation, the Bible that says "is come" and not "has come," and the reason there's a difference between my version New King James Version and maybe the one that you're looking at is because the word—that the way that the word is given the present perfect in the original Greek, it's hard for translators, because it can imply both. He has come, at a specific point in time past, and he is the coming one, which is a whole nother study for another day. So he has come at the very least it implies something that implies that he came from somewhere else. Where? Well Jesus Himself proclaims in the gospels, most notably in the Gospel of John, "I, the Son of Man have come down from heaven." He has come from the spiritual realm.

Now the Gnostic of the first century, the second century, would say, "Okay, we're, we're fine with that. But he didn't come in the flesh." But John says, "No, no, no, no, that's not the case. Jesus Christ has come (third point) in the flesh." He came

in the flesh. The Gnostic view of the second century had to kind of differing opinions about the nature of Jesus, one said that he was just a man, but a spirit—a Spirit of Christ came upon Him at His baptism and left when he was in the Garden of Gethsemene, just before he died on the cross. But he wasn't really fully God, fully man. That was one gnostic view. John says, "No, he came in the flesh, Son of God, Son of man." The other gnostic view was what's called "docetism." And it basically means he just appeared to be human, but he was just like an apparition. He's just a spirit. And John says, "No, Jesus Christ has come in the flesh."

And this destroys both the ancient and the modern counterfeit. Jesus is both Son of God, and Son of Man. Which means he—his death on the cross—is the sufficient sacrifice to atone for our sin. And he, as God, has the ability, the power to save us. And everyone who does not hold to this confession is of another spirit. John says, "This is the spirit of antichrist, which you have heard was coming and is now already in the world."

Point number four on your outline, "We should not be surprised by, or afraid of an antichrist spirit in the world."

And these, I think, are kind of the two reactions that sometimes Christians encounter when they come to the realization that there is an antichrist spirit in the world. Either they're surprised by it. John says, Don't be surprised by that. Why not? He says, "Well, you've already heard that the antichrist spirit was coming. And it's already here." And then he says, "Don't be afraid of it." Why? Well look at verse four.

First John four, four, "You [if you're a follower of Jesus] you are of God, little children, and have overcome them." Who's the them? Those in the world that are of different spirit—spirit antichrist. "You have overcome him, them, because He who is in you is greater than he—the Antichrist—who is in the spirit, they are the world, therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God. He who knows God hears us and he who does not know God does not hear us. By this we know the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error."

In the world, there are deceiving spirits, according to the revelation of Scripture. Untrustworthy, antichrist spirits, that are motivating false worldviews and ideologies, false philosophies by teachers and prophets who profess false things. And we shouldn't be surprised by this. And we shouldn't be afraid of this,

because point number five on your outline, "The spirit (capital S), the Spirit in us, makes us overcomers by his mighty power.

John says, "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them." Would you underline the words "have overcome?" John does not say, "You are of God, little children, and hopefully, you will overcome them. There's this antichrist spirit in the world. And, you know, I'm a little concerned, but hopefully, you'll overcome him." He doesn't say that. He says, "You have overcome them." So the perfect tense, it means that it is a completed, wholly completed event.

And what is the probability of little children overcoming this great antichrist spirit that is opposed to them? Absolutely no probability, that a little child can overcome them. But greater is He who is in you than he was in the world. So we overcome them not by our strength, but by the working of the Spirit of God in us. And this word, overcome, it means to "prevail" to "conquer" to "vanquish." And it is a completed action. Because we, Romans 8:37, says, "Are more than conquerors, through him loved us." Because of what he has accomplished by his love, we are more than overcome.

So then, what then is the place the position of the Christian, in a world in conflict with an opposing spirit? It's an important question. And I would suggest, based on the scriptures, that our place as Christians, if you're a follower of GOD, little child, have a spirit of God dwelling in you. Our place in this world, is to be as lights in a dark world, bearing the truth of God to those who have believed a lie, so that they would come to the knowledge of the truth and be set free by it. That's why God placed you in the neighborhood you live in. On the school campus that you go to. In the office building that you work at. On the construction site. The family that you're a part of. Wherever he is placed you, he's placed you to be a light, bearing witness to the truth of God, so that those who have believed the lie, that will bring them to destruction, can come to the knowledge of the truth, and be set free.

We don't go out to oppose the spirit and fight against the spirit and all these sort of things that all kinds of, you know, Dominion theology, people that ... No, we proclaim the gospel, because the gospel is that which brings truth to those who believed a lie. And once upon a time you believed a lie, and were in darkness, but now, he's given you light, and mercy, and grace, and truth, to be set free. And the value of this truth, one of the ways in which we can see the value of this truth is, what are the outcomes? What does it bring? And I suggest to you that

everywhere the gospel has gone, it has set people free. Will set you free, you wouldn't be here today if you hadn't been set free by it.

And so just a few minutes, we're going to go from here. Where we're going to go to? We're going to go to our mission field. San Diego County. 3.2 million people. 110 different languages spoken, many different worldviews. Every single one of those ideologies, every single one of those worldviews is spiritually motivated. If it does not align with the reality of who Jesus is, then it is of the spirit of error. And that's a hard thing to say because it might offend somebody, but the gospel is an offense to those who are perishing. No better thing than to set up a stumbling block and someone who's running headlong towards a cliff. That they would know the truth and be set free.

Amen?

Would you stand with me as we close in prayer.

Father God, we we need your Spirit. We need your ability, to be witnesses of you here in this place that we live. We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything is being of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from you, and you are the one who enables us to be ministers, servants of the gospel. I pray God that you would give your church, us, your enabling power, to be witnesses of your grace to this world, Lord. This world that is possessed by ideologies that are pathological, they lead to confusion, and disorientation, and death. They do not result in abundant life here, or in eternity. And God I pray that we would be able to share the truth of the grace of the gospel, so that others would know this abundant life that we have through truth, and through, through grace, liberty, mercy, all of these things. God enable us to be witnesses of this in this world. In Jesus name, amen.