

## A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED UPON JOHN'S FIRST EPISTLE

### EITHER/OR

1 John 4:4-6 "Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error."

The dictionary definition of either/or is "an unavoidable choice between two alternatives." When you are confronted with such a choice, sometimes your choice is simply between one good thing or another. However, that is not always the case. John began this new chapter discussing the reality that there are multiple spirits vying for your attention. Only one is holy and good and all the others are not. In such a situation as that, as was discussed in yesterday's devotion, the choice you make will determine your eternal destiny. As Luke recorded in Acts 4, there is only one Savior and faith in Him is necessary for you to spend eternity in heaven.

With the either/or spiritual choices that confront you, you could make the wrong choice. However, John says, "Little children, you are from God and have overcome them (false teachers and ungodly spirits,) for He (The Holy Spirit) who is in you is greater than he (false teachers and purveyors of evil) who is in the world..." The words of John continue, "They (false teachers and ungodly spirits) are from the world; therefore, they speak from the world, and the world listens to them." Since they are from the world which is filled with sin and rebellion against God, whatever they say will lead you away from God. On the other hand, John says, "We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us. . ." And, Jesus promises in John 10:27-28 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand."

John then says either you listen to those who speak from God OR you listen to those who speak for the world. Listening to the voice of Jesus you ". . . know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error." His voice will never lead you astray into false teaching, beliefs and eternal death. He comes to you with the message of God's love and gift of eternal life.

Prayer: Lord, give me the gift of discernment to know the Spirit of truth and recognize the spirit of error. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Glorious things of you are spoken, Zion, city of our God;  
He whose word cannot be broken Formed you for His own abode.  
On the Rock of Ages founded, What can shake your sure repose?  
With salvation's walls surrounded, You may smile at all your foes.

See, the streams of living waters, Springing from eternal love,  
Well supply your sons and daughters And all fear of want remove.  
Who can faint while such a river Ever will their thirst assuage?  
Grace, which like the Lord, the giver, Never fails from age to age.

Round each habitation hov'ring, See the cloud and fire appear  
For a glory and a cov'ring, Showing that the Lord is near.  
Thus deriving from their banner Light by night and shade by day,  
Safe they feed upon the manna Which God gives them on their way.

Savior, since of Zion's city I through grace a member am,  
Let the world deride or pity, I will glory in Your name.  
Fading are the world's vain pleasures, All their boasted pomp and show;  
Solid joys and lasting treasures None but Zion's children know.  
(LSB 648)