

# Testing the Spirits

by A.W. Tozer

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*A.W. Tozer emphasizes the importance of discernment and spiritual maturity in distinguishing between truth and falsehood, warning against the dangers of gullibility and the need to 'try the spirits'.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 7:15, Acts 17:11, 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, Galatians 1:8-9, Ephesians 4:14, 1 Thessalonians 5:21, 2 Timothy 4:3-4, Hebrews 5:14, 1 Peter 5:8, 1 John 4:1

**Topics:** "Spiritual Integrity", "Discernment"

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## Description

A.W. Tozer emphasizes the importance of discerning the spirits that claim to represent Christianity, warning against the gullibility that can arise from a misguided sense of spirituality. He critiques the tendency of some Christians to accept every new teaching or prophet without scrutiny, fearing they might reject something genuinely from God. Tozer argues that true faith involves a careful examination of teachings and a commitment to reject anything that does not align with God's truth. He reminds believers that the command to 'try the spirits' is essential for spiritual integrity and responsibility, especially as the end times approach.

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## Transcript

Many tender-minded Christians fear to sin against love by daring to inquire into anything that comes wearing the cloak of Christianity and breathing the name of Jesus. They dare not examine the credentials of the latest prophet to hit their town lest they be guilty of rejecting something which may be of God. They timidly remember how the Pharisees refused to accept Christ when He came, and they do not want to be caught in the same snare, so they either reserve judgment or shut their eyes and accept everything without question. This is supposed to indicate a high degree of spirituality. But in sober fact it indicates no such thing. It may indeed be evidence of the absence of the Holy Spirit.

Gullibility is not synonymous with spirituality.

Faith is not a mental habit leading its possessor to open his mouth and swallow everything that has about it the color of the supernatural. Faith keeps its heart open to whatever is of God, and rejects everything that is not of God, however wonderful it may be. Try the spirits is a command of the Holy Spirit to the Church. We may sin as certainly by approving the spurious as by rejecting the genuine. And the current habit of refusing to take sides is not the way to avoid the question. To appraise things with a heart of love and then to act on the results is an obligation resting upon every Christian in the world. And the more as we see the day approaching.

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