

What is meant by the expression “try the spirits”?

People are often quick to trust in impressions, visions, “sixth sense”, and other ideas that give to them some sort of idea of a message that they attribute to God.

1. Where is the expression idea found?

1 John **4:1-3**

1 Corinthians **2:11**

John wanted to protect the believers from believing whatever people told them was a spiritual message and wanted them to have some guidance regarding how to determine the legitimacy of a message that is claimed to be from God. There are many groups and major doctrinal teachings that people often accept because they sound good without verifying their legitimacy.

2. What is required in order to try the spirits?

1 Corinthians **12:7-11**

Acts **17:11**

Proverbs **3:5-6**

2 Corinthians **10:3-6**

Proverbs **11:14**; 15:22; 24:6

Proverbs **25:2**

There are several tactics associated with trying or testing the spirit of a person or the spiritual source of a message. For a few select individuals, God has given them a special gift from Him in order to evaluate the wisdom and truthfulness of a message that is claimed to be coming from God. For the vast majority of people, they need to evaluate the scriptures in order to ensure that the message they are receiving is in agreement with God's word and does not follow after with whimsical fantasies of men. This means that the person needs to personally read and study the scriptures and submitting their thoughts to be in agreement with God's thoughts. We can also consult other faithful Christians by seeking multiple counselors to see what they have to say. It is important to remember that God and God alone is the ultimate expert of what is true. We need to ensure that our beliefs are in alignment with God's word.

3. Why would someone deceive another person about a spiritual message?

2 Timothy **3:1-7**; **4:1-5**

Nehemiah **6:12-13**

1 Timothy **6:3-5**

1 Kings **22:11-13**

Jeremiah **44:16-19**

Some men want to be the one that others will come to for encouragement, direction, wisdom, or whatever. The reality is that some people feel the need to be well received and well spoken of by others. By teaching a particular message that communicates the acceptable stance of an individual on a topic, the teacher receives more followers and fame. Sometimes false messages are communicated in order to generate fear in the listeners. It could be to generate a sense of fear regarding those who listen to teachers with a slightly different message or it could be to generate a sense of fear in the minds of those doing the other teaching. A false message could also be delivered in order to be viewed as being in agreement with others. People also have a tendency to evaluate the truth of a message or a situation based upon their experience, their desires, or their intentions. But God defines the truth of a message of a situation based upon its truthfulness.