



Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School



Episode 178 - Time to Take a Test

(1 John)

Dealing with Heresy

The church dealt with Cerinthus' heresy, but Satan keeps disturbing us with false teachings and heresies—some old and some new.

- What are some of the false religions and teachings we struggle against today?

Bruce introduced John's three-point test to divide heresy from the truth:

1. Does It Confess Jesus Christ Has Come in the Flesh?

Since Gnostics like Cerinthus taught the material world was evil and the spiritual world good, they denied that Jesus of Nazareth was always fully God and fully man.

- Why do people find it so difficult to believe the Son of God would have been willing to remain in the body of Jesus of Nazareth during His suffering and death on the cross?
- How would you answer a Jew or Muslim who think Jesus' crucifixion is unworthy of God's dignity?

2. Does it Appeal to the World?

Our sinful nature has corrupted our thoughts and desires and made us enemies of God. So if a teaching appeals to the sinful desires of the world, it is clearly not from God.

- How do Jesus' words reinforce John's point: "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me"? (See Matthew 16:24.)
- Since we still have a sinful nature, we should expect some of Jesus' teachings to be difficult to accept. Which Bible teachings do you find difficult to wholeheartedly embrace?

3. Is it Consistent with the Teachings of the Apostles?

To answer this question, we have to study and understand what the apostles teach in the New Testament.

- What are some elements of this world's thinking (or some particular teachings in other religions) that are clearly inconsistent with God's Word?
- How does it help to know *why* the apostles wrote their letters when we seek to understand their teachings?

