



## CELL GUIDE

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TOPIC	How Do I Know What's Real?	SPEAKER	Eugene Shi
THEME	Faith for Every Season	DATE	6 & 7 Dec 2025

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# MESSAGE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

This week's passage, 1 John 4:1-6, warns Christians to stay alert and be wary of false prophets and teachings. It is also a reminder to believers that the Holy Spirit empowers believers to overcome them and live in victory. With social media, scams and misuse of AI increasing the spread of falsehoods, we must learn to discern and verify the information we encounter.

## THREE WAYS TO KNOW WHAT IS REAL

### 1. Be aware of falsehoods (1 John 4:1)

We should not believe everything that sounds spiritual. Instead, we need to test and validate teachings to determine if they are truly from God, especially since there are many false prophets. As Christians, we must recognise that deception has always been one of Satan's strategies (Matt 7:15). The devil's deceptions often come in subtly disguised ways: He does not make false accusations about God, but twists God's words, he does not deny God, but distorts who God is, and He does not need our worship, but draws us away from our worship of God. We must therefore remain vigilant as our hearts can be deceitful (Jer 17:9) and mislead us. If not, we may find ourselves drawn to the devil's deception when it appeals to our greed, soothes our fear, clears our doubts, and fuels our passion.

### 2. We need to discern (1 John 4:2-3)

Verses 2-3 addressed false teachings that deny Jesus's incarnation and that Jesus did not come in the flesh but as a spirit. It also warned believers about the spirit of the antichrist. While these false teachings may not be relevant in our context, we still face other forms of spiritual deceptions. These include becoming lukewarm Christians, neglecting church community, or believing that Christianity is a faith that does not come with suffering and sacrifice, and does not require our repentance and obedience. To safeguard against these deceptions, we can apply three Fact Filter tests:

#### a. Word Test

God's Word is our truth (John 17:17) and is the lamp to our feet and the light to our paths (Psalm 119:105). When we evaluate the information we encounter, we must ask ourselves if it aligns with Scripture, and whether the source is reputable and verifiable.

#### b. Spirit Test

The Spirit of truth will guide us to all truth (John 16:13), and we will know them by their fruits (Matt 7:16). We can test the spirit by asking if a message honours Jesus, and what the intention and tone

being conveyed is. We should also seek to understand whether it produces good fruits like peace, joy, and love, rather than bad fruits like fear, anger and anxiety.

c. Community Test

God often protects us from deception through the collective discernment of His people (Prov 11:14, 15:22). We should consult with people who have spiritual maturity and expertise, ensuring the feedback we get is consistent with the Scripture and grounded in the truth. In addition, their perspectives provide a non-biased clarity which we lack on our own.

**3. We can overcome (1 John 4:4-6)**

Christian living is not just about recognising deceptions, but also about living in the victory God has given us. These verses call us towards spiritual maturity rather than a mindset of suspicion. They remind us that we are God's children of God, and His Spirit dwells in us to guide, discern and anchor us in the truth. Here are three practical handles that we can use:

1. Be Grounded in the Word of God (2 Tim 3:16-17)

Read the Bible for our spiritual formation. Develop a hunger for the Word and seek the truth daily by having a habit of reading the Word regularly.

2. Be Fervent with the Holy Spirit (Rom 12:11)

Walk closely with the Spirit of God and learn to recognise His voice. Set aside time daily to spend time with God and intentionally build your own Altar of Praise and Thanksgiving.

3. Be Connected to the Community of Believers (Heb 10:24-25)

The Spirit often speaks through counsel, encouragement and prayers from a community of believers. When we share faith, doubts and troubles with trusted believers, we gain strength, wisdom and accountability in a loving Christ-centred community. A practical suggestion is to join a Cell Group.

## CONCLUSION

Not everything in the world can be faked. The truth has a face, and His name is Jesus. His love is not seasonal (Jer 31:3), He calls us His own (1 John 3:1), and He loved us at our worst (Rom 5:8). Let us stay close enough to the real Shepherd to know His truth, which will set us free.

# QUESTIONS

**1. Share about an example of an online or offline message or influence that challenged you to discern whether it was rooted in God's truth. How did you realise it was rooted or not rooted in His truth?**

**2. Using the three fact filter tests, what is one belief or idea that you may be holding onto but need to let go of? How does it go against the Word?**

**3. Apart from the practical suggestions shared in the sermon, what other ways can you apply to your life to grow in spiritual discernment, both individually and as a cell group?**