Below are notes to a sermon preached Sunday morning, Nov. 5, 2000, at Gospel Light Baptist Church, Albany, Georgia. For more outlines, including a zipped file of all of my 1999 sermon outlines, click on the link at the bottom of this note, and go to our website:

THE SPIRIT OF ERROR

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Scripture Reading: 1 John 4:1-21

Text: 1 John 4:6

1 John 4:6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

Introduction: The Bible speaks of "the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." The spirit of truth is God's Spirit, the Holy Ghost. He is a person. He is God, manifest in spirit. He guides into TRUTH.

The spirit of error is any of many spirits in this world. They are UNholy spirits, called unclean spirits, or devils, in God's word. Their origin is a mystery, although some Bible students believe they are the disembodied spirits of sons of God, fallen angels, who inhabited a preadamic earth. They inhabit all lost people, and they trouble saved people. They guide into ERROR.

Have you ever asked, or heard someone ask, "Where did you come up with THAT idea?" or "Why did you think THAT?" or "What possessed you to say THAT?" Well, it could be that the answer to each of those questions is: THE SPIRIT OF ERROR.

You can identify the spirit of error by observing where the spirit leads:

I. THE SPIRIT OF ERROR LEADS YOU TO THE WRONG PREACHING

1 John 4:6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

1 Corinthians 12:2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

The wrong preaching consists of:

A. Teaching that does not call for a commitment

B. Theories of man to scratch itching ears
   • Salvation by self-improvement
• Success by worldly goals

C. Terms designed to impress a worldly mind

• Some preachers love indecent words
• Some preachers love intellectual words
• Some preachers love invented words

II. THE SPIRIT OF ERROR LEADS YOU TO THE WRONG PRACTICE

1 Thessalonians 4:7-8 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. 8 He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

1 John 2:15-16 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

The spirit of error leads you into the world's temptations:

A. Sinful pleasure - the lust of the flesh
B. Seeking possessions - the lust of the eyes
C. Self-promotion - the pride of life

III. THE SPIRIT OF ERROR LEADS YOU TO THE WRONG PRECEPTS

1 John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Isaiah 8:20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

A. Precepts of unclean spirits

• 1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

B. Precepts of unbelief

C. Precepts of ungodliness
IV. THE SPIRIT OF ERROR LEADS YOU TO THE WRONG PEOPLE

1 John 4:20-21 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? 21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

A. It will lead you to the wrong crowd

• The crowd you run with identifies you, but it also influences you.
• The spirit of error will get you active in clubs rather than in church.
• The spirit of error will lead you to a church that is more of a social club than a soul-winning station.

B. It will lead you to the wrong counsellors

• Solomon's son, Rehoboam, forsook the good counsel that was given to him, and he followed bad counsel. His decision split the kingdom. (1 Ki. 12)

C. It will lead you to the wrong companions

• Proverbs 13:20 He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

V. THE SPIRIT OF ERROR LEADS YOU TO THE WRONG PLACE

Matthew 15:14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

If you are lost, it will lead you to

A. Damnation

If you are saved, it will lead you to

B. Defilement

C. Discouragement

D. Discontentment

E. Doubt

F. Defeat