

Daily Devotion: Tuesday, June 30, 2020

Pastor Jeff Steeber, Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, Avon Lake

1 John 4:1-6

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. <sup>2</sup>By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, <sup>3</sup>and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. And this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming; and now it is already in the world. <sup>4</sup>Little children, you are from God, and have conquered them; for the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. <sup>5</sup>They are from the world; therefore what they say is from the world, and the world listens to them. <sup>6</sup>We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us, and whoever is not from God does not listen to us. From this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

When reflecting upon this reading, it helps us to know that it was written in part as a response to people who were claiming that Jesus was not human. These so-called Christians, who believed that they were truly Christians, had no issue believing that Jesus was God. However, they could not accept that Jesus was a human, flesh and blood. The original apostles, along with the early Church, refused to allow this alternate view of Jesus to become the dominant and accepted doctrine. “By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God.”

This is important for us today, as Christians, as it was important for our brothers and sisters nearly 2,000 years ago. It matters because as Christians we confess that Jesus knew what it meant to be human. He felt the joy. He experienced the stress. He was tormented by the pain. He relished the love he received and offered. If Jesus had not been a human, then we lose such an integral part of our understanding of God. We know that our God loves us beyond our ability to comprehend, to the point of entering into our world to live among us. The death that Jesus died was real. Even more, the resurrection that Jesus experienced was also real. We find out comfort and heavenly assurance through the one who has walked where we walk, and who still guides us today.