

The Discipline of Guidance  
Spiritual Disciplines #9 – September 7, 2014

1. The discipline of guidance is all about hearing God's voice as to His plan or will in our lives. What is most important for you in understanding how to hear God?
  - a. If you have unanswered questions about hearing or discerning God's voice, talk to someone who you know regularly hears God's voice to them.
2. What would be some signs in your life that might be showing, that regardless of what you say, you really don't want to hear from God in a specific place in your life, or your life in general?
  - a. What is the difference between not planning to hear God's voice and planning not to hear His voice?
3. What is your 'inner voice', that internal sense which only comes when God is speaking to you, seeking to get or retain your attention?
  - a. How would you help another disciple of Jesus hear/find what their 'inner voice' is like for them?
4. Do you ever wish God would make everything perfectly clear as to what you should do and how?
  - a. What would be the negatives of God doing this for us?
  - b. What are we seeking to eliminate by wanting God to tell us everything without our need to seek Him or His will?
  - c. How is not needing to hear from God in every decision greater than Him showing us every step?

Scripture Memorization:  
John 10:10

## Discipline of Guidance

The spiritual discipline of guidance is probably better recognized through a different phrase... "finding God's will". Seeking God's guidance is not just for us as individuals, but also in the families we are a part of, including our church family. As individuals we may seek God's guidance in large and small decisions. As a church family we seek God's guidance for direction in finding solutions to problems, as well as how to minister to those around us.

Since we live in an individualistic society, we can easily forget that we were designed by God for community. This means that even as we seek God's guidance, we look to hear His voice confirming that through His people as well. History is littered with people who thought they heard God's voice leading them in a direction, but went without a community surrounding them, helping them to discern what they had heard and how to apply it. Not every voice we hear is from God or seeking to honour Him.

Many of the other disciplines we have looked at are involved in seeking God's guidance. Prayer, worship, fasting, studying Scripture, and solitude are often commonly involved. In seeking guidance we use these disciplines to aid our focus on listening for the voice of God to us, and individuals or as a group.

Here are some guidelines when it comes to seeking guidance:

1. Give up the belief that you know best or are the one who hears God's voice most clearly. The Holy Spirit dwells in other disciples as well.
2. Take what you are hearing to someone whose example of following Jesus you respect. The spiritual gift of discernment, if you know someone with it, is also of great value to help you affirm what God is saying, or help you get some additional perspective.
3. Trust that God wants to reveal to you His will.

### **Suggested Activities for Anyone:**

- Take a decision that has meaningful impact on you or those around you (not likely what you should eat for breakfast) that you are facing and ask God what He desires for you to choose, and how to go about enacting that decision.
- When praying for guidance, also pray for the willingness to follow and obey.
- Ask God what are some better decisions you could/should be making in your life in one or more areas, than talk about them with someone who will help you take action, or just hold you accountable:
  - Finances. Diet/Health, Following Jesus
- As you are contemplating an action or what to say in a situation ask yourself whether your words or actions will honour God or go against any of His commands? Will the decision cause unnecessary harm in a person's life? Will it turn a person away from Jesus?
- Get rid of any other activities you may use or turn to for discerning the future (astrology, Ouija board, psychics, etc...). Even if meant for fun, or you believe them to be harmless, the question is "Whose voice are you really hearing through those activities, and why would you settle for any voice other than God's?"
- Ask God for wisdom in a situation that you are facing today, then go forward confidently into that situation, believing that God will give you the words and wisdom you need.

### **Activities With Children:**

- Talk to your children about their 'inner voice'. Talk to them about their conscience, and the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- One night around the dinner table talk to your children about their goals, long-term or short-term. Talk about how you, as a family, can help them achieve those goals. Perhaps share a goal of yours as parents as well.
- Plan to do a day trip as a family, where the children are given the parameters of time, distance, and cost, but they choose the itinerary. When they have made the plan, talk to them about how and why they chose what they chose.