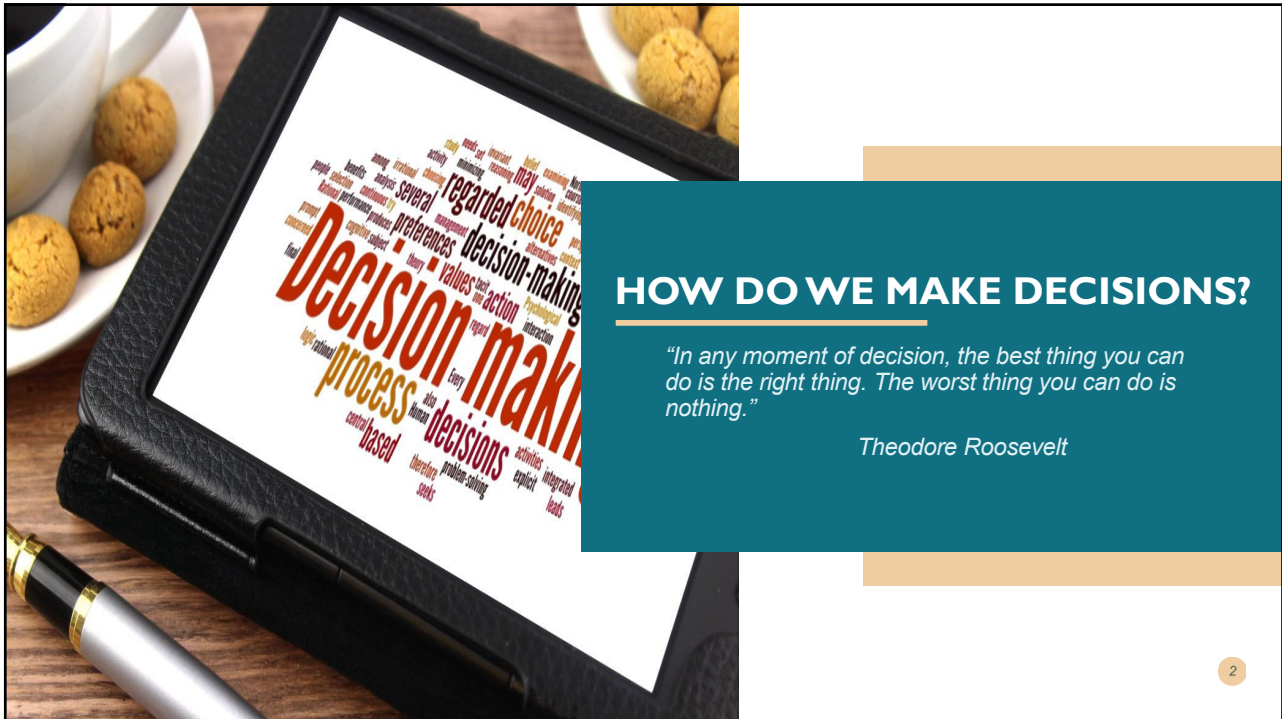




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IS THIS THE BEST THERE IS?

Influencers & Leaders


- *Great leaders make great decisions – always?*
- *What are their drivers or motivations?*
- *How can we increase buy-in for all?*
- *Is God speaking to and thru our leader?*

Majority Rules

- *Are the majority always right?*
- *Do people speak up?*
- *How do people respond when someone disagrees?*
- *Silent minority?*

3

3



HOW DO WE MAKE DECISIONS?

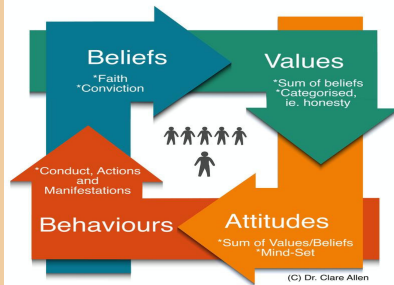
“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths..”

God (Proverbs 3:5-6)

4

4

WHAT DO WE BELIEVE?



Is God already at work?

God is always working in situations around us to bring about His purposes. Do we notice what He is doing? Do we join it? What is God doing?



Does God's Spirit lead us?

Do we believe that God's Spirit will lead us in practical ways? Does He speak to us and direct our steps?



Will God lead us in unity?

In an individualistic culture, we are tempted to believe that unity is a dream for eternity. Can God direct a group in a way that leads to unanimous agreement?



Is God's way always best?

Does He always have my best in mind? Will He lead us on straight paths or toward hardship and suffering?

5

5

BUT WHEN HE, THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, COMES, HE WILL GUIDE YOU INTO ALL THE TRUTH.

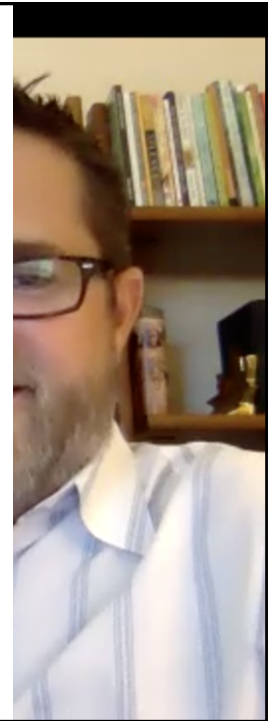
JOHN 16:13

6

“Discernment is an incredible tool... but it can be destructive if you don’t know how to use it.”

Dr. Ted Wueste

Director of the Spiritual Formation Society AZ; Pastor and adjunct professor in the area of spiritual formation at Phoenix Seminary



7

Discernment

How is it different?

- The process matters
- Our hearts matter
- Relationships matter
- Attentiveness matters
- Trust matters
- Time matters
- Collaboration matters
- God’s leading matters

8

THE PROCESS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE PRODUCT OR OUTCOME

Prepare	Clarity	Gather	Yield	Listen	Discern
<i>Individual Preparation</i>	<i>What are we talking about?</i>	<i>Understanding the relevant information</i>	<i>Letting loose of our attachments & preferences</i>	<i>Personal prayer and listen to others</i>	<i>Noticing God's leading and direction</i>

SUCCESS = JOIN GOD IN HIS WORK

9

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PREPARATION

✓ **Self-Aware**

Our conscious knowledge of our own character, feelings, fears, motives, and desires. We all have blind spots, and as we reflect on our feelings, attitudes and behavior we are awakening our consciousness to see what others more easily see.

✓ **Spiritual Depth**

In our journey of maturity in the Lord, we see our human tendencies of self-reliance, pride, control, fear of man and so much more. As we grow in knowing the Lord, we grow in our trust of the Lord and yield to Him for freely.

✓ **Trusting Others**

Trusting others isn't often an easy thing for us to do. It is easy to break trust, so how do we build trust? We are honest, respectful, and transparent. We allow others to be heard and even raise disagreement without being judged. We work through conflict.

✓ **Identify Attachments**

Things, beliefs, conditions, outcomes and people that are often gifts from God but have become more valued than God and often hinder us from knowing God's heart and will.

✓ **Slowing Down the Process**

We don't rush others, push decisions through to avoid resistance, or ignore silence that may represent wise reservations. We make time for expressing honest desolation and seek to understand others.

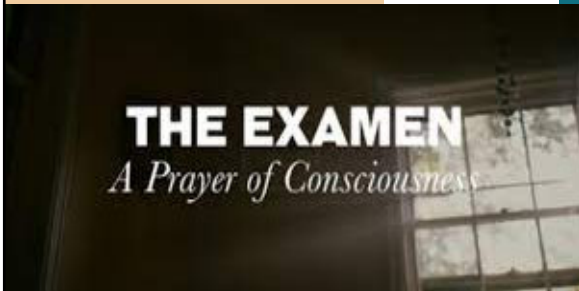
✓ **Surrender Outcomes**

Leaders have a natural gift for solving problems and leading groups into action and forward movement. Often we have thought through issues and have a solution when we bring it to others. Though we don't need to deny our solution, we need to lay it down and surrender it to the Lord.

10

10

Important Concepts



Attachments Those things that are often gifts from God but have become more valued than God and often hinder us from knowing God's heart and will.

Indifference or Detaching The release or surrender of our attachments and desired outcomes. In confessing, letting go, laying down and releasing them, we become indifferent to all things apart from God's purposes.

Consolation Those things that cause us to move toward the Lord; things that bring life, joy, freedom, peace, compassion to our soul. True consolation comes from God.

Desolation Those things that cause us to pull away from God and produce a "troubled heart"; ways we protect ourselves, withdraw, take control, and seek to meet life's demands apart from God. Desolation never comes from God but from our flesh or Satan.

11

11

OUR HEART IN DISCERNMENT

- It desires to participate with God where God is leading
- It longs to accomplish God's will concretely
- It is open to be taught and led by God (even through others)
- It is humble and ready to prefer others (and slow to judge them)
- It is willing to let go of power, control, and ultimate leadership
- It is courageous and willing to go where others haven't been

**YOU HAVE TO ASK YOURSELF,
'DO I REALLY WANT THIS?'**

It might mean loss

It might mean letting go

12

12

THE PROCESS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE PRODUCT OR OUTCOME

Prepare <i>Individual Preparation</i>	Clarity <i>What are we talking about?</i>	Gather <i>Understanding the relevant information</i>	Yield <i>Letting loose of our attachments & preferences</i>	Listen <i>Personal prayer and listen to others</i>	Discern <i>Noticing God's leading and direction</i>
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SUCCESS = JOIN GOD IN HIS WORK

13

13

GETTING CLARITY

What decision are we going to make?

Create a clear, yes/no closed question to discern.

Focus on one question at a time to discern.

Are we asking the right question?

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THE PROCESS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE PRODUCT OR OUTCOME

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Buying? Selling? Where?

Where is the market going? What kind of loan can you get? What is the interest rate?



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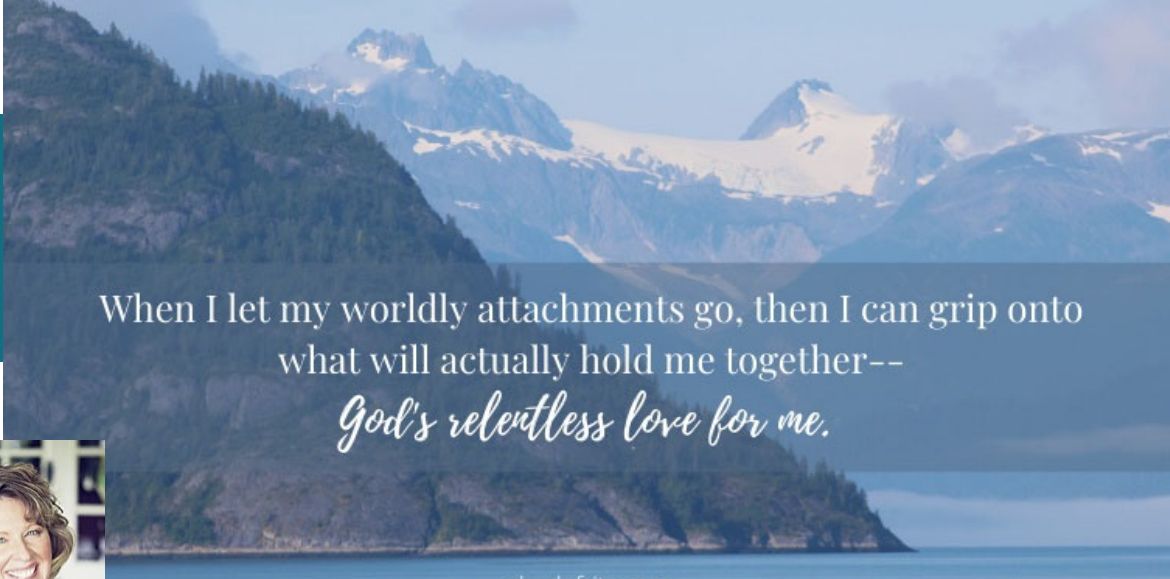
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17



When I let my worldly attachments go, then I can grip onto what will actually hold me together--
God's relentless love for me.



"I become indifferent to anything other than God's will."
Ruth Haley Barton



18

THE PROCESS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE PRODUCT OR OUTCOME

Prepare <i>Individual Preparation</i>	Clarity <i>What are we talking about?</i>	Gather <i>Understanding the relevant information</i>	Yield <i>Letting loose of our attachments & preferences</i>	Listen <i>Personal prayer and listen to others</i>	Discern <i>Noticing God's leading and direction</i>
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SUCCESS = JOIN GOD IN HIS WORK



19

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Imagine Exercise



20

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THE PROCESS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE PRODUCT OR OUTCOME

Prepare <i>Individual Preparation</i>	Clarity <i>What are we talking about?</i>	Gather <i>Understanding the relevant information</i>	Yield <i>Letting loose of our attachments & preferences</i>	Listen <i>Personal prayer and listen to others</i>	Discern <i>Noticing God's leading and direction</i>
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SUCCESS = JOIN GOD IN HIS WORK

21

21

QUESTIONS THAT HELP US IN DISCERNMENT

- What is the Lord doing?
- What has He been doing?
- What is He inviting us into?
- Who are we? What are we called to?

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23

BUILD A DISCERNING CULTURE

How People Change

- Start with YOU
- Then share what you are learning
- Invite others to join you
- Bring in someone to do some training
- Ask an outsider to help facilitate a discernment process for a significant decision

24

24

IT CAN GET MESSY

1. People are in different places in their spiritual journey
2. People are a different places in their own self-awareness
3. Everyone has good days and not so good days
4. We have different ways and experiences of listening to the Lord
5. Trust is built slowly and is broken quickly
6. Resistance, irritation, frustration are often part of the process
7. The transformation or sanctification process gets to the real stuff

When it gets messy, it isn't bad – this is often where it gets real and trust is deepened.

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25

I believe it!

HIS WAYS
are better than
OUR WAYS

I want to know and follow His ways!

LIFE + PASSION

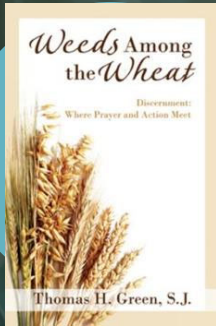
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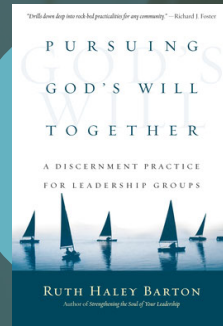
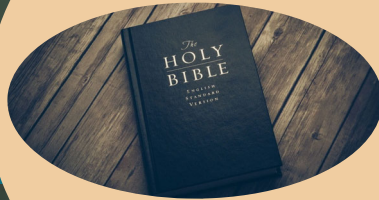
Questions?



RESOURCES



Weeds Among the Wheat
Thomas H. Green



Pursuing God's Will Together
Ruth Haley Barton



THANK YOU!

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