

Discernment Guide *Walking with God through Life's Decisions*

Discernment is not just what happens when you have to make a big decision. Discernment is a lifestyle. As you consider the big decisions you need to make, take some time with God to process and listen using the following prompts.

1) Remember that you are deeply loved by a God who created you and knows everything about you (Phil. 1:9-11, Psalm 139).

“Father in heaven! You have loved us first. Help us never to forget that You are love so that this sure conviction might triumph in our hearts over the seduction of the world, over the inquietude of the soul, over the anxiety for the future, over the fright of the past, over the distress of the moment.

You have loved us first, O God. You have loved us first many times and every day and our whole life through. When we wake up in the morning and turn our soul toward You—You are the first—You have loved us first; if I rise at dawn and at the same second turn my soul toward You in prayer, You are there ahead of me. You have loved me first. When I withdraw from the distractions of the day and turn my soul toward You, You are the first and thus forever.”

~ Soren Kierkegaard

2) Acknowledge that sometimes your sin gets in the way of being able to clearly hear or see where God might be leading. Psalm 139:23-24 invites us to acknowledge this truth before God, and Hebrews 12:1 encourages us to “lay aside” every weight and sin that hinders us. Consider what may be hindering you from clearly hearing God’s voice (pride? fear? discouragement?), and offer this to him.

*I'm giving you my heart, and all that is within
I lay it all down for the sake of you my King
I'm giving you my dreams, I'm laying down my rights
I'm giving up my pride for the promise of new life*

*And I surrender all to you, all to you
And I surrender all to you, all to you*

*I'm singing You this song, I'm waiting at the cross
And all the world holds dear, I count it all as loss
For the sake of knowing You for the glory of Your name
To know the lasting joy, even sharing in Your pain*

~ “Surrender” by Lincoln Brewster

3) Think with God through the practical questions of your life and circumstances by journaling, making a pros/cons list, or creating some other concrete record to help you see more clearly where God may be leading.

- a. What do you need to know more about yourself as you walk with God in this decision? (your gifts, skills, abilities, likes, dislikes, things you love doing, things that are draining... God created each of these in you!)

- b. What research do you need to do as you walk with God in this decision? (learn more about a potential career or major? Find out time commitments involved in leadership positions or job offers? Budget finances to allow for a volunteer internship or mission trip? Talk to someone who has already held that position or job? Or... something else?)
- c. What people do you need to help you as you walk with God in this decision? (a mentor, small group or friend who will reflect honestly with you? A family member or professor who has wisdom in this area? Or... someone else?)
- d. How, specifically, will you invite God into this decision? You've been thinking through some things with him. What's next? (Make a pros/cons list with him? Ask someone to pray for you in this? Set aside an hour to keep talking with him? Ask him to take a concrete next step with you? Or... what else?)

*MY LORD GOD, I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.*

*But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you.
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.
And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may
know nothing about it.
Therefore I will trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the
shadow of death.
I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my
perils alone.
Amen.*

Campus Resources

- Career Development: career.biola.edu ~ career.development@biola.edu
- Academic Advising: academic.advising@biola.edu
- Campus Leadership Applications:
 - SOS (due Dec 14): biola.edu/sos/selection
 - RA (Due Jan 6): studentlife.biola.edu/raselection
 - Chapel Internships (Due Feb 15): studentlife.biola.edu/spiritual-development/chapel/
 - AS/SMU Elections Info Night: Tuesday, Dec. 4th @9:15pm, AS Conference Room.
 - Applications for AS President, Sr. VP, Senators, and SMU President due Feb 11.