

# **I've Decided to Discern – 4 Guidelines to Apply**

Using discernment can save you from the consequences of poor decisions. It sounds so easy, but most of the choices we make in life require some deep thought, prayer, and consideration. How often do you find yourself taking action and then deciding if it was a good idea? If you are a person with a big vision or have a burning desire to fulfill your God-given purpose, this can be a common mistake. Act, then think, instead of think, then act. Sound familiar? The term could also be known as a “reactive” personality. If this is you, it's OK. Being a person of action isn't a bad thing. You may simply need to practice a little more discernment when making your decisions. In its simplest form, to discern means to decide between truth and error. This can seem like a difficult task, but if you apply these four guidelines to help you, it can make it much easier to accomplish.

## **Start where you are!**

Once you've made a decision to begin using better discernment, you have to start somewhere. The best place is right where you are. You've made it this far, so what have your experiences taught you? Up until this point, what are your beliefs, who have your biggest influences been, and where do you seek knowledge? The phrase, start where you are, start with what you know, but just start, really is the beginning of success. To discern, start where you are!

## **Decide who or what you will you trust?**

If you want to be more discerning, you must decide who or what you are going to trust. God can speak to us through the wisdom of other people as well as resources we read, watch, or listen to. It is so important that we make clear decisions on

what truth we will stand. Remember, if you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything. If you don't have a clear understanding of who or what you will trust, it will be very easy to get distracted or jump to something that may seem to be better. When you trust who or what you're listening to, discernment becomes much easier.

## **Pray**

What better way to be confident in your discernment than to ask the one who created you? The creator of the universe loves for us to seek Him for wisdom. Remind yourself that you are not on your own and that there is a God who desires to help you fulfill your purpose and that He will gently guide your decisions if you're open to it. Take time to listen and spend time alone. If you are struggling with hearing what God may be saying to you, consider going to the scriptures and reading His word. His promise to you is that if you earnestly seek Him, you will find Him. Praying will open your heart to discern what God's plan is for your life.

## **Take action**

At some point, once you feel you have sought out the best wisdom and discerned to the best of your ability, you must take action. Discernment is ongoing and requires you to constantly evaluate the decisions that you've made. Check the results, if the outcomes- your behavior, your attitude, your words, your actions are good, it's an indicator your discernment was good. If they are poor, then you will need to adjust your decision. Whatever you do, never beat yourself up if you've made a mistake while discerning. Mistakes are opportunities to learn and grow. Besides, the all-knowing God already knows the mistakes you will make and He has them factored into your success journey.

**Deciding what you should do can be difficult but using discernment will help you.**

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