

Week 3 Discernment: Seeking God's Will Together

Scriptures:

- Psalm 27:4,7-8,11,14
- Isaiah 55:1-3, 8-9
- Luke 22:41-42
- Luke 1:26-38
- Romans 12:9-19

Sermon Text Questions Acts 15:1-35

- How might we grow our capacity for listening to the Holy Spirit through diligent and deliberate process?
- What role does impatience play in engaging good process?
- Who and what needs to have our deep listening in the discernment process?
- What hinders our capacity to listen deeply together as a community?
- In what ways might fear impact community discernment?
- How do we cultivate the kind of posture and prayer Christ had of holy indifference to anything but God's will?

Reflection questions

- How do you typically show up in a group discernment process?
- What do you need let go of or let die within you to enter a space of being able to say, "not my will, but thine, O Lord"?
- What challenges you about the prayer for indifference to anything but the will of God?
- In what ways do fear and impatience impact your capacity for entering community discernment?
- How is it with your heart? What is your inner self/spirit telling you when you consider entering a season of church discernment?
- How are you taking responsibility for allowing God to transform you into a person who can enter, with integrity, the process of seeking God's will together?

Application

What is a *Prayer for Indifference*

The Prayer of Indifference asks God to make us indifferent to anything but his will. When we are in a place of holy indifference, we are prepared and free to hear from the Holy Spirit and to pray for wisdom. It was the prayer of Mary in Luke 1:38, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be unto me according to your word." It was Jesus' prayer in Luke 22:42 from Gethsemane, "Not my will but, yours be done." This prayer looks to produce in us an openness to God where we are free from undue attachment to any particular outcome. It's a place where we want God and God's will more than anything. God must accomplish this for us and we wait for it to be given. We offer ourselves completely to God, detaching ourselves from comfort, personal ownership, advantage, or wanting to look good in the eyes of others. We humbly lay down our own will to embrace God's will. Holy indifference comes through a work of the Spirit and is given for the holy purpose of being open to a new work of God.

A *Prayer for Indifference*

In a time of silence and solitude, pray through this prayer as you feel led. Pray it as it resonates and reflects where you currently are now in your discernment process, or in preparation for a season of discernment around a particular issue or decision. Pray slowly and pause to listen to what God might be revealing and speaking in between stanzas.

God, I come humbly before You now searching my heart. I open my heart and hands to You. Lord, search my heart and know me. Give me knowledge of the places that I am attached to anything other than Your will.

Right now, it seems apparent to me that I am not indifferent when it comes to _____. I know that part of me clings to my own agenda. Lord, if I am to become indifferent, You will have to do it in me. God, I wait on you.

Jesus, I notice that I am not indifferent and find resistance. Without judgment and in self-compassion I ask You to show me how to surrender to Your will. In the spirit of Mary I say, "let it be unto me as You say" and in union with You, "not my will, but Yours, oh God."

Holy Spirit, what needs to die in me for Your will to come forth in my life? What do I need to set aside so that I can be open to what You want?

Lord, I am willing to let _____ die to give You room to start something new. I lay aside and leave behind _____ so that I can be open to Your new gifts of grace and new expressions of ministry.

God, I entrust myself to you. Bring me to holy indifference so that I might hear from You and follow You, to the places and ways in which You are at work. I commit my spirit, heart, and mind to You. I surrender to Your will, not my own.

Amen.