

HEARING THE VOICE OF GOD WITHIN

Exercise: Discerning the Spirits

Find a quiet, relaxed place to sit. Close your eyes and focus on your breathing as a way to calm yourself. If any distractions enter your mind, don't try and stop them, just let them pass through. Acknowledge before God how you are feeling - distracted or attentive; happy or grumpy; eager to hear from Him or bored and reluctant - and ask him to meet with you where you are at.

OBSERVE

- Take note of a desire within your spirit - maybe the desire to start a new job, or move house, or take up a hobby or a new ministry, to meet someone new or reconnect with an estranged friend.
- Prayerfully consider:
 - What exactly is it that you desire?
 - Is there a competing desire within you? (For example, you might desire to move house or to stay put, or there may be 'part of you' that wants to retire and another that wants to keep working.)

INTERPRET

Prayerfully Consider

- Where do you think these desires are coming from? Are they connected to fear, anxiety, shame, tiredness, hurt or pain? Or are they coming from peace, joy, contentment and confidence?
- Day dream with God. Imagine what it would be like if you followed each desire. (For example, imagine what it would be like if you moved house and then imagine what it would be like if you didn't). Is there a scenario in which you feel closer to God, growing in faith, hope, love and peace. Or is there a scenario in which you feel further from God - maybe more excited but a little 'empty' in your Spirit?
 - Ask God to show you where each of these desires comes from? Are they from the false spirit, the true spirit or neither? (Be sure to talk to a trusted friend about this, especially if it is a significant decision.)

RESPOND

Prayerfully consider:

- What can I do in response? How can I respond to the God given desire within me?