

## **Blocks to Discernment Seeking the Lord and Not Finding Him**

“They shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the Lord, but they shall not find it.” Amos 8:12

Discernment is for **little and big** decisions.

**Little-** Which prayer should I make today? What possessions should I give away today?

**Big-** What house should I buy? What do I do as I age? How can I help dysfunctional friends or family?

Jesus said He is the way. He wants us to know His way, His timing, His speech, His waiting, and His silence.  
People, places and things can **block** His voice.

Examples of getting rid of the old and embracing the new, so that we become “a new creation” in Jesus.

1. “For you, O God...refined us like silver.” Ps 66:10 Our transformation into faithful disciples includes letting go of all the imperfections in us. Like silver, we have to give up the darkness within to be sterling.
2. 2 Kings 2:10-14- Elijah & Elisha- transformation.
3. Cut flowers- when they are cut and brought inside, they are beautiful. When they die we have to throw them out and get new ones. Old comforts, situations, jobs etc must be replaced with new for us to grow.
4. Empty nest syndrome.

### **Blocks to Discernment**

1. **Sins-** choosing not to love, refusing to love, in our thoughts, actions, words and body language. Sins are **always** against God, and can also be against others, self, and/or nature. They block our ability to discern.

**Sins can be:** once in a life time or habitual

Sins of commission- doing the unloving thing

Sins of omission- not doing the loving thing

Sins of countries, companies, families, individuals

**The seven deadly (because they can kill the soul) sins are:**

<b>greed</b>	material goods, human respect, things, money.
<b>envy</b>	of others, of material possessions, honors, responsibility
<b>gluttony</b>	foods, alcohol, anything that appeals to our senses.
<b>anger</b>	rebellion against God, good people.
<b>lust</b>	intimacy without love- impure thoughts, words, and actions.
<b>pride</b>	giving ourselves greater power or sway than God desires.
<b>sloth</b>	eluding responsibility, passivity when Jesus is asking you to act or speak.

2. **Feelings or emotions** which keep us away from God- loneliness, depression, inadequacy, hopelessness, despair, loss, anxiety.
3. **Unforgiveness** of self, others, God, the Church, strangers, harmful leaderships, governments, nationalities.
4. **Self will-** I want things my way, I know what's best for me and everyone, not willing to listen, hypocritical, self righteous, selfishness, its my way or the highway.
5. **Fears** of the future, ill health, failure, success, loss of loved ones, finances, natural disasters, unworthiness, fear of death, your own or another's, fear of family going to hell.
6. **Your past-** guilt, shame, weaknesses, family and societal dysfunction, unwilling to remove walls you or others have set up, stuck in "if only," romanticizing the past, regrets, making a

mistake and not forgiving self or others for it, not being perfect, feeling inadequate.

7. **Lack of faith**- not knowing what our faith teaches, or why, refusal to pray before speaking or acting,
8. lack of hope in God and God's mercy, lack of trust, lack of patience, compromising our faith values.
8. **Lack of self control**- unhealthy boundaries, impatience, refusal to listen to others, controlling.
9. **Addictions including** food, drink, gossip, computers, pornography, TV, buying, smoking, self-destruction.
10. **Other People** are more important than God's will. Their view of who you are and what you should do, seeing yourself as others do, not as God does.
11. **Ancestral Bondages**- premarital sex, babies out of wedlock, addictions, familial sins, suicide or self destruction, abuse, hostility to a nation, religion.
12. **Numbness**- immobility, stuck in a place or attitude, inability to act for Jesus or unwilling to.

Bad spirits keep us from discerning and getting closer to God. We need to rebuke them and ask Jesus to give us good virtues, graces and gifts to replace the old sins and bondages.

### **Binding Off Prayer**

In the name and blood of Jesus, I bind, reject and cast off  
all the spirits of \_\_\_\_\_ (any of the above).  
I ask you, Jesus Christ, to remove these forever from me and my family tree,  
and to replace them with the gifts of  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(virtues and strengths). Amen

The University of California at Berkley did an experiment. They took an amoeba and put it into a stress free environment, " an ideal temperature, optimal concentration of moisture and constant food supply. Yet it died." Life requires change and stress- stretching to grow, letting go of the cocoon and transformation into a beautiful butterfly.

### **Discernment is**

**"Testing every spirit"**

**"Putting on the mind of Jesus Christ"**

**Believing that God is our God and we are the people of God, that God has the best answers and that God wants to give us the best answers.**

**Change is not only possible but beneficial.**

### **One way to discern**

**Make a list of the reasons you want to do something, and the reasons against that decision.**

**For**

**Against**

### **Conclusion-**