

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Book of Genesis (Genesis 3:1-6)

Now the snake was the most cunning of all the wild animals that the LORD God had made. He asked the woman, "Did God really say, 'You shall not eat from any of the trees in the garden?'" The woman answered the snake: "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; it is only about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden that God said, 'You shall not eat it or even touch it, or else you will die.'" But the snake said to the woman: "You certainly will not die! God knows well that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, who know good and evil." The woman saw that the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eyes, and the tree was desirable for gaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection – The motivation for Discernment is an ardent love for God's will

Those who love God will need to discern God's will for our lives in our life choices, big or small. God desires us to be faithful even in small things. Those who do not love God will be driven by their own passions, desires, ambitions or dictates of society. They are of the world. Our faith calls us to be not of the world but its light and salt. We are called to be good Catholic witnesses by how we live our lives. True discernment is the way to finding out God's will for our lives, and is solely motivated by an ardent love of God's will. **The fulfillment of God's will is the best proof of our love for God.** Jesus said: *If you love Me, you will keep My commandments (John 14:15).* Love for God engenders love for all the things He stands for and for His children which is everyone. During His time on earth, Jesus gives us a great example on how to love. He is obedient to God, His Father unto death, even to death on the cross of crucifixion, a death reserved for the vilest of criminals in those days.

True discernment always adheres to God's laws, commandments and precepts. When a decision resulting from a period of discernment is contrary to God's laws, it is not the fruit of a true discernment. God would never ask any of His children to sin against Him no matter what the human situation is. There is a huge, opposing difference between the divine teachings of our faith and the subjective human thinking behind Situation Ethics. We can see clearly in the biblical account of the first Fall of our first parents that Eve's decision to eat the forbidden fruit was a direct rebellion against God's desires and wishes. Once we do not wish to adhere to God's laws, the devil takes control over us in helping us make bad decisions which we will not recognize as bad unless our conscience warns us of the violation of God's laws. Thus, a well formed conscience is a necessity.

Discernment is either influenced by the Holy Spirit or the devil. When we sincerely love God and try our best to fulfill His will in all things, God's will unfolds before us. There is no confusion, error or stumbling block for those who love God's laws and diligently adhere to them. The gentle inspirations of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth can be perceived especially when we are in prayer or reading God's Word. The devil cannot have a hold over those who are humble and who wish to fulfill God's will. However, for those who wish to pursue their own agendas, passions, desires, the devil comes in with his unholy suggestions and temptation. He is very crafty and dresses up evil to look good and worth having. He is expert at dressing up sin to take the form of a human right, a human freedom, always catering to the self-love of our fallen human nature. In the first Fall, he told Eve that the forbidden fruit was good for gaining wisdom, and he threw doubt over God's love for them.

The vital need for prayer and meditation of God's Word when we are seeking God's will. God can speak to us in many ways. Oftentimes, God speaks to our hearts and minds in ways that we do not perceive. This may happen when we pray sincerely or when we are in meditation of God's Word. Our hearts and minds are quietly transformed during these times when we are in communion with the Lord. Our hearts which are hardened by sins are softened. The darkness of our minds is dissipated by God's light. We become more accepting of whatever He may will for us. **The more we trust Him, the more graces we can receive, the stronger our faith, the greater the innermost peace we have, the lesser the stumbling block we encounter.**

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, You live to do the Father's will. Give me all the graces I need to follow Your example. Fulfillment of God's will is the best proof of my love for God. Your will for my life will lead me to attain the highest potential of what God created me to be. Your will for me is the surest, shortest and safest route to my crown of glory in our Father's homeland. Through the power of Your Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, grant me the gift of discernment so that the truth of the difference between good and evil will always be shown to me so that my life may always be pleasing to God and enjoy His blessings and favour. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me and give me your humility and wisdom. Help me keep my soul in the state of grace. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. www.twohearts.hk