

How to Discern Between Two Choices

Taken from *Discerning the Will of God* - Timothy Gallagher

Understand the Question	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● examples; college choice, vocation, a big move (decision between two goods)● when the choice is between a good and an evil, God's will is evident● God, who calls us to a state of life, also call us to the tasks inherent to that state (i.e. a father should strive to do things a father does)
Foundation of Discernment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● awareness that God has created us out of love and ceaselessly offers that love to us;● "to do your will is my delight" - Psalm 40
Disposition for Discernment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● we can not properly discern God's will if we are not in the right disposition● foundation for attaining proper disposition<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ awareness of God's infinite love for you○ healing encounter with Jesus who love you (understanding)○ continuing quest for heartfelt knowledge and growing love for Christ.● the means for growing in disposition; spiritual exercises, Holy Eucharist, Sacred Scripture, silence, spiritual direction, and review of spiritual experiences
Three Modes of Discernment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● First Mode: Clarity Beyond Doubting<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ when you cannot doubt that it's God's will● Second Mode: An Attraction of the Heart (<i>if choice is not revealed through first mode</i>)<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ When sufficient clarity and understanding is received through experience of consolations and desolations, and through experience of discernment of different spirits. (SpirEx, 176)○ <i>assumes understanding and recognition of spiritual consolation and spiritual desolation</i>○ in times of spiritual consolation, to which option have I been inclined.○ has this option recurred? enough so that a clear pattern of inclination to one option when in spiritual consolation has emerged?● Third Mode: A Preponderance of Reasons (<i>if choice is not revealed through second mode</i>)<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ when the soul is not agitated by different spirits we use our natural powers freely and tranquilly (peacefully)○ The First Way<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ without any bias or inclination towards either option consider and weigh the reasons of the two options.■ share with a spiritual guide■ make a choice and bring to God seeking Confirmation○ The Second Way<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ reaffirm disposition and put choice to test through three questions<ul style="list-style-type: none">● what would you tell someone you have never seen and that you desire full spiritual growth for?● what choice would you make if you were looking back on this 50 years from now?● when you are at the day of judgment (heaven), what choice would you hope you have chosen?
Questions to Consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● have you researched well the options in this choice and do you have relevant data to ensure the decision will be solidly rooted in reality?● are you truly in a tranquil time? able to use your "natural powers" freely and tranquilly?● have you renewed your awareness of and desire for the end to which this choice is the means?● are you spiritually free? open to either option?● have you sought God's help in prayer <u>before</u> you consider the advantages and disadvantages?● have you shared this process with a spiritual guide?● have you sought Confirmation in your choice?