Small Group Discussion Guide

Leading Like Jesus: Practicing Discernment

## Sermon Summary

When Jesus faced the challenge of choosing the Twelve, he first withdrew to pray. In a politically divided time, he discerned through prayer and chose a diverse group of disciples. Discernment is not about certainty but about aligning with God’s will. As Romans 12:2 reminds us, we are called to be transformed by the renewing of our minds so that we can discern God’s will. Practicing discernment daily builds habits that prepare us for the big decisions of life.

## Opening Prayer

Gracious God, you call us to follow your Son and to seek your will in all things. Open our hearts and minds to your Spirit. Teach us to pause, pray, and discern so that our lives align with your purpose. Guide our conversation and shape us as your disciples. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

## Icebreaker Question

When you face a big problem, what’s your natural go-to move? Do you pray, plan, procrastinate, or something else?

## Key Points from the Sermon

1. Jesus modeled discernment by turning to prayer before making decisions.
2. Discernment requires humility, curiosity, and openness rather than rigid certainty.
3. Practicing discernment daily in small things prepares us for the big challenges.
4. Four Practices of Discernment: Pray, Read, Listen, Wait.
5. Discernment aligns us with God’s will, connects us with others, and relieves the pressure to be perfect.

## Key Quotes from the Sermon

“If Jesus himself needs to practice discernment, why would we think we can do it on our own?”
“Practice makes prepared.”
“Certainty is the enemy of discernment.”
“When we begin to lead like Jesus, we quickly discover that we are not alone, and we’re not just leading like Jesus, but we’re leading with Jesus.”

## Bible Readings

• Luke 6:12–16 (Jesus prays before choosing the Twelve)
• Romans 12:2 (Be transformed… discern God’s will)
• Proverbs 3:5–6 (Trust in the Lord with all your heart)
• James 1:5 (Ask God for wisdom)

## Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Jesus spent all night in prayer before choosing the disciples?
2. How does practicing discernment in small daily things prepare us for bigger challenges?
3. What does it mean to you that “certainty is the enemy of discernment”?
4. Which of the 4 practices of discernment (Pray, Read, Listen, Wait) comes most naturally to you, and which is most difficult?
5. How might our church practice discernment together in times of decision?

## What’s Next? (Life Application)

This week, pause each morning and ask: “God, what do you want me to do today?” Practice discernment in small things—your schedule, your priorities, your relationships. Talk to a trusted friend about what you sense God is saying. Remember: practice makes prepared.

## Closing Prayer

Loving God, thank you for guiding us through your Spirit. Teach us to wait on you, to listen for your voice, and to walk in your ways. Send us out this week ready to practice discernment in both the small and big things. In Jesus’ name, Amen.