

**Title: Listening to God in Times of Choice ~ the Art of Discerning God's Will**

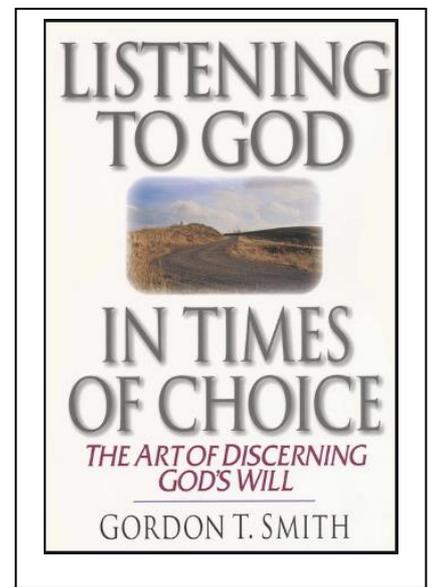
**Author : Gordon T. Smith**

**Genre : Prayer**

**Paperback : 153 pages**

*“Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is discerning, let him know them; for the ways of the Lord are right, and the upright walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them.”*

Hosea 14:9 ESV



I was browsing the church library with no particular book or subject in mind when I chanced upon this book. Reading the synopsis at the back of the book, I noted that this book is about discernment, certainly something that is important to know but not easy to do. So I decided to read the book and, hopefully, learn something more about discernment.

To the author, we need a model for understanding the context and basis for God's guidance in our lives (God's guidance is what discernment is about). And to him, the most helpful place to begin is with the principle of friendship with God. This understanding of discernment and guidance carries certain important implications:

1. Discernment relates to the whole of our Christian experience, not just to an isolated segment – a time of decision. This means we cannot come to God only when we need to make a decision and expect to hear from Him.
2. This approach also presumes that discernment arises out of our prayers. Our friendship with God is sustained in prayer. This is not surprising as prayer is our means of communion with God.
3. This understanding of discernment assumes that we do not approach our encounter with God purely pragmatically. Discernment is the opportunity to deepen the relationship so that our actions in the world arise out of communion with God. Relationship with God should always be our desire and a priority.

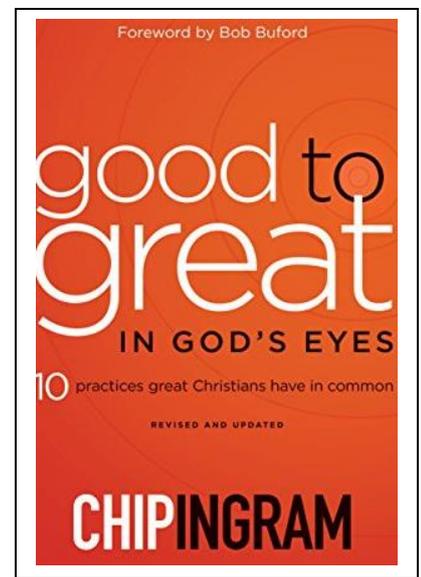
The author then talks about key personal foundations for discernment. One of the key foundations that struck me is the fundamental role of Scripture. Quite simply, if we do not know the Word, we cannot know the mind of God. How true! The communication of the Spirit to our hearts and minds is the specific application of the Word to our lives. We can confidently attend to the prompting of the Spirit only if we are men and women of the Word.

There are other aspects of discernment being discussed. For instance, the peace of God, an intentional approach to decision-making, and what it means to be a discerning person. The author also discusses the obstacles to discernment. The final area he talks about is to have patience with God, because we must let God be God.

I want to end this review by quoting from the author, which I think is very important: “When it comes to discernment and effective decision-making there are no shortcuts.” I highly recommend this book to those who want to know more about discernment.

**Title: Good to Great in God's Eyes :  
10 practices great Christians have in common**  
**Author : Chip Ingram**  
**Category : Christian Living**  
**Hardcover : 295 pages**

*“Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.”*  
1 Corinthians 11:1 ESV



This book is one of two books I borrowed from the National Library in October 2019 and I ordered a copy for our Resource Library.

Here are 10 great practices to work toward from good to great Christians.

Bob Buford, the author of 'Half Time' foreword the book with his passion to help people discover their Core (the best they have to offer), to create Capacity (make time and money available to fulfil their God-given calling and design), and to discover the Context (the unique role and place they fit to make the greatest difference) for the glory of God. He highly recommends this book that will help every believer work towards their Core, Capacity and Context.

Chip Ingram gets us started with ten principles in ten chapters to get us working from good to great in God's eyes:

1. Think Great Thoughts
2. Read Great Books
3. Pursue Great People
4. Dream Great Dreams
5. Pray Great Prayers
6. Take Great Risks
7. Make Great Sacrifices
8. Enjoy Great Moments
9. Empower Great People
10. Develop Great Habits

Every chapter is filled with encouragement and reasons to desire these practices and ends with some practical tips to get you started. At the end of each chapter also has questions for group discussion.

In '*Think Great Thoughts*', I like the tips Chip recommends like Listen to great music, Take walks in nature and Personalise scriptural truths and promises. In '*Read Great Books*', you may be keen to check out from our Resource Library some of the titles that have helped him in his life journey like *The Knowledge of the Holy* (AW Tozer) and *Daws* (Betty Lee Skinner). In '*Develop Great Habits*', pastor Chip outlines several principles to help us work towards saying No to bad habits and Yes to great ones.

I highly recommend this book.

Other titles by Chip Ingram available in our Resource Library are:

1. The Real God
2. Love, Sex and Lasting Relationships