

試驗諸靈

因為沒有好樹結壞果子，也沒有壞樹結好果子。凡樹木看果子就可以認出它來。路 6:43-44

對那些有規律地實踐良心省察 (Awareness Examen 附設於網站) 的人，會留意每日在他們內心所發生的情況。每每發現在一天之內，是會出現很多經驗上的差別，是由於有好與壞的靈在影響著我們的選擇。能辨別諸靈是很重要的。約翰一書四章一節提醒我們「一切的靈，你們不可都信，總要試驗那些靈是出於神的不是」。耶穌在經文中說明一種方法——看果子就認出在我們裡面的靈來。

你在靈裡面經驗到什麼？是什麼引導你到這地步？是否真從神而來？或是從一個你不該跟從的靈而來？

聖依納爵教導他的門徒分辨的方法：是分辨那靈是導致靈裡的安慰或導致靈裡的失落。若我們想像內在的生命好比一氣象系統，每天會有很多不同的光線和黑暗在經過。安慰這個字在拉丁文中是解作「與太陽同在」；相反，失落是「失去了太陽」。這是一個很重要的分別，因為這兩種在靈裡是結出不同果子的。

在他的晨操中，依納爵鑑定安慰的靈是引致信心，盼望和愛的增長及內裡的喜樂；所有屬天的都會被吸引和邀請，因為已被平安和安靜在主，我們的創造者所充滿了。

他定義靈裡的失落是：靈的黑夜，靈的騷動，傾向於低沈和世俗，焦躁不安是出於他渴求信望愛。這靈是全然怠惰，不冷不熱，憂心，並與創造主分離。

依納爵更補充靈裡失落的影響：是那邪靈的特徵，用憂愁去折磨，用憂慮去煩擾，並且用假理論來築起阻礙。

歷代教會傳遞給我們有關活出屬靈生命的重要智慧，當我們學會多一些注視心靈，我們會多一點智慧來選擇那一個聲音要跟從。

我的羊跟隨我是因為認出我的聲音，牠們不會跟著陌生人；反而牠們會逃跑，因為牠們不認識陌生人的聲音。約 10:4-5

反省問題：

1. 如果專注是重要，並能幫助作好的抉擇的，我們當怎樣培養這智慧？
2. 依納爵提到那「邪靈的特徵是用憂愁去折磨，用憂慮去煩擾，並且用假理論來築起障礙。」而那靈的果子就是「靈的全然怠惰，不冷不熱，憂心，並與創造主分離。」我們在何種情況下不必要地責備自己引致這境況而忽略了是跟隨了那靈所作的？
3. 當發現在靈裡有發酸的時候，有什麼可以做？

禱告：求主幫助你每天更專注在你的心靈所發生的事。求主給你智慧去選擇那一個靈你的內心要跟隨，那一個你要遠離。

10. "Testing Spirits"

No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. Luke 6:43-44

Anyone who regularly practices the Awareness Examen (see website) will become much more attentive to what happens within them each day. As we discover the many shades of experience that take place in the course of a day we come to recognize both the good and bad spirits that influence the choices we make. It's important to be able to distinguish between these spirits. In 1 John 4 :1 we are cautioned to "not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God" Jesus shows us, in the Scripture above, one way to do this—by examining the fruit a spirit bears within you.

What are you experiencing in your spirit and what has led you there? Is the spirit that has led you to this state of soul truly from God? Or is it a spirit you shouldn't be heeding?

St. Ignatius of Loyola taught his disciples to distinguish between spirits that produce consolations in the soul and those that produce desolations of the soul. If we picture our inner life as a weather system it might give us an idea of the varied states of light and darkness our souls pass through each day. The word consolation, from the Latin, literally means "with the sun." Desolation, in contrast, means "without the sun." These are important distinctions to note as they each bear quite a different fruit in our spirits.

In his Spiritual Exercises, Ignatius identifies the spirit of consolation as causing "an increase of faith, hope, and love, and all interior joy that invites and attracts to what is heavenly by filling it with peace and quiet in its Creator and Lord."

Desolations he defines as:

darkness of soul, turmoil of spirit, inclination to what is low and earthly, restlessness rising from many disturbances which lead to want of faith, want of hope, want of love. The soul is wholly slothful, tepid, sad and separated, as it were, from its Creator and Lord.

In his diagnosis of the effects of desolation Ignatius adds,

it is characteristic of the evil spirit to afflict with sadness, to harass with anxiety and to raise obstacles based on false reasoning.

Sound familiar? You will know a spirit by its fruit. A bad spirit produces a souring of the soul. Awareness that this is happening should be the first indicator that the voice you are following is not from God. It is time to let go of whatever your mind, heart or actions have been pursuing and to wait on God for redirection.

The church has handed down to us important wisdom with regards to living the spiritual life. As we learn to pay more attention to our souls we will be able to more wisely choose which voices to follow.

My sheep follow me because they know my voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice.

John 10:4-5

Questions:

- If attentiveness is essential to making good choices, how can we cultivate this wisdom?
- Ignatius says that “it is characteristic of the evil spirit to afflict with sadness, to harass with anxiety and to raise obstacles based on false reasoning.” The fruit of this spirit is that “the soul is wholly slothful, tepid, sad and separated, as it were, from its Creator and Lord.” In what ways do we unnecessarily blame ourselves for such states of soul rather than the spirit we've been following?
- Once such a “souring of the soul” has been noticed what can be done about it?

Prayer: Ask the Lord to help you be more attentive to what takes place in your soul each day. Ask God for wisdom in choosing which spirits to follow in your inner life and which to run away from.