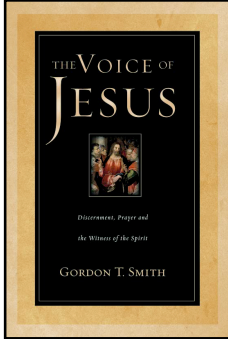


DISCERNING THE VOICE OF JESUS



"For us as individuals, the danger is that we might never develop an inner life. It is easy to live by duty, the expectations of others, the routines of our work and the inertia of culture and religious traditions. Surely what we long for, though, is an authentic interior life in which we know to the core of our beings that the Spirit of God is present to us and speaking life to us—a life that is personally and dynamically our own. With a well-developed interior life, we live our lives in response to the Spirit. We choose to live that which we are called to live—our life, not someone else's life."

—Gordon T. Smith, author of *The Voice of Jesus*

In his new book *The Voice of Jesus: Discernment, Prayer and the Witness of the Spirit* Gordon Smith says that every Christian should be able to answer two questions:

- What do you think Jesus is saying to you at this point in your life, in the context of the challenges and opportunities you are facing?
- What indicators give you some measure of confidence that it is indeed Jesus speaking to you rather than someone or something else?

They are questions we all ask at many points in our lives, whether we're wondering about changing careers, raising children or getting married. We listen for the voice of God to give us the answers. What confuses us is that we're not always sure if the voice we hear is that of the Spirit of Christ. "We need to take as a given the possibility of a false witness that may be confused with the voice of Jesus," Smith writes. "Thus we must be discerning."

The Voice of Jesus is a book about discerning the differences between true and false witnesses, and recognizing and responding to the inner witness of the Spirit. Smith describes how we are to listen for and respond to the Spirit, and how the Spirit works in our lives to convict us of sin, illumine our minds, help us make choices and offer spiritual direction.

Building on the rich spiritual tradition that spans the diversity of history and theology from Ignatius Loyola to John Wesley to Jonathan Edwards, Smith opens our ears and hearts to the depths of the inner witness of the Spirit. By learning to attend to the Spirit, Smith urges us, we will learn to hear and heed the voice of Jesus in everyday life.

"The ability to discern the voice of Jesus is a critical skill, basic to our capacity to make vocational and moral choices. What we long for are the insight, discretion and judgment that would enable us to respond with integrity in the face of emotional turmoil and perplexing alternatives," Smith explains. "As we yearn to know the voice of Jesus at the critical moments of our lives, we have a wonderful Christian heritage that can inform and guide this longing and help us make sense of the voices in our heads. We can learn how to discern, how to listen for the voice of Jesus and how to speak of this voice within the community of faith."

TO SCHEDULE AN INTERVIEW WITH GORDON SMITH, CONTACT KRISTA CARNET,
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