

# Good finding god in all things essay example

[Religion](#), [God](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Often in life I have found myself in a situation where I have to decide between two or more opportunities and prayerfully consider which way God wants me to go. During my teenage years I was confronted with the choice of the best high school and college, after that it was time to choose which way my career path should go. Not only have I been in this situation, but my family members, my close friends and literally everyone around me would be confronted with such choices in life. However, I think, we Christians have a different burden and different aspect to consider than most of the worldly people around us – it is connected with the will of God in our life and our obedience to Him. We need to find out to how to serve Him better in humility and how to lay our lives, our worldly weapons, in order to take on the full armor of God, preach the Gospel to the poor, be humble and love everybody we encounter. Most often, the spiritual battle takes place within my soul and my willpower to choose the right path.

I think the Ignatian discernment method makes the Christian decision making a much more comfortable process, because I ask God in prayer to give me light to understand what to choose next. In this prayer I can tell God that I yearn for His presence to be sensed when I am in the middle of a certain decision development and in a situation where there are two option or choices and I have to discern where to say yes and which one to negate. In such situations I am eager to observe the feelings each alternative evokes in me. For example, I had to choose between two high schools with two different profiles – one of them was a grammar school and the other one was with a science profile. I had to observe my feelings as to each of the alternatives to be enrolled in one of them. I had to imagine each one in my

mind – how would I feel, if I would prioritize in studies in humanities and the same – in science. I felt I was equally gifted in both fields.

Such conflicting desires feel like a battleground in me when they are equally appealing. Certainly the decision making process causes fears, anxiety and anger – I was afraid I was going to be hurt no matter what choice I would make. That is why I found the importance of exploring my feelings – I needed to identify where they would come from and what was the reason for my distrust and trust in each different situation. The feelings were not always negative – the choices I had to make also evoked positive feelings like joy, happiness, peace and call to freedom. The alluring desires for a completely new life were certainly in the picture of my vision as to where each choice would lead me. However, even at the prospect of wholeness, happiness and fulfillment I being a Christian had to stop and ask God where He was in that, what He was saying and where He was leading me to go – what was the nudge from above I had to feel. Certainly, I had to leave space for His invitation and initiation.

In moments like that, I have noticed that I have to get to a third stage where the process of discerning and sorting out takes place. I have to manage to estimate between the different alternatives and discover which one will make me more energized and joyful and where I will feel down and unfulfilled. It certainly helps me when I talk to someone who has been through the same type of journey – for example a spiritual companion. They definitely cannot tell me what to do with exactness or make the final decision for me – I still would have the last word with accordance to God's will. But the spiritual guides will help me to discover my unique individual

self by giving me some hints as to what my character has revealed to them and what aspects of the two alternatives have made me show more enthusiasm, peace and joy. They would have also noticed which choice would most probably make me sad, unfulfilled and emotionally drained. Meeting the right choice is important, since I have to live with the outcome and this might affect my whole life in the years to come. This will certainly affect the range of people I meet and communicate with and the level of my personal happiness.

How do I make the right choice then – I have to engage into a deeper conversation with the Lord and observe how the Lord speaks through my feelings. Finally, the confirmation comes when I present my choice before the Lord and experience a lasting inner peace, joy and comfort. If this is not the case, I am entitled to start the process of discernment all over again and to take enough time to make the right decision.

It is, however, not so much about my making the right choice between two simple alternatives – shall I pursue career in humanities or in science, but rather, me being a Christian – I am expected to always choose God's way instead of the way of the world. Ignatius' spiritual exercise extends to four weeks and the second week fully focuses on my personal following Christ as a missionary in His given ministry. I would have to learn to know how to love and to serve, which would lead my spiritual life into unity with all my compartmentalized personality, spiritually drawn toward the Kingdom of God, but at the same time torn apart from it by the worldliness of the world. I need to achieve this unified self by an unitative action and unitative life, as Ignatius calls it.

I need to focus and keep in mind that “ God is always more” (“ Deus semper major”). I need to attain it “ for the greater glory of God”, as the Jesuit motto claims (“ Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam”). I would like to get to the point where I am free from any kind of disordered affections, imbalances and exaggerations, which would block my deeper intimacy with the Risen Lord in God’s mission today. In this sense, I choose to focus on the apostolic availability together with my commitment to Christ and to the Gospel today. The person who sins is no longer in the center of my attention, but rather I am looking for a personal and collective friendship with the Lord on a mission.

I realized that I have been elected and have a concrete response to Christ’s call rooted in the Gospel today considering the “ eternal Now” moment, which involves a fairly total commitment to saying Yes to the Lord’s calling. From that moment I am not alone, but am in the state of “ being with” and it is a question of how much of this shared “ being with” co-existence I can take and desire, while at the same time I am put into action and experience my commitment to the highest degree. I come to realize at this point that there is freedom in my commitment, which is freedom from the world, but at the same time it requires a higher cost – the cost of the discipleship. I am called to dream an impossible dream and to fight an unbeatable foe.

Ignatius warns us that at this point we encounter the standard of the Enemy of our Human Nature, who urges us to strive for riches and honors that ultimately lead to pride (“ soberbia”). We compare it with it the contrary standard of Christ, who teaches us to be content with poverty and humiliations. It is at this facing of the two natures that I need to identify with

whom I stand – do I care for the beatitudes of Jesus and issues of social justice?

My whole person needs change and reorientation and this is the grace of the second week. Through His love I allow Jesus to take control of my life and my life becomes fully contained in His. He starts leading me on His paths and points me what His priorities are. I have entrusted myself to the almighty power of God. Of course, for this reason I cannot ignore the question of companionship. The core of my adult spirituality turns out to be the process of moving away from “ ego spirituality” toward the urge to pursue and to see what I can do for Christ. Thus I have to learn to hold Christ as the center and focus of my life. I am learning to live in Him, move in Him and have my whole being in Him. Then it is not me in the center of the circle, but the Lord. I have to be receptive, responsible and available through prayer and discernment and I have to be able to understand the signs of the times. During the Spiritual Exercises of the four weeks I experience their structure, rhythm and contemplative strength. First I have to focus on the desire that I want to take place. Then I have to bring in some structure by applying a preparatory prayer where a prelude (the so called “ composition of the self”) forms an emotional and affective atmosphere. It helps me to become more centered. I need to form a conversation (“ colloquy”) by talking to Christ like with a friend (“ como amigo”). The contemplations in 2-4 weeks have 3 preludes, which include the history of mystery defining my image and place (“ the composition of the self”) and grace.

The rhythm of an exercise usually is defined by me personally – it consists of gradual slowing down and staying where there is fruit. Sometimes I do not

find a lot of content in the meditation, but an intimate understanding when I am deeply present and available to listen to the Lord. The structure of the day differentiates the second week from the first week. In the first week I have to practice more meditation and repetition. In the second week I experience more contemplation and repetition. The Ignatian repetition means not to literally repeat or review, but rather to go back to where the fruit or, in other words, the consolation was blocked in the first place. The second repetition requires the application of the senses – it shifts the attention and allows me everything I have experienced to come into me and over me.

I have noticed that the rhythm of those weeks gradually slows down to a place where I reach quietness, rest and peace. The transition from the second to the third week is not that clear, however. I get to symbolically go through the process of the death of Jesus, who says He commits His spirit in His Father's hands in order to resurrect. The rhythm of the prayer during this process is that of a spectator prayer, who is close-up to Jesus. I need to apply the unitative prayer and feel it working inside me, as if I am looking through the eyes of Jesus.

A key moment of the second week is the Ignatian Gospel Contemplation. During the transition from the first week I am able to realize that even being a sinner I am loved and this is a great gift, since it makes all things possible. When I am ready to place Jesus and the Gospel in the center of my life, I express my desire for both Jesus and His Gospel to live. This is a choice. I get to form a deep friendship and intimacy with Jesus on a mission. There is, of course, the fear of the cost of the discipleship, because it might mean

poverty of spirit and in some cases – an actual poverty, but at the same time it guarantees my spiritual freedom to stand my ground, to choose in public the heroic calling and to focus on Jesus. The second week literally means to be graced to live in friendship with Jesus day by day – loving Him, knowing Him and serving Him. The Gospel contemplation consists indeed in knowing, loving and serving the Lord. The mystery of this process is that a Gospel contemplation leads to recapitulation of the Gospel itself as a ‘ Now’ event or the so called ‘ Ongoing’ Gospel. The same mysteries and events that happened during the lifetime of Jesus are still happening and are available to me. My choice of an apostolic Gospel life leads to the complete reformation of my life and enables me to discern what is leading me to a further insertion into the chosen Gospel life and the mission of Christ.

The voice of God can have four natural sources: 1. I myself am able to perceive the divine in the creation of God. 2. It is in the Scripture. 3. We hear the teachings of the Church and live within the tradition of our community. 4. The divine voice is accessible to us daily, when we measure our experiences and combine all of the above. God has a span of 24 hours to communicate with us. We have to be ready to listen to His voice and not to harden our hearts. He relies on us to be receptive, to train our minds and perceptions to hear Him.

According to Bill Creed Chapter 7, during the second week we get to realize that there are no rules into the process, but guidance and wisdom. I should be making the journey, getting more spiritual experience and starting to differ gradually from the naïve beginners. But there is still a temptation waiting for me to test me. The temptation is more typical for the “

advanced” stage and is not a sin or a bad destructive behavior. Sometimes the spiritually advanced Christians tend to do too much good works trying to play God. There is a deception in this dynamic – it is not of God and also not from my healthy best self. It is masquerading as doing things better and more. This could lead to the danger of playing the role of God and forgetting my humanity, my human needs and limitations and consequently making me feel off-centered and unbalanced. The urge for “ More” (“ magis”) traps me into thinking that I can handle everything on my own strength – for example raising children, caring for elderly parents as well as studying, keeping my finances in balance, etc. While I am tricked into the need to hold on and prove my goodness, faithfulness and commitment, I can easily find myself on the edge with a very intense emotions and forgetting to ask: “ Lord, what are you saying?” But the positive in this experience is that, once reaching the edge, I come to the end of myself and have no choice, but to turn to God again for strength.

The positive outcome of such a trap or deception is to focus on Christ and on His mission instead on myself. During the second week I need to find out what God in Christ wants, hopes and dreams. However, I should not reach the state of submitting to an ungrounded “ whatever God wants,” but have to count my feelings and my person. In situations like that I can possibly change my understanding about the image of God, because actually God teaches a person to learn to pay attention to his/her “ inner map.”

Nevertheless, I have to keep in mind that discernment becomes more vulnerable to influences from one’s deeper wounds and suppresses parts of my person (this is the so called “ Jungian shadow”) to generic patterns (“ the

collective unconscious”) and cultural biases. I need to be totally free and as available as possible in the Lord to become a person of faith. When we open to God, we feel His good Spirit – he brings love, joy, peace, patience, whereas the enemy of our human nature agitates, stirs up and crashes. I need to find everything that makes me feel “ free in the Lord” to be able to discern.

When I am guided by the Good Spirit, I go through four different stages: 1. Confusion as to why God chooses me, since I don’t feel worthy and capable. 2. Detachment in the sense of Ignatian indifference. 3. Profound peace with the Holy Spirit, a sense of unity and intellectual calmness. 4. Obedience with an unselfish heart. In this final fourth stage the strategies and tactics of the enemy of our human nature encourage the unselfish heart to do too much and become deceived. The enemy is pushing a person to leave behind one’s humanness. He would do whatever he can to destroy me, my ministry or my family. Ignatius advises me on how to take a stock of my weaknesses and to oppose the enemy. I should not give power to negativity and recall my own sins, but own the mercy of God that has freed me. I also have to avoid losing objectivity by an extremely subtle rationalization. God has the means to give me a “ sudden divine consolation.” I feel swept by His love and experience Him directly. His consolation has nothing to do with the deceptive consolation and hunger for “ security,” adoration and “ self-esteem” that often make me stay inside the box.

The “ Grace of the Third” week is the pivotal experience in my four weeks journey. However, the third and the fourth weeks are irretrievably interconnected, because they aim to find the essence of the Pascal Mystery.

It symbolizes the death and the process of dying to oneself in everyday life, so that God grants us a new life with new miracles and opportunities to experience His mercies. To sum up, during that time I realize my calling is to walk in Jesus's steps and to fulfill His vision through the means of His Mission by prayer and faith. He after all directed His prayers toward the faithful God Yahweh, who never ignores the prayers of His servants, even in the face of grate afflictions and seemingly absurdly difficult circumstances.

When I trust God that He will answer my prayers, I also activate my faith that He loves me and takes care of my needs based on this love. When I experience this dynamic, I am able to envision how the serving process will be completed. Coming into the fourth week, I sense deeply God's love and commitment to help me in my journey with Him. I extend this love to the outside world and see the people around me with hope and love, instead of negativity and judgment. When Jesus resurrected and appeared to his disciples, He reminded them that His mission is about love and forgiveness, not about vengeance and vindictiveness. The Ignatian vision offers us a tool of discernment "to be empowered to love and serve the Lord in all things" (SPEX 232).

Ignatius reminds me of the nature of love and that the affective love is good, but the love that produces deeds and actions is even more efficacious (SPEX 230). To love means to share what I have just as God shares with us and asks us to do likewise with others (SPEX 231). The theologically and spiritually right attitude of stewardship should overshadow the lapse into proprietorship. I realize that I am empowered to love and to serve the Divine majesty. Through the nature of grace I discover my human and spiritual gifts

that have been appointed particularly to me. Instead of burden, I feel the consolation in the legitimacy of my gifting. I am surprised by the way the Lord has found me, has come to dwell in me and how He labors through me (“Deus operarius”) (SPEX 235). He is walking with me, creating opportunities and opening possibilities. I need to join in actions what God has already started. I sense that I also have the gift of perseverance in mission and ministry to seek Him and find Him in all things and all persons.

I learn through Ignatius’ teachings that I have to pay a special attention to gratitude in my heart toward God. He has given me so much – the air I breathe, the wonderfully created body, the life that it sustains – every aspect of my life has been created by God. The more I look around and contemplate, the more thankful I will be, because of God’s gift of life and love. I experience His love through the love of others and am also part of His love expression towards others. I am thankful to be part of everything that God has created. To develop a habit of contemplative thankfulness is of high value for Ignatius, because the opposite of gratitude is a major sin – to forget what we have received from God and to ignore His blessings. We are entitled to be thankful, but this spirit of thankfulness brings even greater blessings, because we focus on God’s abundance and supply. When I am grateful I can look to the following day and with God I can plan correctly how to live in it, according to God’s desire for my life. I have to be aware of God’s presence with me, as I prayerfully conclude the Examen. With God in my heart, I review my days. It is a journey that I learn to apply to my mission every day.

## Conclusion

My journey as a believer in Christ goes through different stages. During the four weeks of Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius I have learned to come closer to God and ask Him for directions and discernment as to what decision to take when I am confronted with two equally appealing choices. I learn to focus on my inner emotions and fantasies, while seeking for a confirmation from the Lord that will come in the form of peace and inner contentment. This is a mysterious revelation that symbolizes the death and resurrection of Jesus, who dies to Himself to fulfill the will of the Father. The surrendering is only the beginning of the resurrection and the new life. When I learn to die to myself, I take on the mission of Christ and follow Him, experiencing how God works through me and how He makes me continue His mission of love and forgiveness, taking expression in serving actions.