

**Comparisons of Discernment in the
early Jesuit and Quaker Communities**

**For
History and Polity of Friends
Carole Spencer
June 2009**

**By
Bruce Bishop**

Two long-standing faith communities within Christian faith and practice, share a commitment to spiritual discernment. The Society of Jesus, commonly known as the Jesuits, and the Religious Society of Friends, known as Quakers or Friends, were each grounded in the spiritual experience of their founders, Ignatius of Loyola and George Fox. Their initial spiritual encounter changed their own lives and perspectives, and became the “norm” by which they taught their companions how to hear and discern the movement of God. Because each initial encounter was unique, and their personalities were distinct, the teachings and practices of each tradition have distinctive characteristics. While they both focus on the same goal of hearing and obeying the leadership of the Holy Spirit, they have differing strengths and weaknesses. The goal of this paper is to briefly outline what each of these traditions can offer to the other, perhaps creating a stronger foundation for spiritual discernment.

Listening for the leadership of God is a commitment that belongs to the entire Christian tradition through the ages. There is nothing unique to Quakers and Jesuits about this longing or commitment. Every Christian would agree that their goal is to be in relationship with God and obey the leadings of God, but very few traditions have actively developed individual and corporate practices to be taught and pursued. Fewer still have worked spiritual discernment into their polity. Quakers and Jesuits bring this unique gift to the universal Church.

Ignatius of Loyola

Ignatius of Loyola was born in 1491 to a Basque family in Loyola, Spain. His family was of minor nobility, and had a long tradition of fighting on behalf of the kings, as well as in forays against other noble families. His upbringing gave him a “strong sense of duty, of obedience, and of high-minded chivalry.”^[1] In 1521, while urging his commander to not withdraw but continue a fight against the French at Pamplona, he was hit in the leg by a cannonball. It was a life-threatening injury from which he almost did not recover. During his long convalescence he asked for romantic and chivalrous novels to read, which the castle library was unable to provide. Instead he was given a small collection of religious books, including *The Life of Christ*, by Ludolph of Saxony, and the *Golden Legend*, a book about the lives of the saints, by Jacobus de Voragine.^[2] Ignatius found himself filling his time with day-dreams that alternated between rescuing fair maidens and following in the footsteps of the great saints and martyrs of the church. From these distinctly different day-dreams, Ignatius began to notice different responses within his spirit:

When he (Ignatius) was thinking of the things of the world he was filled with delight, but when afterwards he dismissed them from weariness, he was dry and dissatisfied. And when he thought of going barefoot to Jerusalem and of eating nothing but herbs and performing the other rigors he saw that the saints had performed, he was consoled, not only when he entertained these thoughts, but even after dismissing them he remained cheerful and satisfied... Thus, step by step, he came to recognize the difference between the two spirits that moved him, the one being from the evil spirit, the other from God.^[3]

Upon his recovery, Ignatius was a changed man. He had experienced definite leadings of God within his own body and affections, which he labeled as “consolations” and “desolations.” He determined to go to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage, but was delayed by a proclamation of Pope Adrian VI, and therefore spent all of 1522 in the small town of Manresa. During this year of prayer and penance, most of the outline for his *Spiritual Exercises* was developed, as he plumbed the depths of his spiritual experience and sought ways to share it with others.^[4] Ignatius died in 1556.

George Fox

Almost exactly one hundred after Ignatius’ war injury, George Fox was born in 1624 in the English countryside. He was steeped in religion not as a Catholic noble, but as the son of a Protestant laborer and weaver. Rather than being of chivalrous nature and prone to fighting, Fox was a serious young man of “gravity and stayedness of mind and spirit not usual in children.”^[5] The Church of England was unable to offer satisfactory answers to his spiritual discomfort and in 1647, he had *his* experience that changed his outlook and perspective:

But as I had forsaken the priests, so I left the separate preachers also, and those esteemed the most experienced people; for I saw there was none among them all that could speak to my condition. When all my hopes in them and in all men were gone, so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could I tell what to do, then, oh, then, I heard a voice which said, ‘There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition;’ and when I heard it, my heart did leap for joy.... And *this I knew experimentally*.^[6]

Fox went on to live a life of prophetic obedience, hearing the voice of God, experiencing and interpreting dreams[7], discerning people's spirits,[8] seeing the interior "nature of things,"[9] having "openings",[10] being "moved of the Lord",[11] and being given many mystical experiences.[12]

Fox's experience was similar to Ignatius' in that it happened within his own body and experience. He had exhausted the external sources of Truth, and had finally discovered God's voice speaking within himself. As Ignatius discovered the voice of God in his "ordered" and "disordered" affections, Fox found it interiorly in his private experience. Each of these men were approached by God directly and immediately, outside of the structure of the Church, either Catholic or Protestant. These formational experiences, one more rational and evaluative, and the other more mystical and embodied, shaped their teachings about spiritual discernment and thus the character of the movements that followed them.

Ignatian Discernment

Ignatius' experience of paying attention to his spirit and noting the "dissatisfaction" or "satisfaction" that flowed from his day-dreams, became the foundation of his work on discernment. Calling these "consolations" and "desolations," Ignatius instructed his companions (and later the Jesuit order), to pay attention to such interior movements. He "systematized his own experience of distinguishing movements"[13] in order to be able to offer assistance to others. His *Rules for Discernment*[14] are his simplified outline of this system. The *Rules* offer general guidelines for discerning the consolations and desolations of an individual's spirit. These are to become a lifestyle, which then inform specific decisions. They are designed to help people build a discipline of *perceiving*, in order that they might *understand* so that they might *take appropriate action*. [15]

Consolations, those feelings or drawings that produce peace, freedom, light, joy, and desolations, which create a feeling of heaviness, dis-ease or fear, are ways that we either 1) test a best-we-can-do tentative decision or 2) discover general directions that God is gifting and leading us.[16]

Ignatius developed the prayer practice known as the examen or what he called an "Examen of Conscience." [17] The examen was to be performed every day by the Jesuits, and three times a day by the individual going through a retreat based on his *Spiritual Exercises*. [18] Consolations and desolations (deeper than just "easy/difficult" or "happy/sad" feelings) were to be noted, with the intention that God was encouraging and drawing us toward the activities that created consolation.

Consolations and desolations were mere cues to the activity and will of God. Ignatius outlined a specific three-step process for decision-making itself. [19] Firstly, cultivate "indifference:" offering or submitting to God all one's personal will and liberty so that God may do whatever God desires, and the individual will not fight it. "Therefore we must make ourselves indifferent to all created things, in so far as it is left to the choice of our free will and is not forbidden." [20] Secondly, offer to God the alternatives or the best option developed so far and ask God to suggest God's preference. And thirdly, once a decision is made it should be offered to God for confirmation:

When that election or decision has been made, the person who has made it should with great diligence go to prayer before God our Lord and offer him the said election so that, if it be for his greater service and praise, he may be pleased to accept and confirm it.^[21]

Ignatius also discussed three “occasions” of discernment, which were basically three different ways that God might communicate with an individual.

The First Occasion is one where God bursts into a person’s experience and there can be no doubt as to God’s presence or God’s desires. He references Paul’s Damascus Road experience and Matthew’s abrupt willingness to leave everything and follow Jesus. God moves so forcefully, that “without question and without desire to question”^[22] a Christian obeys. A discernment process is hardly needed, and “these are rare moments that cannot be sought; they are the exception, and they are sheer gift.”^[23]

The Second Occasion is when an individual does the work of paying attention to their consolations and desolations and “develops a clear understanding and knowledge.”^[24] This process of discerning the spirits is probably the one most people think of when they consider spiritual discernment.

The Third Occasion for discernment comes about when there is a spirit of tranquility (Ignatius’ words) or a “calm assurance to trust our own judgment.”^[25] If an individual feels confident that they are grounded in “what purpose man is born, which is to praise God our Lord and to save his soul,” the individual can have the freedom to choose “some life or state within the bounds of the church that will help him.”^[26] In this Occasion, our “natural powers” of reason and logic come to the forefront. Ignatius suggests making lists of “advantages and benefits...disadvantages and dangers”^[27] (i.e. pros and cons); considering “some man that I have never seen or known” and ponder what advice would be given; imagining being on my deathbed and considering what I would have wished I had decided at this moment; and finally, “consider how I shall be on the day of judgment... then wish(ing) to have made my decision in the present matter.”^[28]

Ignatius’ approach to discernment is very practical and pragmatic. It is applied to everyday events and employs everyday emotions, rational processes, and events. In general, Ignatius taught that God’s desires could be known through our own desires, if we were fully committed and indifferent to worldly things. His “contrariety principle” held that when a soul was committed to God, the things of God would be sweet, giving “courage and strength, consolation, tears, inspiration and peace”^[29] and the enticements of the evil spirit would be bitter. But for those who were not committed to God, God acted like a burr under the saddle, “pricking them and biting their conscience.”^[30] In this way, our emotions and desires could be trusted to give direction, but confirmation was still necessary. Only with the First Occasion of discernment (that of the immediate and undeniable leading of God, which Ignatius noted as “rare”) could our decision be considered infallible.

Early Quaker Spirituality and Discernment

Built upon Fox’s immediate experience of the voice of God in his life, Quaker discernment became grounded upon “openings” and inspirations that were spontaneous and specific. Fox could be approaching a town, Lichfield, for instance, and step into a field only to be “commanded by the Lord” to remove his shoes and walk barefoot into Lichfield whereupon at the moment of entering: “the world of the Lord came to me saying, “Cry, ‘Woe to the bloody

city of Lichfield!”[31] This he did, completely unaware of the reason for doing so. Fox’s immediate and specific leadings, and his teaching that Jesus Christ “would teach his people himself”[32] created an atmosphere of expectation that God would speak to each individual according to the specific concerns of his or her heart.

By asking, and then, when necessary, waiting in silence upon the Lord, God would provide guidance. No specific guidelines or processes were taught or needed. God was active within the heart and mind of every individual. Fox was proposing a theory of “direct divine inspiration of an extraordinarily detailed sort: God showed him the inner workings of all reality... dependent upon neither Book nor human event; hence, the normal avenues of independent verification were closed.”[33]

It wasn’t until difficulties arose from without (being labeled as anti-nomian Ranters) or from within (Naylor, Perrot, Wilkinson/Story) that a structure to test the leadings through the community began to be developed.

A strong sense of communal discernment rose within Friends practice. If the Spirit was speaking to an individual, it would not be contradicted by the leading of another Friend. Over four years of hectic travel, 1666-1670, George Fox laid a new foundation of structures to allow for corporate discernment and correction. Elders “advices” had appeared in 1656, monthly meetings in 1667, and “morning meetings” to provide oversight for ministers in 1673.[34] It is important to note that these meetings for oversight were not created to subordinate the leading of God to the institution. Rather, Friends sought a corporate leading of God... a group discernment of God’s voice, which would confirm or over-rule individual discernment. Immediate revelation was still the norm. Private revelation was simply subordinate to corporate revelation.

In both these discernment situations, personal and corporate, emphasis was put upon the mystical encounter with God, rather than the process or description of how they were to be pursued. Friends would share about “openings” and “leadings” and “concerns” and “calls,” they would use the language of “flaming swords” and “celestial showers” and “being gathered into the Life”... without ever describing the process.

Helpful criteria for weighing leadings were later developed (and will be discussed in the next section). But specific steps of discernment were expressed with mystical language rather than practical descriptions. “For Fox, there was no... external yardstick by which to measure... individual leadings. No wonder the meeting came to assume so central a role. For only the inspired group was available to act as a check on the individual’s inspiration.”[35]

Criteria and Norms

Both Jesuits and Friends committed themselves to discerning and acting upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit. As each community of faith developed their structures, specific criteria came to be accepted as necessary to validate the authenticity of the leading.

For Ignatius, the primary motivation and criteria was always God and salvation: “Nothing should move me... only it be to the service and praise of God our Lord and the eternal salvation of my soul.”[36]

A list of Jesuit norms would include consistency with:

- Deeper service and praise to God[37]
- Fuller salvation of the soul
- Consistency with revelation of the Scripture regarding Christ-likeness[38]

- Lasting and deeper consolation
- A sense of assurance that you've done the best work you can to ascertain this leading.[39]
- And over time, evil will eventually reveal itself, so continue to hold the decision loosely in discernment.[40]

A list of early Quaker norms would include:

- “Of the cross” – contrary to one’s self-will[41]
- “Agreeable to Scripture”[42]
- The Fruits of the Spirit being made manifest
- The presence of inner peace[43]
- Interior and exterior silence, to allow for the still small Voice[44]
- Consistency with revelation to others[45]

Comparing and Contrasting

Some initial differences stand out:

- 1) Ignatius created an entire system of discernment, with specific steps and specific practices to help individuals. Fox and early Friends used the language of discernment to describe their leadings, but never really outlined specific processes or steps, relying instead on mystical encounters that could not be described or systematized.
- 2) Ignatius described three types of ways of hearing God: Immediate revelation, a general direction discerned from daily consolations and desolations, and a reasoned approach between Christ-like alternatives. Early Friends relied almost exclusively on the first type, and eventually moved more into the second type for corporate discernment.
- 3) For Ignatius, immediate revelation was rare, whereas for Friends, it was considered the most common sort (which created problems with how to question competing revelations.)
- 4) For Ignatius, certainty and infallibility was attached only to the first type of hearing God. The other two types could be motivated by “either the good or the evil spirit.”[46] This required a process of confirmation and weighing that would have addressed the “question of infallibility which plagued Friends.”[47] Friends did not distinguish between types of leadings, and so the “concern” would have as much validity as an “immediate opening.”[48]
- 5) For Ignatius, feelings of peace and tranquility could accompany a consolation that was providing direction. However, “more difficult” was not necessarily “more correct.” Friends spoke of consolations and peace as well,[49] but also looked to self-mortification as “living under the cross,”[50] (often resulting in actions that were “inspired” because they were uncomfortable.)
- 6) Ignatius saw desires as powerful expressions of our affections, and believed that God could use them.[51] He instructed retreat leaders to direct their retreatants to: “Ask for what you desire.”[52] Friends seem more leery in trusting their desires.
- 7) For Friends, corporate guidance was possible and preferred. Meetings of elders or ministers were not intended to be hierarchical. Instead, they were ways to gather more

light and better discern the situation. Ignatius, while a counter-reformer within the Catholic Church, still held onto a hierarchical model, ultimately giving final allegiance to the Pope.

8) Communal discernment became a priority for Friends, and has continued to this day, creating three centuries of knowledge and experience. Ignatian spirituality has become more individual, with the tradition losing much of its corporate discernment processes with the death of Ignatius.

9) Friends had a higher sense of humanity's ability to transcend the effects of the Fall. This led them to more hopeful actions, as well as into difficulty with errant leadings.

Similarities also abound:

1) The awareness of consoling and desolating feelings were a part of both traditions, although not specifically named or sought as a source of direction by Friends.

2) Fox describes an experience similar to an Ignatian prayer of examen: "I was brought to call to mind all my time that I had spent, and to consider whether I had wronged any..."[\[53\]](#)

3) Without naming it, or even practicing it regularly, I believe Fox understood the "contrariness principle": "So I spake to his condition, and his understanding was opened. I told him that that which showed him his sins, and troubled him; for then, would show him his salvation."[\[54\]](#)

4) Scripture is seen as affirming, not because it is a written rule book, but because it was written under the same Spirit.

5) Fox's instruction to "take heed... of the promptings of Love and Truth in your hearts for those are the leadings of God,"[\[55\]](#) are eerily similar to Ignatius' call to pay attention to the consolations and desolations, the ordered and disorder attachments in our lives.

6) Both Fox and Ignatius believed in inner guidance. The Spirit of God guides people through "consolations and desolations" or through "the Inward Light" to bring individuals and communities into a fuller expression of Christ-likeness and the Kingdom of God.[\[56\]](#)

7) While the Early Friends' commitment to "living under the cross" led some to feel that a "true call was always contrary to ones' will,"[\[57\]](#) there is a parallel to Ignatius' call to "indifference."

"For this it is necessary to make ourselves indifferent to all created things in all that is allowed to the choice of our free will and is not prohibited to it; so that, on our part, we want not health rather than sickness, riches rather than poverty, honor rather than dishonor, long rather than short life, and so in all the rest; desiring and choosing only what is most conducive for us to the end for which we are created."[\[58\]](#)

Conclusion

We have briefly explored two Christian traditions, built upon the strong personalities of two separate men, living one hundred years apart... and yet through their commonalities, the fingerprints of the same God are clearly seen in both. Ignatius and Fox had transformative

experiences that opened their lives to a deeper communion with Christ, and they had evangelical hearts that prompted them to share their discoveries with others.

Each man's experience was unique, and so the traditions built upon their leadership are unique. And, I believe, there is room for these two traditions to inform one another and perhaps strengthen each tradition's areas of weakness.

Ignatian practice provides basic exercises and practical steps that would help Quakers build the skill sets they need to practice discernment. This has always been a weakness of the Quaker process: mystical language is used to convey leadings and insights, leaving listeners to guess as to the process.

Ignatian discernment also speaks directly to the core problem that has plagued Quakers from the beginning: How do we weigh an individual's sense of leading if they speak to it with clarity and strength? Ignatius challenges us with the thought that only miraculous interventions, that have no source but God, can be trusted as infallible. All other sources are to be noted and sought and prayerfully considered, but always held loosely while confirmation is sought, since humanity is subject to both good and evil spirits. Fox was more of a prophetic proclaimer, and didn't suggest a lot of need for confirmation. But the Quaker movement has experienced the need for such, and has struggled to implement it without seeming to forsake Fox's strong call to the immediacy of the Spirit.[\[59\]](#)

Ignatius introduces the arenas of the affections and the use of the imagination, as well as elevating the importance of reason in determining God's leadership in our lives. Friends have tended toward a more apophatic approach, suggesting that God is heard only out of the nothingness of silence. I believe this has led many Friends to distrust their emotions or imaginations and reason, or to be embarrassed to mention the use of them. Recapturing these God-created modes of communication will strengthen the diverse giftings of our community. Quaker discernment offers a radical egalitarianism, even while requiring submission and obedience to the discernment of the community. This belief and practice, that all people, regardless of age or gender or race, are able to discern the voice of God, is a stronger element in Quaker practice than it is in Ignatian discernment, which is influenced by Catholic hierarchical theologies.

While some would say that Quakers took the Reformation to its logical conclusion and moved as far away as possible from the Catholic church, it is clear that God is the same God in both traditions and is able to break through our human barriers and definitions. Ignatian and Quaker discernment is deeply rooted in the same theological beliefs about the immediacy of God and God's desire to communicate and direct us into Christ-likeness. They are both rooted in a belief that humanity is capable of hearing God's voice and experiencing God's leadership experientially. The Church is richer and stronger for the contributions of these two men and the movements that formed around them. And I believe the movements will be stronger by referencing one another and drawing on each tradition's inherent strengths.

Bibliography:

Barbour, Hugh. *The Quakers in Puritan England*. Yale publications in religion, 7 [i.e. 8]. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964.

Top of Form

Barclay, Robert, and Dean Freiday. *Barclay's Apology in Modern English*. Alburtis Pa: Hemlock Press; distributed by Friends Book store, Philadelphia, 1967.

Bottom of Form

Charry, Ellen T. *Inquiring After God: Classic and Contemporary Readings. Blackwell readings in modern theology*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000.

Farnham, Suzanne G. *Listening Hearts: Discerning Call in Community*. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Pub, 1991.

Fox, George. *The Journal of George Fox*. Edited by Rufus Jones. Richmond, Indiana: Friends United Press, 1983.

Ignatius, and Anthony Mottola. *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*. Garden City, N.Y.: Image Books, 1964.

Liebert, Elizabeth. *The Way of Discernment: Spiritual Practices for Decision Making*. Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008.

Lonsdale, David. *Listening to the Music of the Spirit: The Art of Discernment*. Notre Dame, Ind: Ave Maria Press, 1993.

Loring, Patricia. *Spiritual Discernment: The Context and Goal of Clearness Committees*. Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1992.

Morris, Danny E., and Charles M. Olsen. *Discerning God's Will Together: A Spiritual Practice for the Church*. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1997.

Mueller, Joan. *Faithful Listening: Discernment in Everyday Life*. Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1996.

Sheeran, Michael J. *Beyond Majority Rule: Voteless Decisions in the Religious Society of Friends*. [Philadelphia, Pa.]: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 1983.

Skehan, James William. *Place Me with Your Son: Ignatian Spirituality in Everyday Life*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1991.

Smith, Gordon T. *Listening to God in Times of Choice: The Art of Discerning God's Will*. Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1997.

Toner, Jules J. *Discerning God's Will: Ignatius of Loyola's Teaching on Christian Decision Making*. Series III--Original studies, composed in English, no. 8. Saint Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1991.

_____. *A Commentary on Saint Ignatius' Rules for the Discernment of Spirits: A Guide to the Principles and Practice*. Series III--Original studies, composed in English, no. 5. St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1982.

Young, William J. *The Spiritual Journal of Saint Ignatius Loyola*, translated .Rome: Centrum Ignatianum Spiritualitatis, 1974.

Bottom of Form

-
- [1] Ignatius and Anthony Mottola, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, (Garden City, N.Y.: Image Books, 1964), from introduction by Robert W. Gleason, 11.
- [2] Joan Mueller, *Faithful Listening: Discernment in Everyday Life*, (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1996), 49.
- [3] Ignatius' own words, written in the third-person in his journal. *The Spiritual Journal of Saint Ignatius Loyola*, translated by William J. Young, (Centrum Ignatianum Spiritualitatis, Rome, 1974), 100.
- [4] Ignatius and Mottola, 13.
- [5] George Fox, *The Journal of George Fox*, ed. Rufus Jones (Richmond, Indiana: Friends United Press, 1983), 66.
- [6] Fox, 82.
- [7] *Ibid*, 77.
- [8] *Ibid*, 70, 119.
- [9] *Ibid*, 86, 99.
- [10] *Ibid*, 74 (ad naseum).
- [11] *Ibid*, 78.
- [12] Such as that of coming up "in spirit through the flaming sword into the paradise of God." *Ibid*, 97.
- [13] Mueller, 51.
- [14] Often contained as a closing section in editions of his fuller retreat program known as his *Spiritual Exercises*.
- [15] Mueller, 53.
- [16] Danny E. Morris and Charles M. Olsen. *Discerning God's Will Together: A Spiritual Practice for the Church*. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1997), 133.
- [17] Ignatius and Mottola, 42.
- [18] *Ibid*, 43.
- [19] Jules J. Toner, *Discerning God's Will: Ignatius of Loyola's Teaching on Christian Decision Making*. Series III--Original studies, composed in English, no. 8, (Saint Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1991), 191.
- [20] Ignatius and Mottola, 47.
- [21] *Ibid*. 86.
- [22] *Ibid*. 84.
- [23] Gordon Smith, *Listening to God in Times of Choice: The Art of Discerning God's Will*, (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 26.
- [24] Ignatius and Mottola, 84.
- [25] Smith, 26.
- [26] Ignatius and Mottola, 84.
- [27] *Ibid*, 85.

- [28] Ibid, 86.
- [29] Ignatius and Mottola, 131, Second Rule for the Discernment of Spirits.
- [30] Ignatius and Mottola, 131, First Rule for the Discernment of Spirits.
- [31] Fox, 132.
- [32] Fox, 76.
- [33] Michael J. Sheeran, *Beyond Majority Rule: Voteless Decisions in the Religious Society of Friends* (Philadelphia, Pa.): Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 1983), 8.
- [34] In 1676 Fox complained: "I was not moved to set up that meeting to make orders against the reading of my papers." Cited in Sheeran, 22.
- [35] Sheeran, 29.
- [36] Ignatius and Mottola, 83.
- [37] Ibid. 23.
- [38] Toner, *Discerning*, 180.
- [39] Ibid. 301
- [40] Ignatius and Mottola, 130.
- [41] Patricia Loring, *Spiritual Discernment: The Context and Goal of Clearness Committees*. (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1992), 6.
- [42] "Yet I had no slight esteem of the holy Scriptures. They were every precious to me; for I was in that Spirit by which they were given forth; and what the Lord opened in me I afterwards found was agreeable to them." Fox, 103.
- [43] Loring, 9.
- [44] "One of the best things about this silent waiting upon God is that it is impossible for the enemy to counterfeit it. The devil cannot delude or deceive any soul in the exercise of it." Robert Barclay, *Barclay's Apology in Modern English*, ed. Dean Freiday (Philadelphia: Sowers Printing Company, 1967), Proposition XI, Sec XII, 268.
- [45] Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers In Puritan England*, (Yale University Press, 1964), 122.
- [46] Sheeran, 29.
- [47] Ibid.
- [48] "Nevertheless, it does not follow that these divine revelations should be subjected either to the outward testimony of the scriptures, or to the natural reason of man, as more positive or more noble rules or touchstones. These divine revelations and inward illuminations possess their own clarity and serve as their own evidence." Proposition II. Barclay, 16. Likewise Ignatius would say that this first type of discernment leaves no need for confirmation, but it is rare. Toner, *Discernment*, 108.
- [49] "In every individual, it becomes like a flood of refreshment that extends over the whole meeting." Prop XI, sec VII, Barclay, 250.
- [50] Loring, 6.
- [51] Elizabeth Liebert, *The Way of Discernment: Spiritual Practices for Decision Making*. (Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 25.
- [52] "The Third Prelude will be to ask for what I desire. Here it will be to ask for an interior knowledge of our Lord... that I may love him more intensely and follow him more closely." Ignatius and Mottola, 69.
- [53] Fox, 69.
- [54] Fox, 127.
- [55] Quoted in Loring, 4.
- [56] Lonsdale, David. *Listening to the Music of the Spirit: The Art of Discernment*. (Notre Dame, Ind: Ave Maria Press, 1993), 169.

[57] Suzanne G. Farnham. *Listening Hearts: Discerning Call in Community*. (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Pub, 1991), 24.

[58] Ignatius and Mottola, 47-48.

[59] Barclay did declare that it was the Spirit alone, who was infallible: “For it is one thing to affirm, that the true and undoubted revelation of God's Spirit is certain and infallible; and another thing to affirm, that this or that particular person or people is led infallibly by this revelation in what they speak or write, because they affirm themselves to be so led by the inward and immediate revelation of the Spirit. The first is only by us asserted, the latter may be called in question. The question is not who are or are not so led? But whether all ought not or may not be so led?” Barclay, Proposition II section XIII, 39.