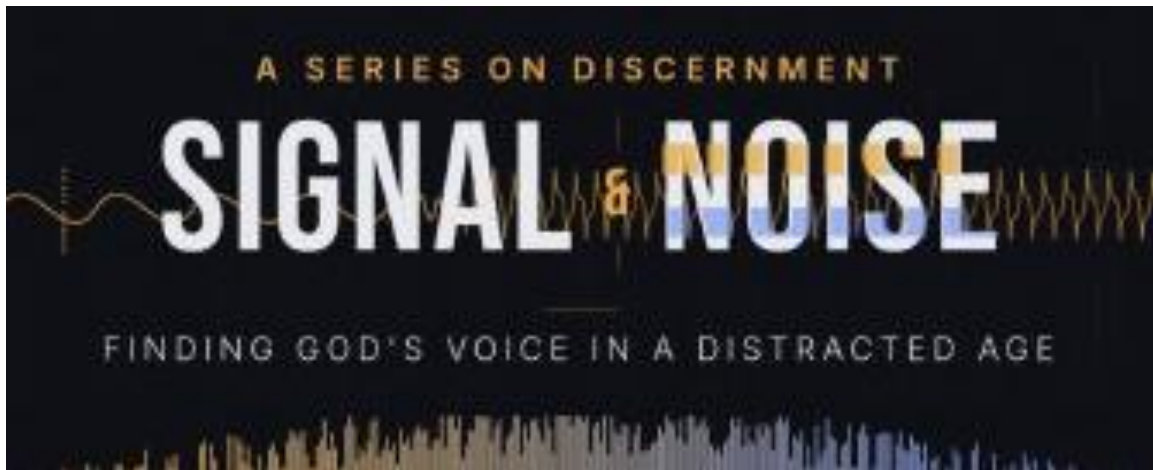




Part 1: Introduction to Series

Small Group Guide: "Can You Hear Me Now?" - Developing Discernment

Opening Prayer (2-3 minutes)

Begin by asking God to quiet the noise in your hearts and minds, and to help you discern His voice clearly during your time together.

Icebreaker (5-10 minutes)

Share a time when you misunderstood someone's message (text, email, or in person) because of missing context or tone. What happened, and how was it resolved?

Sermon Overview

This message explores how to develop spiritual discernment in an age of information overload, using the story of King Ahab and Jehoshaphat from 1 Kings 22 as a framework for understanding the difference between noise and God's signal.

Key Takeaways

1. The Progression: Information → Knowledge → Discernment → Wisdom

- Information is raw data (the "what" and "where")
- Knowledge is organized information (the "how," "when," and "who")
- **Discernment is the bridge** between knowledge and wisdom
- Wisdom is the application of knowledge (the "when" and "why")

2. Discernment Definition

"The spirit-formed ability to recognize the difference between what we want to hear and what God is actually saying."

3. Two Main Hindrances to Discernment

- **The Noise** (external voices and pressures)
 - **Our Needs and Wants** (internal desires and fears)
-

Discussion Questions

Section 1: Understanding the Noise (15-20 minutes) Political Pressure, Peer Pressure, and Desire

- In 1 Kings 22, Ahab faced political pressure to reclaim Ramoth Gilead. What are some "political pressures" (cultural expectations, workplace demands, family obligations) that make it hard for you to hear God's voice?

2. The Echo Chamber

- How have you experienced "echo chambers" in your own life—whether through social media algorithms, friend groups, or church circles? Can you think of a time when everyone around you was saying one thing, but you sensed God might be saying something different?

3. The Check in Your Spirit

- Jehoshaphat felt something was "off" despite 400 prophets saying the same thing. Have you ever had a "check in your spirit" about a decision? Did you follow it? What happened?

Section 2: The Distractions (15-20 minutes)

4. Ego, Desire, Fear, and Control

- The sermon identified four key distractions: ego, desire, fear, and the need for control. Which of these is most likely to distract you from hearing God's voice? Why?

5. Good Intentions vs. God's Voice

- Jehoshaphat had good intentions (hope for unity, family loyalty), but these distracted him from fully discerning God's will. Can you think of

a time when your good intentions led you away from what God was actually saying?

6. Information Can Be True But Not Accurate

- The sermon mentioned how Job's friends gave "true" information that wasn't accurate for his situation. How do you discern when biblical truth or good advice doesn't apply to your specific circumstance?

Section 3: Finding the Signal (15-20 minutes)

7. Creating Space for God's Voice

- The sermon emphasized that "noise fills whatever space we give it." What practices help you create space to hear God? What makes it difficult to be still?

8. The Uncomfortable Voice

- Ahab said Micaiah "always prophesies evil" about him because the prophet's words were uncomfortable. When has God's voice been uncomfortable or disruptive in your life? How did you respond?

9. One Faithful Voice

- Who is that "one faithful voice" in your life—someone who tells you the truth even when it's uncomfortable? How has that relationship helped you grow in discernment?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge: Create Space for the Signal

Choose **at least one** of the following practices for this week:

Option 1: Two Minutes of Silence

Once a day, sit in complete silence for two minutes. Don't fill the space with music, podcasts, or prayer requests. Simply ask: "Lord, where are You in this moment?" and pay attention to what rises up in your heart.

Option 2: Pause, Pray, and Ask

When you feel rushed or pressured this week, pause and pray: "Lord, is this You slowing me down? What are You trying to show me?"

Option 3: Pay Attention to the Check

When you sense a "check" in your spirit this week—whether peace, discomfort, or uncertainty—don't ignore it. Take time to ask: "Lord, what is this feeling about? What are You saying to me?"

Option 4: Seek Out Your "Micaiah"

Reach out to that one person in your life who speaks truth to you. Ask them to pray with you about a decision or situation where you need discernment.

Option 5: Digital Detox

Choose one day this week to limit your media consumption (social media, news, podcasts). Notice what happens when you reduce the noise.

Reflection Questions for Journaling

- What voices have I been listening to most this week?
- What would it look like to prioritize God's voice above all others?
- What fear or desire might be creating noise in my life right now?
- How can I tell the difference between God's voice and my own wants?

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Pray together:

- For increased discernment as a group
- For the courage to hear and obey God's voice, even when it's uncomfortable
- For the discipline to create space for God's signal amid life's noise
- For wisdom to know when information is true but not accurate for your situation

Next Week's Preparation

Continue practicing one of the "Create Space" exercises. Come prepared to share:

- What you noticed when you created space for God

- Any moments of discernment or clarity you experienced
 - Challenges you faced in quieting the noise
-

Leader Notes

- **Be vulnerable:** Share your own struggles with discernment to create a safe space for honest discussion
- **Avoid quick answers:** Discernment is a process; resist the urge to give simple solutions
- **Watch the time:** This guide has more content than most groups can cover in one session—choose the questions most relevant to your group
- **Follow up:** Check in with group members during the week about their "Create Space" practice