

# Images in Discernment

## *Recognising my orientation and attitude*

### *Recognising the draw of God in your life*

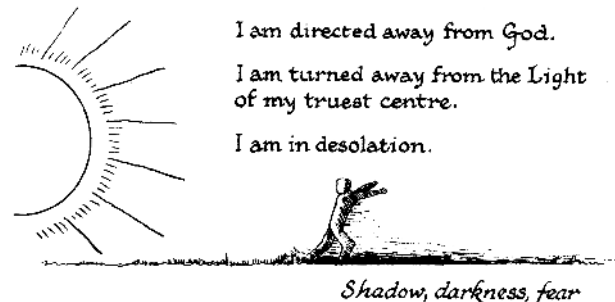
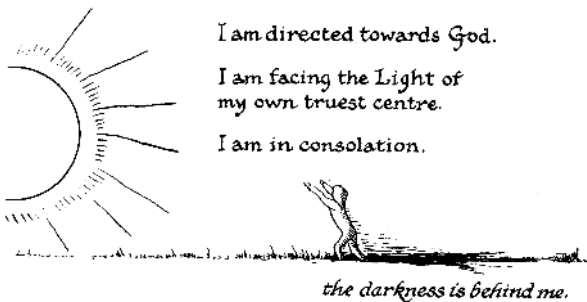
Where am I? How am I?

What is my orientation?

Which images and descriptions apply?

Am I in Consolation or Desolation?

**Helping the way into knowing Who I am as God's beloved**



#### **Consolation**

- ❖ Deep love for God, and awareness of God's love for you
- ❖ Increases in faith, hope and love, peace, joy...
- ❖ At peace within, with who you are, hopeful, joyful, energised
- ❖ Inner courage and strength, clarity and truth,
- ❖ Having a generosity towards God, self, others, life...
- ❖ These effects linger ... enabling a sense of being able to cope better
- ❖ **Whose kingdom?** *The kingdom of God in me.*

#### **Painful Consolation**

- ❖ Repentant - deep sorrow for sins,
- ❖ Compassionate – for suffering...
- ❖ Enduring pain for the sake of a greater cause (the way of the cross)
- ❖ Often challenging to endure, but has a deep sense of 'rightness'.
- ❖ **Whose Kingdom?** Despite the pain, beyond it the kingdom of God is sensed and trusted

#### **Desolation**

- ❖ Opposite of consolation: Sense of dis-ease with life, separation from God, self, others, gloominess, turmoil, listless, anxiety...
- ❖ Darkness and turmoil, confusion, despair; lack of faith, hope and love; dislike of facing guilt, uncompassionate, avoidance of suffering
- ❖ Responding easily to temptations, slow to act positively...
- ❖ **Whose Kingdom?** Hard to seek the kingdom of God. Kingdom of Me may seem all that matters.

#### **False Consolation**

- ❖ Consolation that comes from some unreality. Everything in the garden is rosy, I cannot see any problem, denying challenges...
- ❖ Can follow true consolation, but comes from thoughts that become self-centred and leads to desolation.
- ❖ **Whose Kingdom?** The Kingdom of Me.

Here are some images and descriptions of feelings that might help you recognise your inner state of being, and choose an appropriate way forward.

As you recognise yourself, where you are at present, notice how you feel about this.

Reflect on what your feelings are telling you about any deeper desire that you have?

### ***Carrots and Sticks***



**Carrot** like: attraction, draw, desire...

**Stick** like: driven, beaten, compelled, undesired...



### ***Bees and Spiders***



**Bee** like: Seeking life (nectar) and in so doing giving life (pollinating) – mutuality

**Spider** like: Seeking life (catching prey in web) and giving nothing back – simply self-indulgent



### ***Open handed, Gripping fist, Pushing hands***



**Open handed:** easy, generous, permitting alternatives, encouraging...

**Gripping fist:** tense, grabbing, holding, no alternatives accepted, controlling...



**Pushing hands:** rejecting, distancing, controlling...