



ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA

Rules of Discernment

SEVENTH RULE

Let him who is in desolation consider how the Lord has left him in trial in his natural powers, in order to resist the different agitations and temptations of the enemy; since he can with the Divine help, which always remains to him, though he does not clearly perceive it: because the Lord has taken from him his great fervor, great love and intense grace, leaving him, however, grace enough for eternal salvation. – St. Ignatius

Explained

Remembering that God never causes desolation and admitting that God does permits desolation. It becomes important to ask oneself “why is God allowing in me to be tested this way?” After a while a parent must take off her child’s training wheels, if her child is to master riding a bike even if that means the child may fall a couple of times in the process.

1. Name a struggle that you have had in your life that you have overcome. How have you grown because of this experience?
2. Name some ways in which a parent must allow a child to do something despite the fact that the child may hurt him or herself in order to see the child grow.
3. How would you feel as a parent if your child only came to you for money? Can you relate this to God and our praying only when we get a “warm” feeling?
4. How does loving someone and respecting a person’s freewill blend together?
5. Name some examples of people in the Bible that felt God was far away from them when actually He was very close to them?
6. Why is faith not easy?





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EIGHTH RULE

Let him who is in desolation labor to be in patience, which is contrary to the vexations which come to him: and let him think that he will soon be consoled, employing against the desolation the devices, as is said in the sixth Rule. – St. Ignatius

Explained

When we are feeling desolate we can become very impatient with ourselves and with others. At the same time we need to never take the devil lightly so when we feel tempted to become slothful or neglectful in our prayer life we must resist these temptations to the best of our ability. Never forgetting to rely on God despite the feeling that God is absent.

1. When you are feeling horrible how do you normally treat yourself and others?
2. How can feeling God's absence (desolation) make one feel about oneself or others?
3. Have you ever tried to do something and failed the first time and later succeeded? If you got impatient with yourself did it make it easier to accomplish your work? How did being patient with oneself help you accomplish work?
4. How can you stand up to temptation?
5. What role does "Trust in God" work in resisting temptation?
6. How can you remind yourself of God's love even when God does not feel present in your life?

