



ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA

Rules of Discernment

NINTH RULE

There are three principal reasons why we find ourselves desolate.

The first is, because of our being tepid, lazy or negligent in our spiritual exercises; and so through our faults, spiritual consolation withdraws from us.

The second, to try us and see how much we are and how much we let ourselves out in His service and praise without such great pay of consolation and great graces.

The third, to give us true acquaintance and knowledge, that we may interiorly feel that it is not ours to get or keep great devotion, intense love, tears, or any other spiritual consolation, but that all is the gift and grace of God our Lord, and that we may not build a nest in a thing not ours, raising our intellect into some pride or vainglory, attributing to us devotion or the other things of the spiritual consolation. – St. Ignatius

Explained

Why does desolation happen? The first God allows desolation to respect our freewill. God will not force Himself upon us. The second reason is that God wants to make sure that we will persevere in prayer despite not receiving warm feelings from Him. The third and final reason God allows desolation is to prevent us from being prideful and reminding us that all we have is a grace (“a gift”).

1. Why do you think God permits desolation?
2. How can taking someone for granted affect a relationship?
3. How can only associating with someone when they give you something can damage a relationship?
4. What is the proper response to someone who gives you a gift?
5. How can you develop a deeper sense of gratitude to God & how can you show God your gratitude to God?





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TENTH RULE

Let him who is in consolation think how he will be in the desolation which will come after, taking new strength for then. – St. Ignatius

Explained

When we feel God's presence in our life, it is good to prepare ourselves for our next experience of desolation.

1. Have you ever found yourself in the midst of a problem that you did not properly prepare for? An example maybe a flat tire on a road trip despite not knowing how to fix a flat tire.
2. How can you prepare yourself in times of feeling God's presence to be prepared for a time in which God feels absence?

