



God, Is That You

OR AM I CRAZY?

Finding God in Consolation
and Desolation, Part 1

Tone

Has weight, Impresses, Highlights, Not from you, you didn't think it up (What do I think about that?), confident, settles, usually a still small voice

Is not: Arguing, screaming, Justifying or Trying to convince

Spirit

Loving and Wise Father, Relational, Warm, Peaceful, Convicting, Challenging, Affirming, Feels right (*even if pride and flesh resists it*)

Is not: threatening or condemning, confusing or complicated

Content

True, Revelatory, Instructive, Inviting, is aligned with Scripture and character of God





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TIMOTHY M. GALLAGHER, O.M.V.

The
Discernment
of **Spirits**



An Ignatian Guide for
Everyday Living

"Timothy Gallagher leads the pressing work of discerning, recognizing, and
of spiritual beings, and offers wisdom to discerning their spiritual lives."

— HARVEY D. FAAR

“Rules”

- The word *rules* used loosely
- Some recommend behaviors
- Others describe reality



Who Was Ignatius Loyola?

- **16th C. Spanish soldier**
- **Only saint with an arrest record**
- **Cried so much during worship that he couldn't continue—thought he was losing his eyesight**
- **Name was originally Inigo**



HELLO

my name is

Inigo Montoya.
You killed my father.
Prepare to die!

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- **Cried so much during worship that he couldn't continue—thought he was losing his eyesight**
- **Name was originally Inigo**
- **Had doctors rebreak his leg after the cannonball incident so he would look good in tights**



The Cannonball Incident

- **Defense of Pamplona**
- **Cannonball shattered his leg**
- **First surgery—without anesthetic—to set the leg**
- **Had them break and reset his leg out of vanity**



During Recuperation

- **Reading material**
- **Imagination**
- **Deep satisfaction**
- **Chose to follow Jesus**
- **Began to learn about consolation and desolation**



Why Are We Learning from a 16th Century Roman Catholic Saint?

- **Aligns with Scripture**
 - **Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God.**
(1 John 4:1a ESV)
- **Teachings resonate as true**
- **Many have been transformed**
- **Eat the meat and spit out the bones**



Introduction

- These are “rules” to help us discern when God is communicating with us versus when Satan is so we can respond appropriately.
- To read original, search for “Loyola 14 rules”



Discerning Means Doing Three Things

- 1. First, we notice and become aware of God's or Satan's communication.**
- 2. Second, we understand not only who is communicating but what they are saying and why.**
- 3. Third, we take action to receive what's from God and reject what's from Satan.**

Becomes a habit



Loyola's Fourteen Rules

Rule 1: *Persons moving away from God to serious sin*

The enemy facilitates this movement through temptation to sensual pleasures. The Holy Spirit stings the conscience to help us turn back to God.

- **“Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.” (2 Corinthians 11:14b NLT)**
- **“And when he comes, [Holy Spirit] will convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment.” (John 16:7-8 NLT)**



Loyola's Fourteen Rules

Rule 2: Persons going away from sin toward God

When we're moving toward God, the enemy bites, stings, saddens, places obstacles, and stresses us out with lies. The Holy Spirit encourages, strengthens, consoles with tears, inspires, eases, and takes away all obstacles.

Where's opposition coming from? Depends on which way we're headed.



Loyola's Fourteen Rules

The rest of the rules assume that we are *Persons going away from sin toward God*—Rule 2.

If that's not you, repent.



Loyola's Fourteen Rules

Rule 3: *How to recognize spiritual consolation*

Signs that I am in spiritual consolation include:

- I have faith, hope, and love
- God seems close
- I experience peace, tranquility, transparency, and holy desires



Loyola's Fourteen Rules

Rule 4: *How to recognize spiritual desolation*

Signs that I am in spiritual desolation include:

- **I don't have faith, hope, or love**
- **God seems distant or even absent**
- **I experience distress, agitation, secrecy, worldly desires**
 - **“No power in the sky above or in the earth below—Indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:39 NLT)**



Being Aware of Consolation and Desolation

- You can't resist desolation unless you are aware that you are experiencing desolation.
- The Prayer of Examen



Loyola's Fourteen Rules

Rule 5: In times of desolation, stand fast

NEVER make a change in your spiritual plans when you're in desolation. Be firm and constant in plans made previously when you were in consolation. You can't make good decisions with the enemy as your counselor.



Loyola's Fourteen Rules

Rule 6: *Resist desolation*

Resist the desolation by changing yourself



Loyola's Fourteen Rules

Rule 6: *Resist desolation*

Resist desolation by changing yourself through increased:

- 1. Prayer**
- 2. Meditation**
- 3. Much examination**
- 4. Taking one small step toward God and precisely against the temptation**



Resist Desolation by Changing Yourself

- **Prayer**
 - **Help!**
- **Meditation on...**
 - **Truths of faith**
 - **Scripture**
 - **Memories of God's faithfulness**
- **Much examination**
 - **What's going on? How did it get started?**
- **Taking one small step toward God and precisely against the temptation**



The Brilliance of These Rules

- **We can understand them**
- **We can do them**

God works through them

- **Discern God's voice**
- **Discern God's will**
- **Wage spiritual warfare**
- **Experience more consolation**



Challenge

Keep track of your spiritual state of spiritual consolation or desolation this week. At the end of each day write in your journal:

- Did you spend the day in a spiritual state of consolation, desolation, or one and then the other? How do you know?**
- Did your spiritual state change during the day? What happened that may have triggered the change?**
- If you spent time in desolation, how did you try to resist it?**

Talk to God about your consolation or desolation.





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