

The Text of the Rules

Rules for the same effect with greater discernment of spirits, and they help more for the second week. (328)

First Rule. The first: it is proper to God and to his angels, in their movements, to give true joy and spiritual gladness, taking away all sadness and disturbance which the enemy induces; to whom it is proper to militate against that joy and spiritual consolation, bringing apparent reasons, subtleties and persistent fallacies. (329)

Second Rule. The second: it is of God our Lord alone to give consolation to the soul without preceding cause; because it is proper to the Creator to enter, go out, to move it interiorly, drawing it totally in love of his divine majesty. I say without cause, without any previous sentiment or knowledge of some object, through which such a consolation comes, by means of its acts of understanding and will. (330)

Third Rule. The third: with cause both the good angel and the bad can console the soul, for contrary ends: the good angel for the profit of the soul, that it may grow and rise from good to better; and the bad angel for the contrary, and later on to draw it to his damnable intention and malice. (331)

Fourth Rule. The fourth: It is proper to the bad angel, who takes on the appearance of an angel of light, to enter with the devout soul and to go out with himself; that is, to bring good and holy thoughts, conformed to such a just soul, and afterwards, little by little, he endeavors to go out, bringing the soul to his hidden deceits and perverse intentions. (332)

Fifth Rule. The fifth: We should give much attention to the course of the thoughts; and if the beginning, middle and end is all good, inclined to all good, it is a sign of the good angel; but if in the course of the thoughts that he brings, it ends in something bad, or distractive, or less good than the soul had proposed to do before, or if it weakens it, or disquiets, or troubles the soul, taking away the peace, tranquility and quiet, which it had before, it is a clear sign that it proceeds from the bad spirit, the enemy of our profit and eternal salvation. (333)

Sixth Rule. The sixth: When the enemy of human nature has been perceived and known by his serpent's tail and the bad end to which he induces, it profits the person who was tempted by him, to look immediately at the course of the good thoughts that he brought, and the beginning of them, and how little by little he procured to make him descend from the sweetness and spiritual gladness in which he was, till he brought him to his depraved intention; so that with such an experience known and noted he may guard himself in the future from his customary deceits. (334)

Seventh Rule. The seventh: In those who proceed from good to better, the good angel touches such a soul sweetly, lightly and gently, as a drop of water that enters a sponge; and the bad touches it sharply and with noise and disquiet, as when the drop of water falls on a stone; and in those who proceed from bad to worse the above-said spirits touch in a contrary way; the cause of which is that the disposition of the soul is contrary or similar to the said angels; for when it is contrary, they enter with clamor and sensible disturbances, perceptibly; and when it is similar, they enter with silence, as in their own house through an open door. (335)

Eighth Rule. The eighth: When the consolation is without cause, although there is no deception in it, since it is of God our Lord alone, as has been said, nevertheless the spiritual person to whom God gives such a consolation should, with much vigilance and attention, look at and distinguish the time itself of such an actual consolation from the time following, in which the soul remains warm and favored with the favor and remnants of the past consolation; for frequently, in this second time, through his own reasoning by associating and drawing consequences from ideas and judgments, or through the good spirit, or through the bad, he forms different proposals and opinions which are not given immediately by God our Lord; and therefore they must be very well examined before entire credit is given them or they are put into effect. (336)