

**FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE INVISIBLE
RULES FOR DISCERNMENT ACCORDING TO DIADOCHUS OF PHOTIKE**

1-The goal and object of Spiritual Contemplation is so that through union with God, we may follow His invisible footsteps.

6- The light of true knowledge is to discern infallibly good and evil.

7- In order to discern, one needs to spend time in spiritual discourse and the prayer of quiet.

10- When the passions are stirred, approach God humbly in prayer and give Him thanks for His great Love in delivering us from being subject to our passions.

11- To learn the ways of discernment, one must seek spiritual knowledge.

12- Seek God's Glory in all that you do, never seeking to fulfill or attain your glory.

14- Receive the Love of God and one will be transformed into His Love.

16- Perfect love casts out fear, leaving only the fear of the Lord.

18- When burdened by life's worries and worldly concerns, one cannot recognize one's own judgment.

21- One must act in charity, so as to be moved by charity and love.

23- When one's conscience reproaches or bothers one's spirit, the soul cannot clearly hear matters of the spirit.

24- The soul naturally propels itself toward beautiful things of the spirit, if it is cleared of material obstacles or desires; that is, the spiritual sense are natural, yet they become clouded by the physical senses.

25- Through detachment, the mind can perceive God's ineffable blessings.

25b- The senses take joy in proportion to one's progresses in the spiritual life.

26- Always keep custody of one's thoughts in order to discern what is of God and what is not, casting out every thought that is "perverse and diabolical".

27- We can only see according to the clarity of our vision.

29- The soul possesses a natural sense that became distanced in the fall of man.

30- The mind is capable of recognizing the wealth of Divine consolation and can infallibly recognize the Holy Spirit's consolation, discerning and choosing what is best.

30b- The mind retains the memory of the taste and goodness of the Lord through love.

31- One increases in discernment by recognizing the 'wiles', or tactics, of the evil one who is always trying to lull the mind away from the Holy Spirit.

32- The time when one is in a state of light sleep or passing into sleep, is a dangerous time, filled with many false consolations.

33- The object of one's thoughts can guide one to judging its source, whether it is of the Holy Spirit or the evil one.

36- So long as we live in the flesh, we cannot visibly see God, and therefore cannot trust any vision that claims to be Him or His workers.

38- Dreams can at times reveal the love of God, but it takes a soul of great virtue to distinguish properly between good and bad dreams. One never faults to err on the side of skepticism and not accepting a true vision.

39- It is far better to not act for taking the Master's voice as deception, than to fall into deception.

42- Anyone who is careless in one of the virtues, betrays the practice of self-mastery.

44- Voluntarily abstaining from what is abundant and enjoyable is constitutive of knowledge and discernment.

54- When one becomes excessively concerned over physical ailments and illnesses, one runs the risk of ignoring all movements of the spirit and must recall that we are spiritual beings, enslaved by the desires of the body.

55- Give little attention to the things of physical beauty, these can veil one's vision from seeing the spiritual goods, which are the narrow way to follow the invisible.

56- When used immoderately, our sight, taste and all of the senses dissipate the memory of the heart.

57- By walking in virtue, the evil one's schemes become ineffective.

59- When discerning, if your imagination seems to run wild, recall the Holy Name of Jesus.

61- A soul agitated by anger, blurry-eyed by a hangover, or discouraged by onerous worries cannot see clearly to discern the memory of the spirit. This sight can be recovered through repetition of the Our Father.

62- Ire disquiets and confuses the soul, but when it is aimed at sin and accompanied by peace, it can fuel the soul to act with fervor and strength.

65- Giving up one's belongings frees one from worries over their condition or loss.

74- Self-knowledge is the necessary first step toward mastery of discernment, but unless it is transcended into knowledge of God, one's attempts at discernment fall miserably short.

75- Whether one is seeking the knowledge of God or the knowledge of worldly things, one's ability to discern the spirit is greatly affected. While the Holy Spirit clarifies, knowledge of worldly things is like a fog that clouds vision.

76- The Grace of Baptism has the effect of expelling the spirit of deceit from within the soul, being replaced by the Holy Spirit of truth. Encouraging one that his natural state is truth and by overcoming attacks from without, one can discern infallibly.

77- According to a soul's progress in perfection, God reveals the gift of Divine goodness.

81- There are two kinds of evil spirits, each attempting to cloud's one vision: Those that attack the spirit and those that attack the body.

82- Satan cannot hide from a soul that is in a state of grace.

82b- Emotions are the front-line of attack that spirits use.

83- The source of one's thoughts, in addition to their content, must also be discerned.

85- As one advances in following the commandments, the various attempts and attacks of the evil one have less of an effect. When one continues on to the perfection of the virtues, these attempts no longer have any effect.

86- Desolation that is Divine encourages the soul to draw closer to God. The other form can be recognized by a distaste for turning toward God.

87- Divine desolation brings about profound sorrow, humiliation and a degree of despair and results in the soul longing to rest in the silence of God and turn toward confession and the fear of God. The other kind fills the soul with despair, mixed with faithlessness, pride and anger.

93- In the beginning, the path seems long and slow, but after the mid-way point, it becomes even and easy.