

SPIRITUAL
WARFARE
AND THE
DISCERNMENT
OF SPIRITS



VIDEO STUDY GUIDE
DAN BURKE

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DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS SUMMARY

FIRST RULES (1–14)

BY
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FIRST RULES (1–14)

PROCESS:

1. Awareness
2. Understanding
3. Action: Resist/Embrace

DEFINITION & FRUITS:

Consolation: Inspirations to Faith—Hope—Love

Desolation: Inspirations to Doubt—Despair—Narcissism

SOURCES:

1. Yourself
2. Good Spirits
3. Bad Spirits

RULES:

1. **Persons moving away from God to serious sin:**
Bad spirits facilitate movement through imagination of sensual pleasures. Good spirits sting the conscience to help the person to turn back to God.
2. **Persons moving away from sin toward God:**
Bad spirits bite, sting, sadden, places obstacle, disquiet with false reasons. Good spirits encourage, strengthen, console and take away obstacles.
3. **Consolation:** Soul becomes inflamed with love of God; increase in faith, hope and love that quiets and attracts to heavenly things.
4. **Desolation:** Darkness of soul to doubt, despair, narcissism, low and earthly things, disquiet, agitations and temptations, cowardice, feeling slothful, tepid, sad, as if separated from God. Permitted but not caused by God.

5. **Desolation Resilience:** Never make a change of spiritual proposals made in consolation. Bad spirits voice is loud and influential. Good spirits voice is faint.
6. **Desolation Fight:** Resist desolation by increasing intensity and commitment to prior resolutions and through much prayer, meditation, examination and suitable penance.
7. **Desolation Consider:** Reflect on how/why He has allowed the trial so you can resist. Affirm God's presence/provision/sufficient grace for salvation.
8. **Desolation Patience:** Pursue patience—affirm the temporal nature of the battle and that consolation will soon return.
9. **Desolation Causes:** 1) Tepid, slothful or negligent in spiritual disciplines, 2) try us and test/reveal our motivations, 3) to remind us that all consolation is a gift—mitigate pride.
10. **Desolation Preparation:** In times of consolation consider how you will conduct yourself in the coming desolation.
11. **Humility and Trust:** Receive consolation with humility remembering your struggles in desolation and God's provision. Fight desolation with trust in God.
12. **Enemy's Cowardice:** The enemy will flee when resisted but will ravage when yielded to or not resisted firmly with conviction.
13. **Desolation Secrets:** The enemy will flee when his attempts are revealed to holy persons.
14. **Awareness:** The enemy seeks to find and exploit our weaknesses—sins—attachments. We must know and mitigate them to fortify our souls.



LESSON ONE



HOPE IN THE STORM

Dan Burke shares his testimony of how he was set free from darkness when he encountered Jesus. As He searched for peace, the Lord brought him to the Catholic Church where he began to experience the fullness of freedom. He shares the message of hope that you do not need to be held captive to darkness and despair. The Church has everything you need to be free.

*"I had hope because I came to know the truth.
And the truth, as Jesus said, sets us free."*



LESSON ONE

NOTES



LESSON ONE

1. Are there parts of Dan's testimony that resonate with your own story? Have you ever called into the darkness looking for answers? Have you ever cried out to God for help? If so, how has the Lord answered you?

2. How often do you struggle with negative thoughts or emotions? Do you believe that the truth sets us free? How does the message of hope speak to your heart?

3. Which words having to do with the experience of spiritual desolation resonated with you as Dan read them? Does naming them help you see how the remedy is applicable to you?



LESSON ONE

4. Do you desire to be free from the darkness? Do you believe that you don't have to be bound? How could the grace of the sacraments and the wisdom of the Church lead you to a deeper peace and freedom?

5. In what ways have you said yes to God? How do you think God is calling you to say yes to Him, or to continue to say yes to Him, now? What concrete steps can you take toward a deeper yes?

6. In looking at the reasons bad spirits cause desolation, can you identify areas of warfare playing out in your life? Is there an area where simply naming something as warfare could bring you hope and the promise of freedom?



LESSON TWO



RENEWAL OF THE MIND

Dan challenges you to see how, with Christ, it is truly possible to have the peace that surpasses all understanding. He exhorts you to a life of prayer. He also reveals, using the teaching of St. Ignatius, how demons can influence our thoughts. He unmasks their common tactics and encourages you to take courage in the fight for your soul. He gives you the necessary insight to allow you to begin to fight back.

*"We have to deliberately determine what we put in
our hearts and minds."*



LESSON TWO

NOTES



LESSON TWO

1. Reflect: Is the Lord calling you to deeper prayer, or to begin a life of prayer, in order that you would discover the peace that surpasses all understanding?
2. Deceiving spirits can tap into a wound, reinforce it, and propose a destructive action. Become aware: Is the Holy Spirit revealing any areas of woundedness in your life that are easy targets for bad spirits?
3. Can you recall any experiences of the enemy proposing that you do more good things to distract you from Jesus? Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal if there are good things keeping you from the Lord's will for your life.



LESSON TWO

4. How can you be more purposeful about what you're putting into your heart and mind every day? How can you immerse yourself more fully in the word of God and the teachings of the Church?

5. What encouraged you from Dan's talk? Are you more aware of how the Holy Spirit will help you even if you engage just a little, because His beloved Son paid the highest price for our freedom?

6. What tools or prayers did Dan mention that you might like to try implementing in your life?



LESSON THREE



DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS

Dan speaks about the enemy's tactics in desolation. He guides you to recognize consolation and the voice of the good spirit who seeks to help you. He helps you to overcome the deception of the bad spirits. Dan will help you discover the importance of moving at the pace of prayer and silencing the world so you can hear the voice of God.

"God has promised you peace. He has paid the price for your peace. He has commanded you to fight for and protect that peace."



LESSON THREE

NOTES



LESSON THREE

1. Can you be like Martha, busy, and running around all the time, and really listen? In your life, do you have space in your head and heart to hear God's voice?

2. Are you practicing daily mental prayer? How can you begin to move at the pace of prayer, focusing on the Lord?

3. Are there things you are worried and concerned about that Jesus wants you to surrender to him?



LESSON THREE

4. Become aware: How have you experienced false obstacles trying to dissuade you from the good you are trying to do as you move towards God?

5. Orient yourself to God. How has the voice of the good spirit helped you remove obstacles, with encouragement? Can you surrender to a deeper trust in His power, mercy, and grace?

6. Reflect on the gift of consolation. Remember how you have experienced consolation. Why do you think consolation is important? How do you see God's love and mercy in the gift of consolation?



LESSON FOUR



AN INVITATION TO HEALING

Learn more about what to do, or not to do, when you are in desolation. Be equipped with the wisdom and knowledge to fight back. Learn to create space to hear the Lord's voice with greater clarity.

"Do not allow yourself to be imprisoned by destructive thoughts and emotions. We've got to figure out where they're coming from and we have to fight them."



LESSON FOUR

NOTES



LESSON FOUR

1. "Never make a change in desolation but be firm and constant in the decisions made in consolation." Why do you think rule number five is so important to follow? Have you ever experienced this?

2. Have you made any changes to your spiritual commitments while in desolation? Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal if there's anything the Lord wants you to recommit to.

3. When you fight against desolation, the good spirit will give you insights and wisdom into what's going on. Has the good spirit brought up any insights and wisdom regarding any areas of spiritual warfare in your life?



LESSON FOUR

4. Take a moment to do a short examination. Think of an area that may need some healing. You may ask: *What is God doing? What is happening? Why does this always get to me? Why is this holding me back?*

5. What are some things you can do to fight desolation?



LESSON FIVE



RENOUNCING THE LIES OF THE ENEMY

Not all the voices in your head are your own. Learn to name and renounce the evil spirits that are hindering your progress toward God. In this lesson, Stephanie Burke walks us through renunciations of bad spirits. She then teaches us to welcome the Holy Spirit and to ask for an infilling of truth and goodness.

“May you, in the name of Jesus, be victorious over whatever it is that has you bound, whatever is disturbing you, whatever is trying to control you.”



LESSON FIVE

NOTES



LESSON FIVE

1. Did any of the renunciations particularly resonate within you? Write them down. Renounce those spirits again and then ask for what you desire.

2. Are there any other spirits that came up for you during the renunciations that weren't mentioned? Renounce them and run to Jesus and to Mary.

3. Is there anything that leads to God, that you want to ask for? What might help you stand in the strength and dignity of your worth in confidence and in freedom?



LESSON FIVE

4. Is there anything you desire? What else do you want? What graces do you desire to ask of the Lord, through Mary?

5. When you get the negative thought out on paper, you've just shined light into the darkness and weakened the enemy. Write down anything else that has been coming up for you during these lessons.



LESSON SIX



FIGHT, DON'T RUN

You are in a war for your soul. Gain more skill and insight into how to fight for your soul. Learn how to oppose the enemy's deceit, and to follow the Lord's will for your life. Invite His grace in to help you win the battle.

"The Church has everything you need to heal every wound in your heart and your soul."



LESSON SIX

NOTES



LESSON SIX

1. Fill in the blank. Have no anxiety about _____
How does this sit with you now, at the end of the video series?

2. Think of a time you've been in desolation. Ask yourself, "What is the exact opposite of what the enemy wants me to do in this situation?" How could you oppose the enemy's manipulation by doing the opposite?

3. When we act quickly in response to God's commands or His wisdom, His strength grows within us. How might you arm yourself to act quickly when the enemy attacks?



LESSON SIX

4. All grace is mediated. The Lord's grace works through others. Have you seen how community mediates grace for you? Is the Lord calling you deeper into community?

5. Demons are encouraged by secrecy. To whom can you reveal the enemy's lies and destructive thoughts? Who can you tell when you're in desolation?

