

2 Timothy

IGNATIUS CATHOLIC STUDY BIBLE QUESTIONS

Welcome

“You are approaching the ‘word of God’. But for thousands of years, ... the Word of God has been approaching you.”

The following guide is provided to enhance your reading of the Second Letter of Saint Paul to Timothy using the *Ignatius Catholic Study Bible*. If you are new to this resource or to reading the Bible, we recommend you read the general Introduction before you begin. It explains what it means that Scripture is the Word of God as well as how we understand and interpret it as Catholics. It also introduces the special features of the Study Bible and tells how they can enrich your reading and study. Additionally, the *Introduction to Paul and His Letters* will provide valuable context for your reading.

A simple rhythm of prayer followed by reading and reflection is offered below to guide you through the book one chapter at a time. Questions draw attention to key footnotes and word studies to lead you into a deeper understanding of what you read and then prompt you to consider how to apply what you have learned. For a deeper dive, take advantage of additional features as you go: not just the other footnotes but also cross-references to Scripture and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)* that are provided above the footnotes as well as any maps, charts, or essays that are not touched on in the questions.

Don't miss these helpful icons as you read! They highlight footnotes that pertain to the Church's criteria for interpreting Scripture (see CCC 112–14):



Be attentive to the content and unity of Scripture

Notes marked with a Bible icon connect Old Testament passages and New Testament mysteries, fostering appreciation for God's unified plan.



Read Scripture in light of the Church's living tradition

This icon marks notes drawn from the Holy Spirit's guidance of Church teaching and the spiritual senses of scripture. Here you'll find official teaching as well as interpretations from Fathers, Doctors, and saints of the Church.



Be attentive to the “analogy of faith”

Explore notes marked with an icon of keys to learn how the mysteries of faith, revealed in Scripture and defined by the Church, clarify and connect with one another in a unified, coherent way.

May God bless you as you read his word!

of God,* did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,⁷but emptied himself,[†] taking the form of a servant,[‡] being born in the likeness of men.[§]And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.[¶]Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name,^{||}that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,^{|||}and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

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12 Therefore, obeyed, so now much more in salvation with f work in you, bo pleasure.
14 Do all thi tioning,¹⁵that y children of God crooked and per

2:9–11: Rom 10:9; 14:9; Eph 1:20–21. 2:13: 1 Cor 15:10. 2

2:7 emptied himself: The Greek verb *kenōō* means “empty out” or “render void”. The idea is, not that Christ divested himself of divinity when he united himself with humanity, but that he restricted his rightful exercise of certain divine abilities during his earthly life and accepted certain limitations of the human condition. In effect, the Son of God made himself poor in order to make us rich with his grace (2 Cor 8:9) (CCC 472). • Christ emptied himself by compressing the glory of his Godhead within our smallness. What he always was remained perfect and incomprehensible, but what he assumed was in proportion to the measure of our nature (St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Apollinarius*).

2:8 death on a cross: The ultimate indignity. Death by crucifixion was the most awful and degrading form of criminal execution in the ancient world. The Romans reserved it for slaves and insurrectionists. See note on Mk 15:24.

2:9 exalted him: By raising him from the dead, enthroning him in heaven, and clothing his humanity with divine glory. A similar destiny awaits all who humble themselves as Jesus did (3:21; Lk 14:11).

2:10 every knee should bow: An allusion to the divine oath in Is 45:23. • Yahweh swore that all peoples, to the very end of the earth, would acknowledge his Lordship and bow before him in homage. Paul moves Christ into the center of this prophecy as the divine Lord destined to be revered by all. **heaven ... earth ... under the earth:** The three principal realms in the world view of ancient Israel (Ex 20:4). Homage will come from all creatures great and small—the angels and saints above, the family of man and beasts spread over the earth, and the dead and the demons of the underworld.

2:11 confess: I.e., acknowledge. Included in this open dec

serious that we pur sense of awe at ser the prospect of sinn Encouragement con readers that God's g desire (intention) at 21; CCC 308) (CC “work”, he address and trembling”, he good deeds were th not boast of your g within you (St. Augu **2:15 pervers** • Deuterono poetic lawsuit that and ingratitude du

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Prepare

Read the Introduction to 2 Timothy, paying particular attention to the *Purpose* and *Themes and Characteristics* of the book. What one thing stands out to you, that you would like to remember?

Read the Outline of 2 Timothy to get an overview of the book. What are its major divisions?

Pray

Use the following questions to guide your reading of 2 Timothy, going at a pace that is comfortable to you. Before you begin each new section, pray simply for the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit:

Come, Holy Spirit, open my heart to hear and receive these words as what they truly are, the Word of God. Enlighten my understanding and give me grace to put what I read into practice in my life. Amen.

Read and Reflect

Read and reflect on 2 Timothy as follows:

- Pray before you read
- Read a section of biblical text by itself
- Read the text again, referring to the notes that accompany the text
- For deeper understanding and to aid in applying what you read, answer the questions that follow. The references at the top of each numbered question correspond to particular notes.

At the end of each chapter, review what you have written and linger where you feel drawn, asking the Lord to speak to your heart and into your life. What do you hear? Respond in prayer and ask his help to live what you hear in your attitudes and actions this week.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Chapter 1

For understanding

1. **1:5.** Who are the members of Timothy's family named here? What do we know about them? Why does Paul mention them?
2. **1:7.** What is Timothy urged to do? What is the purpose of Paul's exhortation?
3. **1:8.** To which imprisonment of Paul does this verse refer? How do we know, since it is not otherwise recorded in the NT?
4. **1:9.** Since salvation is a process initiated by God, what does Paul say about the grace we receive for it? What does God call us to do? How long has the plan of salvation been in God's mind?

For application

1. **1:5.** Have any members of your family had a positive influence on your faith? If you are a parent or a teacher, how do you want to influence the faith of those for whom you are responsible?
2. **1:7.** How does timidity differ from natural shyness? Has timidity (not shyness) ever affected your spiritual life? What three virtues does Paul say the Holy Spirit has given you? How do you think the Holy Spirit wants you to apply them in your circumstances?
3. **1:8–12.** If you were accused of being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you? Has fear or shame ever inhibited you from witnessing to your faith? What have you done to conquer that fear or shame?
4. **1:13–14.** Whether you participate directly in the work of the Magisterium or not, what is your role in guarding the truth of the faith? Have you ever seen the truth contradicted? What might you do to defend it?

Chapter 2

For understanding

1. **2:2.** Where does Timothy fit in the chain of apostolic succession? What charges has he received in this regard? How does apostolic succession take place?
2. **2:11–13.** What is the possible source of these verses? What propositions are set forth here? What is our ultimate certainty?
3. **2:18.** How might false teachers have misconstrued the doctrine of the resurrection? What did they deny about it? How might their teachings have been a distortion of Paul's own? What ancient heresy does this resemble?
4. **2:19.** What are the sources of the two quotations that Paul sees on the Church's foundation? What is the point of the citation from Numbers 16 for the Ephesian Church?

For application

1. **2:3–7.** How would you describe a "radical Christian"? Do these verses match your description? What kind of "understanding" (v. 7) do you think you still need about these things?
2. **2:8–13.** Have you ever come close to denying Christ? What got you through the experience? Can you look back on the experience and say that Christ has ever denied you?
3. **2:20–22.** Regardless of your age, what sorts of "youthful passions" have you had to contend with? As you learn to "shun" these passions and acquire the virtues listed here, what changes do you notice in the opportunities the Lord gives you to serve him?
4. **2:24–26.** What do these verses suggest about how you might approach friends or family members who have strayed from the Christian way of life? Paul mentions correcting opponents with gentleness; what is your approach to correcting others? What was the most effective and fruitful correction you have ever received, and what does it tell you about your own approach?

Chapter 3

For understanding

1. **3:8.** Who are Jannes and Jambres? Are they identified by name in the OT?

2. **3:15.** To what does the expression “the Sacred Writings” refer? When did Jewish children normally start studying the Torah? What does Paul maintain about the books of the OT?
3. **Word Study: Inspired by God (3:16).** What does the Greek word for “inspired” mean? From what root words does it come? What does the word mean when applied to Scripture? What understanding does the passage from 2 Peter add to this? Finally, what does the fact that the Bible enshrines the very words of God mean for those of us who read it?

For application

1. **3:1–5.** How do Paul’s characterizations apply to the environment in which you live? If his description fits, what is your response to it?
2. **3:10–14.** Who are your role models in the Christian life? What has their behavior taught you about how you should behave? How can you be a role model for others younger than yourself?
3. **3:15.** How well acquainted are you with Sacred Scripture? What is your greatest fear when it comes to understanding Scripture? How have you tried to remove that fear?
4. **3:16–17.** What difference has the reading of Scripture made on your life? Paul mentions several things for which Scripture is useful. Have these helped you personally to be “equipped for every good work”?

Chapter 4

For understanding

1. **4:6.** To what does the expression “the point of being sacrificed” allude? Why does Paul evoke this imagery? What does “my departure” mean? According to tradition, how did Paul “depart”?
2. **4:8.** To what does a “crown of righteousness” allude? Of what is it symbolic? On what does Paul’s confidence rest? When was he not nearly so assured?
3. **4:11.** Who is Luke, and what relationship does he have with Paul? Who is Mark, and what is his relationship with Paul?
4. **4:17.** Why was Paul’s preliminary hearing before the Roman court disappointing? Why does Paul refer to “the lion’s mouth” in this verse?

For application

1. **4:1–2.** Why do you think Paul is so insistent about the urgency of preaching the word “in season and out of season”? Would he feel that same urgency today? Assuming that you “preach by example”, how do you preach (or evangelize, or share) using words? If you do not do that, what prevents you?
2. **4:3–4.** How can a person keep an open mind and yet reject unsound teaching? Why is a person who rejects unsound teaching not being “narrow-minded” in the usual sense of that term?
3. **4:5.** Paul urges Timothy to do his job as a bishop. How does his admonition apply to you? Given your state in life, how do you maintain steadiness, endure suffering, evangelize, and fulfill your ministry?