

1 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 First 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,⁷ but 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 th tioning,¹⁵ that 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.

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Prepare

Read the Introduction to 1 Timothy, paying particular attention to the *Destination* and *Themes* of the book. What one thing stands out to you, that you would like to remember?

Read the Outline of 1 Timothy to get an overview of the book. What are its major divisions?

Pray

Use the following questions to guide your reading of 1 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 1 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.

Chapter 1



For Understanding

1 Timothy 1:2

- Who was Timothy, and what was his relationship with Paul?
- What does the expression “my true child” imply about Paul’s attitude toward his ministry?
- How does Timothy figure into that attitude?

1 Timothy 1:8

- Why is the Law or Torah “good”?
- How does Paul indicate that the moral precepts of the Old Covenant are carried over into the New Covenant?
- What does the term “lawfully” mean here?
- If the purpose of the Torah is not to encourage useless conjectures and confusion, what is its purpose?

Word Study: *Conscience* (1 Timothy 1:19).

- What does the Greek word for *conscience* mean?
- What does it oblige us to do and to avoid?
- How does it act as an interior judge?
- What are the effects on conscience of habitual sin?
- Conversely, what are the effects of a good and clear conscience?
- For Paul, to whom does our concern for conscience extend, and why?

1 Timothy 1:20

- Who were Hymenaeus and Alexander, and what became of them?

- Since excommunication is a drastic measure, what was Paul's purpose in applying it to them?



For Application

1 Timothy 1:5

- What is the aim of Paul's charge to Timothy about his teaching, and from what three things does it come?

- Why are these things important when giving doctrinal instruction?

1 Timothy 1:8–11

- For whom are the moral prescriptions of the Law laid down, according to these verses?

- Even though many commands of the law are phrased in the negative ("You shall not ..."), what is their positive value for those who obey them? For example, what is the positive value in obeying commands to avoid the types of offenses that Paul lists?

1 Timothy 1:12–16

- Of what value to others' faith are the stories of notorious criminals or sinners who have been converted and are now living exemplary lives?

1 Timothy

- What has been your own experience with the mercy of conversion?

1 Timothy 1:18–19

- From the viewpoint of faith, why is it better to live a good life than a wicked one?
- What do you think of the opinion, sometimes expressed by celebrities and pundits, that people who flout the moral law are “more interesting” than those who keep it?
- In a world like ours, how is living according to a clean conscience more interesting than habitually violating it?

Reflect

After reading and reflecting on this chapter, I hear the Lord saying to me:

My prayer response to him:

Chapter 2



For Understanding

1 Timothy 2:1–15

- To what is this entire chapter devoted?
- How is it divided?
- What is Timothy's task?

1 Timothy 2:5

- What is a *mediator*?
- As a mediator, what does Jesus Christ do?
- Since there is one mediator between God and man—Jesus Christ—how is the mediation of saints and angels possible?
- How does Paul encourage Timothy and company to act as mediators?

1 Timothy 2:12

- To what is Paul's prohibition of women as teachers restricted?
- What is Paul *not* denying about women?
- If women cannot act in an official capacity as ordained preachers and homilists, according to Paul, in what capacity can they serve as teachers?

1 Timothy 2:12–16

- What is the background for Paul's teaching on gender roles?
- What specific passages does he have in mind?
- Does his focus on the deception of Eve imply that the sin of Adam is unimportant?
- How would you support your answer?



For Application

1 Timothy 2:1–2

- For whom do you regularly intercede in prayer?

- For whom should you intercede regularly but do not right now?

- When you do intercede, for what do you pray?

1 Timothy 2:8

- Do you ever pray in a group with others (outside of the liturgy)?

- What are some of the benefits of group prayer?

1 Timothy 2:9–10

- Why would Paul insist on modesty in dress and personal accessories?

- How do you dress when you attend Sunday Mass?

1 Timothy 2:15

- How can being a parent promote one's salvation?

- What virtues does parenthood tend to generate or encourage?

Reflect

After reading and reflecting on this chapter, I hear the Lord saying to me:

My prayer response to him:

Chapter 3



For Understanding

1 Timothy 3:1

- What is the role of the bishop?

1 Timothy

- How were the titles of “bishop” and “elder/presbyter” understood in the earliest years of the Church?
- How does the Church recognize these offices now?

Chart: *The Threefold Pastoral Ministry.*

- In the Old Covenant, how many tiers of pastoral ministry were there—and what were they?
- What were they when translated from Temple (sacrifice) to the synagogue (Scripture)?
- What happens in Christian worship that makes these Old Covenant offices a good model for us?

1 Timothy 3:11

- Suppose for a moment this verse refers to deaconesses. What, most likely, was their role?
- How were they set apart for that role?

1 Timothy

- What did the first Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325) conclude about their status?
- What does CCC 1577 say with respect to ordination?

1 Timothy 3:15

- Why is the Church called the “pillar and bulwark” of the truth?
- How does the Holy Spirit make this possible?
- How might Paul be thinking of the apostolic leaders of the Church?



For Application

1 Timothy 3:1–5

- If you are married, how do these verses apply to the way you manage your own household?
- Whether you are married or not, how do they apply to the way you manage your social relationships?

1 Timothy 3:6

- Why would Paul advise against recent converts from paganism becoming teachers of the faith?

- Given the zeal of those who come into full communion with the Catholic Church from non-Catholic Christian traditions, might the same caution apply to them?

1 Timothy 3:8–11

- How might these verses, which are directed to deacons, also apply to you?

- What does verse 9 teach us about dissent from Catholic moral teaching?

1 Timothy 3:13

- How might deacons and other pastoral ministers “gain ... great confidence in the faith” through their ministry?

Reflect

After reading and reflecting on this chapter, I hear the Lord saying to me:

My prayer response to him:

Chapter 4



For Understanding

1 Timothy 4:3

- Why would Gnosticism forbid marriage and enjoin against certain foods?
- What did Gnosticism call its adherents to rise above?
- If Paul is not cautioning Timothy against asceticism, what is he cautioning him against?

1 Timothy 4:13

- To what practice is this verse one of the earliest references?

- Where did Christians get the practice?

1 Timothy 4:14

- In the Bible, what meanings does the gesture of the “imposition of hands” have?

- Which two meanings from the OT are connected to what Paul describes here?

- What does Timothy’s consecration as a bishop give him?

- How were Jewish rabbis appointed?



For Application

1 Timothy 4:1–3

- How do you as an adult Catholic form your conscience in accord with the truth, so that it is not likely to be victimized by false teaching or “seared” by sinful choices?

1 Timothy 4:7–8

- What ways do you have of “training yourself spiritually”?

- What kinds of spiritual reading do you do?

- Where do you go for spiritual counsel?

- What kinds of self-discipline do you practice?

1 Timothy 4:13

- How attentive are you to the reading of Scripture in the liturgy?

- What practices do you follow for the private reading of Scripture?

1 Timothy 4:14

- Since everyone has some charism (gift given by the Holy Spirit) to share with others, what gift(s) do you have?

- How do you nourish what God has given you to share?

- If you are ordained or appointed to some kind of ministry, how would you apply Paul's advice not to neglect it?

Reflect

After reading and reflecting on this chapter, I hear the Lord saying to me:

My prayer response to him:

Chapter 5



For Understanding

1 Timothy 5:3–16

- Why was Paul so concerned about widows?

- What kinds of support systems does he advise in these verses?

1 Timothy 5:9

- Into what kinds of groups could widows be “enrolled”?

- In what way do you think the character of enrolled widows might be comparable to that of bishops and deacons?

1 Timothy 5:18

- In Paul’s day, how were some books of the NT being regarded as compared with those of the OT?

- What is an example of one of these NT books?

- Which passage from a NT book is Paul quoting verbatim?

1 Timothy 5:23

- Why does Paul recommend that Timothy drink a moderate amount of wine?

- What effects can it sometimes counteract?



For Application

1 Timothy 5:1–2

- How does Paul advise you to treat an older man (unrelated to you) with whom you have a disagreement?

- How should you relate to members of the opposite sex, regardless of their age?

1 Timothy 5:4–8

- Have you ever had occasion to fulfill your duty to care for an aged or infirm relative, especially a widowed parent?

- What were some of the spiritual benefits of this experience?

- How might such a responsibility bring you closer to God?

1 Timothy 5:13

- Gossip has traditionally been regarded as a social problem, sometimes seriously sinful. Why might that be?

- Have you ever engaged in gossip (regardless of what you call it)?

1 Timothy

- Whom have you hurt as a result?
- What might you do to improve this area of your spiritual life?

1 Timothy 5:24–25

- Do you tend to see the dark side of others first or their good side?
- How do you view yourself?
- Have you ever had the experience of finding that someone you disliked had done a good deed that was temporarily hidden and emerged only later?

Reflect

After reading and reflecting on this chapter, I hear the Lord saying to me:

My prayer response to him:

Chapter 6



For Understanding

1 Timothy 6:1

- What problems did the conversion of slaves and their masters pose for the early Church?
- On what does Paul insist?
- Without explicitly approving of slavery, what does he stress?

1 Timothy 6:10

- What is Paul reproving?
- What danger does he see in it?

1 Timothy 6:20

- Why was the guarding of the faith so important in places such as Ephesus?

- Who are the persons promoting what Paul calls “false knowledge”, according to many interpreters?

1 Timothy 6:21

- Why do many think that this letter was intended to be read before the entire Ephesian congregation, even though it is addressed to Timothy personally?



For Application

1 Timothy 6:1

- If you are an employee under supervision, how do you show respect to your supervisor?

- What motives do you have for this respect?

- How should a Christian employee relate to an employer?

- If you are an employer, manager, or supervisor, how do you show respect to your subordinates?

- What motives do you have for this attitude?

- What motives does Paul give for respect?

1 Timothy 6:7–11

- If you have one overarching ambition in life, how would you describe it?

- Is it closer to verse 10 or to verse 11? If the former, what attention would you pay Paul's advice to "shun all this"?

1 Timothy 6:17–19

- If you are financially well off, how do you use your wealth to "take hold of the life that is life indeed"? For example, do you take care to give financial support to the Church?

- What kinds of almsgiving do you practice?

- Where can you be more generous?

Reflect

After reading and reflecting on this chapter, I hear the Lord saying to me:

My prayer response to him:



Review and Respond

To complete your study of 1 Timothy, prayerfully read it straight through, focusing on the biblical text alone. What stands out to you?

Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to your heart. What is your response to him?