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Study Questions for the *Ignatius Catholic Study Bible*

The Letters of St. Paul to the Thessalonians,
to Timothy, and to Titus

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THE FIRST LETTER OF SAINT PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS

Chapter 1

For understanding

1. **1:1.** Who are the Silvanus and Timothy mentioned in this verse? How is the Church family in Thessalonica united?
2. **1:3.** What is Paul remembering? How does each of the theological virtues apply to the Thessalonian situation?
3. **1:7.** What are Macedonia and Achaia, and where are they in relation to each other?
4. **1:9.** What does Paul's phrasing suggest about the Thessalonians' religious background? What is the traditional Jewish critique of idolatry contained in the Scriptures? In what respect is the Jewish faith the faith of the Church?

For application

1. **1:2.** When you pray, for whom do you pray? For whom should you be praying? How often do you give thanks for that person's faith in, hope for, and love of Jesus Christ and his Church?
2. **1:5.** To what extent do you experience the gospel as more than a matter of words and dogmas—as, rather, a matter of power in the Holy Spirit and utter conviction? If, as Paul suggests, the gospel should come in power, what might you do to receive it that way?
3. **1:6.** Which Catholics (living or not) do you most admire for their practice of the faith? How have you imitated those you admire? What has been the fruit of your imitation? To extend this question a little farther, how do you imitate the Lord?
4. **1:9.** To what do you devote more time and attention in everyday life than you should? Might these pursuits qualify as idols, in the sense that you spend too much energy and affection in their service? How can you turn from them to the service of a God who is a living reality in your life?

Chapter 2

For understanding

1. **2:9.** Why did Paul and his companions avoid claiming their rights to material and financial support during their brief stay with the Thessalonians? How did they support themselves?
2. **2:13.** To what does “the word of God” refer here? How was it delivered? What OT personages do the apostles and their associates parallel, and how?
3. **2:14–16.** For whom does Paul have some unusually harsh words? Why does he trace this madness to Jerusalem? Who is persecuting the Thessalonians?
4. **Word Study: At Last (2:16).** What are some of the ways this expression is used in the New Testament? If Paul's use of the expression in 1 Thessalonians is a matter of interpretation, what three possible interpretations can be given it? Why is a decision about the meaning difficult here?

For application

1. **2:1–4.** Think of someone you admire for his refusal to give up in the face of

opposition. What is it about that person's attitude that you most admire? How might that attitude encourage you in the face of opposition—especially of a religious or spiritual nature?

2. **2:11–12.** If you are a parent or are responsible for children or adolescents, how do you exhort, encourage, and charge them “to lead a life worthy of God”? If you are direct and explicit, how do you respond when your charges seem to ignore or reject your encouragement? If you are indirect or “hands off”, how do you know that they perceive your approach as encouragement to lead such a life?
3. **2:13.** How do you receive the Church's teaching on moral issues? Do you accept it as the word of God for you—that is, as the truth—or as someone's opinion? If you accept it as the word of God, how can you tell when it “is at work in you”? That is, what effect is it having on you?

Chapter 3

For understanding

1. **3:2.** Why did Paul send Timothy to visit the Thessalonians? When did Timothy return? What happened as a result of the visit?
2. **3:10.** What did Paul fear was lacking in the Thessalonians' faith?
3. **3:12.** When Paul talks about love in this verse, about what kind of love is he speaking? How does this kind of love function? Why can only God make this love increase and overflow?
4. **3:13.** To whom can the expression “all his saints” in this verse refer? What is Paul most likely saying? What other Scripture passages support this interpretation?

For application

1. **3:1–5.** How do you deal with uncertainty over the faith of people you love, especially if their faith is new or is undergoing trial? What steps do you take to encourage them to persevere?
2. **3:10.** Have you ever tried to instruct anyone in the faith? How did you go about it? For example, how did you determine what those you were instructing needed to know? How could you tell when they were “getting” what you were teaching and were growing in faith?
3. **3:12.** Reflect on the note for this verse. How has the Lord caused love to increase in your own life? in the lives of those you catechize?

Chapter 4

For understanding

1. **4:3.** Describe the processes of sanctification. Of what is it a condition? To what does the injunction “abstain from immorality” refer? Where did the Greek expression used here originate?
2. **4:13.** For what is “asleep” a metaphor? What does Scripture imply by using it? Though it is human to mourn for the death of a loved one, how should the Christian handle grief?
3. **4:15.** What do some scholars infer from Paul's use of “we” in this passage? What other comments in Paul's letters seem to weigh against this common interpretation?

4. **4:16–17.** What kind of imagery does Paul use to depict the Second Coming of Jesus? What three OT examples does the note cite, and for which specific images?

For application

1. **4:3–7.** Look up and read Tob 8:4–7. What is the connection between Paul’s admonition and Tobias’ attitude toward taking a wife? What connection is there between chastity, sexual expression within marriage, and the sanctification of the spouses?
2. **4:9–12.** At first, Paul’s injunctions, on the one hand, to love the brethren and, on the other, “to live quietly, to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands” may appear to be contradictory. How can tending to one’s own work be an expression of love for the community?
3. **4:13–14.** If you have ever grieved for the loss of a loved one, how did your grief challenge your hope? How did hope reassert itself? What is the basis for Christian hope?
4. **4:15–18.** If you have ever comforted anyone who has lost a loved one, what kinds of comfort did you offer? How was it received? How would you want to be comforted in a similar situation?

Chapter 5

For understanding

1. **5:2.** What is the “day of the Lord”, and what does Paul know about it? How does the liturgy anticipate this final and fateful day? How is it prefigured in history?
2. **5:5.** What is the Semitic expression “sons of light” a way of saying? To what does the struggle between light and darkness refer, and where do you find it discussed in Jewish tradition?
3. **5:12.** What does the expression “over you in the Lord” indicate about the Thessalonian Church? Why is this situation not surprising? To what does the spiritual oversight of these pastors entitle them from the laity?
4. **5:23.** In using the formula “spirit and soul and body”, what is Paul emphasizing? What is he *not* intending to emphasize? What distinctions *can* be made among these components?

For application

1. **5:1–4.** How predictable is your life? How far into the future do you tend to make plans? What do these verses suggest for the ways you should be planning?
2. **5:5–8a.** What kind of sobriety do you think Paul is talking about here? What does drunkenness represent (beyond an excess of alcohol)? How do these verses compare with what Paul said in 4:3 about sanctification?
3. **5:12–13a.** Why are bishops and pastors always entitled to your respect? In what ways have you personally shown respect to them, especially around others? How often do you pray for them?
4. **5:16–18.** Since Paul advises rejoicing, prayer, and thanksgiving “in all circumstances” as God’s will for you, how do you act on his advice? What does it mean to rejoice or give thanks when times are tough? How do you pray constantly?

5. **5:19–24.** Read these verses slowly, with an emphasis on v. 24. How secure is your confidence that God is faithful to you and will (note the definite future) sanctify you if you cooperate with him?

THE SECOND LETTER OF SAINT PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS

Chapter 1

For understanding

1. **1:1–2.** With what two small but significant prepositions does Paul express the relationship between God and the Thessalonian Church? What does the triune God represent for Paul in connection with every spiritual blessing?
2. **1:5–10.** What do these verses provide? What is Paul's focus here?
3. **1:9.** To what does the expression "eternal destruction" refer? What is *hell* in Paul's thinking? What other New Testament ideas and images fill out this terrifying prospect?
4. **1:12.** What does Paul frequently mention in the two Thessalonian letters regarding the Father and the Son?

For application

1. **1:4–5.** Why do Christians pass around stories of groups (other than their own) that have endured hardship or persecution? Why do you think the Catholic Church takes such an interest in martyrologies (collections of stories about martyrs)?
2. **1:6–8.** As you read these verses, what tone of voice do you "hear"? Why do you think Paul would wish for divine vengeance to fall on people who do not know God? (Then again, what is "knowing God" in Paul's language?) How are failure to know God and disobedience related here?
3. **1:9.** Having considered the note for this verse, what is your own belief concerning the existence and nature of hell? What do you know of the Church's current teaching about hell and those who go there? (Refer to CCC 1033–36.) If you have difficulty with that teaching, what is the basis for the difficulty?
4. **1:11.** According to this verse, how does God fulfill our resolves and good works of faith? Why are good resolutions and good works (even ones done in faith) not enough by themselves?

Chapter 2

For understanding

1. **2:3.** What is another word for "rebellion" here? What is Paul envisioning? Who is the "man of lawlessness", also called the "son of perdition"?
2. **Word Study: Restraining (2:6).** The note points out that the term "restrain" in 2 Thessalonians is difficult to interpret. Remembering that Greek words have gender, what do the *power* (neuter) and the *person* (masculine) do? What or who have they been thought to be? Why did Paul feel no need to describe the restrainer further?
3. **2:7.** What is the "mystery of lawlessness"? Toward what is it building?

4. **2:15.** What are the “traditions” to which Paul refers? What did the traditions serve as a standard for judging? What role did Paul’s personal example of Christian living serve?

For application

1. **2:3–4.** Given the events of the last hundred years, several historical figures might easily fit this description. How would you avoid letting yourself be deceived by a charismatic but devious personality? (Hint: Look ahead to verse 15.) How would you prevent others from being deceived?
2. **2:10–12.** In these verses, what sort of person will be condemned? Why? How can someone “take pleasure in unrighteousness”?
3. **2:13.** What were you chosen by God to do? When? How is this choice the opposite of what happens in the previous verse?
4. **2:14–15.** Why is it important to “hold fast” to the deposit of faith? If someone were to urge you to “question” Church teaching, what would that person actually be urging you to do? What *should* be the effect of asking questions of this deposit of faith so as to understand it better?

Chapter 3

For understanding

1. **3:1–2.** For what purpose is Paul soliciting intercessory prayer from the Thessalonian Church?
2. **3:6–15.** What embarrassing situation in the Thessalonian Church is Paul addressing? What three groups of people is he talking about? How does he urge the Church to get involved in correcting this problem?
3. **3:14.** What two purposes did Paul expect disciplinary exclusion from the life and liturgy of the Church to serve?
4. **3:17.** Why did Paul, having dictated the letter to a secretary, take up his pen and add his own signature and some personal remarks at the end?

For application

1. **3:3.** What is Paul promising you here? How does your faith both strengthen you and “guard you from evil”? Assuming he does not mean that God will prevent evil from happening, what kind of “guard” might Paul be talking about?
2. **3:6–10.** Paul seems to advocate a kind of “tough love” here. When is it appropriate to help someone who is not working, and when is it appropriate not to help such a person? How do you seek help from the Christian community when you are in trouble yourself?
3. **3:13.** Have you ever become tired of living the Christian life? What might cause such a weariness? What prompts or encourages you to “keep on keeping on”?
4. **3:14–15.** If a fellow Christian is publicly dissenting from the faith or practice of the Church, how do you treat him, not as an enemy, but as a brother? Why might Paul recommend that you avoid his company? How would you go about warning him without being sanctimonious about it?

THE FIRST LETTER OF SAINT PAUL TO TIMOTHY

Chapter 1

For understanding

1. **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?
2. **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?
3. **Word Study: Conscience (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?
4. **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. **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?
2. **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?
3. **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? What has been your own experience with the mercy of conversion?
4. **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?

Chapter 2

For understanding

1. **2:1–15.** To what is this entire chapter devoted? How is it divided? What is Timothy’s task?
2. **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?

3. **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?
4. **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. **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?
2. **2:8.** Do you ever pray in a group with others (outside of the liturgy)? What are some of the benefits of group prayer?
3. **2:9–10.** Why would Paul insist on modesty in dress and personal accessories? How do you dress when you attend Sunday Mass?
4. **2:15.** How can being a parent promote one's salvation? What virtues does parenthood tend to generate or encourage?

Chapter 3

For understanding

1. **3:1.** What is the role of the bishop? 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?
2. **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?
3. **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? What did the first Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325) conclude about their status? What does CCC 1577 say with respect to ordination?
4. **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. **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?
2. **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?

3. **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?
4. **3:13.** How might deacons and other pastoral ministers “gain . . . great confidence in the faith” through their ministry?

Chapter 4

For understanding

1. **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?
2. **4:13.** To what practice is this verse one of the earliest references? Where did Christians get the practice?
3. **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. **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?
2. **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?
3. **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?
4. **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?

Chapter 5

For understanding

1. **5:3–16.** Why was Paul so concerned about widows? What kinds of support systems does he advise in these verses?
2. **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?
3. **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?
4. **5:23.** Why does Paul recommend that Timothy drink a moderate amount of wine? What effects can it sometimes counteract?

For application

1. **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?
2. **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?
3. **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)? Whom have you hurt as a result? What might you do to improve this area of your spiritual life?
4. **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?

Chapter 6*For understanding*

1. **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?
2. **6:10.** What is Paul reproving? What danger does he see in it?
3. **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?
4. **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. **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?
2. **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”?
3. **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?

THE SECOND LETTER OF SAINT PAUL TO TIMOTHY

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?

THE LETTER OF SAINT PAUL TO TITUS

Chapter 1

For understanding

1. **1:4.** Who is Titus? Where do we learn about him in the New Testament? What may the expression "my true child" suggest to the reader? In the Bible, with what is spiritual fatherhood connected?
2. **1:5.** What is known about Paul's and Titus' evangelization of Crete? What does the duty of appointing elders indicate about Titus himself? How are the titles "elder" and "bishop" used at this stage of the Church's development?
3. **1:6.** Why did the early Church rule that a bishop should be married only once in his lifetime? For whom does Paul grant—and refuse to grant—a concession with respect to remarriage?
4. **1:15.** What does the expression "to the pure" imply? What does Paul insist on regarding the purity of Christians? What is it important to understand that he is *not* saying?

For application

1. **1:7–8.** Why is it especially important for those who have a vocation to the ordained ministry to strive after virtue and holiness? Who else is called to live virtuous and holy lives? In what areas can you become more virtuous and holy?
2. **1:9–10.** How would you recognize an "insubordinate" teacher of the faith? To whom must such a person be subordinate, at least in the teaching presented?
3. **1:11.** Many complain today that insubordinate teachers are not "silenced" by their bishops. How would you advise a person who is upset that a dissident teacher is apparently allowed to continue teaching? Have you ever considered praying for such teachers rather than criticizing them?
4. **1:15.** How do you understand the saying "To the pure all things are pure"? Why is

this not a license to do whatever one wants? Since Paul immediately qualifies the proverb by adding, “To the corrupt and unbelieving, nothing is pure”, how would you place this proverb in the context of the proper formation of conscience?

Chapter 2

For understanding

1. **2:1–10.** To whom is Titus instructed to give moral counsel in these verses? With what expectation does Paul associate faith and life? In effect, then, what does Paul want of Cretan believers?
2. **2:9.** Since slavery was an accepted institution in Roman society, what did Paul seek to accomplish in commenting on it? What did he generally stress? In this verse, what does Paul imply about the dependability and service of slaves?
3. **2:11–14.** What is the purpose of these verses? On what does Paul place emphasis?
4. **2:14.** Where does the expression “a people of his [God’s] own” come from? How do Exodus and Deuteronomy use these words? Since the persistence of sin and weakness prevented Israel from fulfilling its vocation under the Old Covenant, what did Christ come to do?

For application

1. **2:2–3.** Why might Paul be concerned to bid older persons to be “temperate, serious, sensible, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness” as well as temperate in speech? What issues do older adults face that might tempt them to be the opposite?
2. **2:6.** What aspects of self-control have you found most challenging? Why is self-control so necessary for a Christian (not to mention a mature adult)? Why do you think self-control is under such attack in our society?
3. **2:9–10.** Have you ever been tempted to steal from your employer or company? How have you resisted? If you have stolen anything, what have you done to make restitution? What should you do when you realize that others are stealing?
4. **2:11–14.** What is the difference between this vision of life in the world and a self-repressed severity? What does it mean to be both “sober, upright, and godly”, on the one hand, and joyful, on the other?

Chapter 3

For understanding

1. **3:1.** What is Paul telling Titus about the attitude Christians need to take toward public life? What must the saints be (besides holy)?
2. **Word Study: Regeneration (3:5).** To what does the Greek word for *regeneration* refer? How do extrabiblical writers use the word? To what does Paul link the idea here? What is he saying, in effect?
3. **3:10–11.** What do these two verses present? What is Titus supposed to do, and in what order?
4. **3:15.** By addressing the entire community, not just Titus, what is Paul trying to show the Cretan Church? What is Titus’ commission?

For application

1. **3:1–2.** How does Paul's ideal of good civic behavior enhance the tone of public life?
2. **3:3–7.** According to these verses, why does God our Savior pay attention to your situation? How does he accomplish what he wants? What is his purpose?
3. **3:8–9.** Can you think of times when it is more appropriate and effective to teach sound doctrine by "good deeds" rather than by direct conversation that is likely to lead to "stupid controversies"? How might you avoid controversy without dispensing with all discussion of religion?