



## QUESTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING & REFLECTION

### *A Deeper Purification* (pp. 337 – 370)

1. List the seven capital sins and one example of how each can disguise itself in spiritual trappings.
2. What's the difference between the "active night of the spirit" and the "active night of the spirit"?
3. Why is this deeper purification better for us if it takes place in this life and not the next?
4. Why is fire such a common image to describe this time of purification? Explain in your own words the metaphor St. John of the Cross uses to illustrate the process of purification.
5. According to St. Teresa of Avila, how can we endure the trials God sends? Is there a remedy?
6. Although we can't perceive it, what does St. John say God is doing during the dark night? Why can't we perceive it?

7. Give three examples from Scripture of the dark night and our need for purification.
8. What does St. John say must be crucified or “annihilated” during the dark night of the spirit?
9. How does St. John say this dark night affects our intellect, will, and memory?
10. What is promised to those who pass through the dark night of the spirit?
11. Does this chapter make you weary of growing in holiness to fast? Why or why not?
12. Does the need for this kind of purification change your grasp of original sin? If so, how?
13. Of the seven deadly sins, which do you think affect your spiritual journey most, and how?
14. Think of an exterior trial you’ve faced. How did you respond? Did it change you? How so?
15. Do you know someone who has endured great suffering without losing faith in God? What have you learned from this person? How can meditating on the words of 1 Corinthians 10:13 increase our confidence in God’s providential wisdom and love in our regard?