

2 TIMOTHY

LET'S EAT!



TEACH IT COFFEEHOUSE SESSION 9

1. Materials

For this session each student will need—

- his or her Bible and pen
- journal page for Session 9 (for students to take home)

You'll also need—

- pencils with erasers
- optional: a few spare Bibles for students who forget theirs
- eight napkins that you'll write names on

2. Session Intro

GOALS OF SESSION 9

As students experience this session, they will—

- gain an increased awareness of the power of God's Word.
- better understand the role that the Bible should have in their lives.
- be challenged to intensify their personal time with God's Word.

PRAYER

Begin your session by praying together that students will be open not only to exploring God's Word but also to exploring the role that God's Word plays in their lives.

OPEN

If the Bible Were a Candy Bar

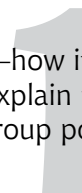
Start with a word association discussion. Ask students the first word that pops into their heads when you say *Bible*. You may hear words such as: *big, God's love, Jesus, confusing, long, and truth*.

Then ask—

Which candy would you pick to describe your personal Bible study?

- Atomic Fireball
- Good & Plenty
- Almond Joy
- Baby Ruth
- Bit-O-Honey
- Tic Tac
- Zero

Next talk with the group about their own Bibles. What are their reactions to it off the tops of their heads—how it's organized, what it looks like, how readable it is? Do they like to spend time with it? Why or why not? Explain to your students that, today, they'll catch a glimpse of how vital the Word is to a deep faith in God. Take a group poll to help students evaluate the health of their personal Bible study habits.



If the Bible were your only source of food, what would be your state of health based on your personal Bible study habits?

- 1. Near death: I have never eaten.**
- 2. Emaciated and skeletal: I quit eating a long time ago.**
- 3. Starving: I'm barely eating enough to get by.**
- 4. Queasy: I'm eating, but it's not staying in.**
- 5. Inactive: Eating a lot but not burning calories by applying or obeying.**
- 6. Fit: Eating right and burning calories.**

3. Digging In

Setting the Table

Tell students—

- 1. Read 2 Timothy 3:14-4:4 from your Bibles and in pencil underline any reference to God's Word.**
- 2. Look for words such as *Scripture*, *truth*, and a few others you'll have to find on your own.**
- 3. If you are hesitant about marking in your Bibles, write lightly so the markings can be erased. It's okay if you're still not comfortable with it. Just make sure to remember the info you see about Scripture.**

When most students have finished, ask them to tell you what they learned about God's Word from these verses. Invite students to use a napkin in the following way to help them process the info:

Designate one side of a napkin DESCRIPTIONS and the other side INSTRUCTIONS.

As descriptions and instructions are shared, write on your napkin any that you want to remember or that you find particularly convicting.

When you've touched on most of the facts, ask someone to read aloud 2 Timothy 2:15. Then ask what new instructions should be added to the list.

Here are possible observations:

Descriptions of God's Word	Instructions for God's Word
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-It's holy (3:15).-It's able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ (3:15).-All of it is God-breathed (3:16).-All Scripture is useful for:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-teaching (3:16).-rebuking (3:16).-correcting (3:16).-training in righteousness (3:16).-It equips the believer for every good work (3:17).-It's sound doctrine (which some people won't put up with) (4:3).-It's truth, not myths (4:4).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Continue in what you've learned and become convinced of (3:14).-Preach it (4:2).-Be prepared to use it in season and out of season (all the time) (4:2).-With great patience and careful instruction:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-correct (4:2).-rebuke (4:2).-encourage (4:2).-Be a workman who doesn't need to be ashamed, who correctly handles the word of truth (2:15).

Work as a group to process the information by discussing the following questions.

In your own words how would you describe the degree to which Paul valued Scripture?

He seemed to count on it for everything. It was his manual for his work. It came from the highest authority—God.

Why was Paul so emphatic—even urgent—in writing what he did about the Word of God?

Remind them of 2 Timothy 4:3-4 (or have them read these verses again). Paul predicted a time when people wouldn't pay attention to God's truth, but would rather listen to myths or what they wanted to hear. That made it all the more important for God's people to teach God's truth diligently and accurately.

Do you think the time Paul was predicting has come? How does 2 Timothy 4:3-4 relate to what you see today?

Moral relativism is widespread today and precisely fits Paul's description. This philosophy states that there are no absolutes—truth is what you believe it to be. Mythology is making a huge comeback through fantasy games, festivals that celebrate pagan mythology, and an emphasis on pagan mysticism in movies and books. Compare these trends with Paul's statement that people will gather teachers who say "what their itching ears want to hear" and "turn aside to myths."

4. Cross-Checking

The Main Dish

Ask the group—

What are some opinions you hear today about the Bible? If you asked your friends, what would they say the Bible is?

Let them brainstorm for a minute or two. Possible answers include:

- It's one of many religious books (like the Koran).
- It's full of contradictions.
- It's an old book written by a bunch of old guys.
- It's a book of good advice.

Explain that most people today form their opinions about the Bible without ever reading it. If they cracked it open, they'd see what the Word has to say about itself—which is what the next exercise is all about.

Read aloud the passages one at a time with your group, and answer the questions about that Scripture in the following chart. Possible observations are printed here for your reference:

Passage	What are we told to do with the Word?	What will the Word do to you or for you?	In what situations would this be helpful?
Psalm 119:97-100	<i>Live according to it.</i>	<i>It will keep my way pure.</i>	<i>-It will help me as I am trying to stay sexually pure. -It will help as I am resisting pressure from friends to sin.</i>
Proverbs 2:1-6	<i>-Meditate on it all day long. -Keep it with me. -Obey it.</i>	<i>-I'll be wiser than my enemies. -I'll have more insight than my teachers. -I'll have more understanding than the elders.</i>	<i>-It will help me hold my own in debates over issues such as creation versus evolution or abortion. -It will help me stand firm when a person, such as my teacher, tries to shake my faith.</i>
Hebrews 5:12-14	<i>-Accept it. -Store it up within me. -Turn my ear to wisdom. -Apply my heart. -Study it as if I'm looking for hidden treasure.</i>	<i>-I'll understand the fear of the Lord. -I'll find the knowledge of God.</i>	<i>-It will help me when I am trying to figure out God's will. -It will help when I need answers from God.</i>

5. Taking It Inward

Using the Proper Silverware

After processing these passages, ask—

What kind of devotional life or quiet time do you see described in these passages?

We see a devotional life that is constant, diligent, thoughtful, meditative, done with an open heart and a willingness to obey.

Tell your students that you're going to give them a pop quiz on basic Bible knowledge. Distribute eight napkins, and ask students to write one of the names in the following left column on each napkin (so you'll have eight napkins with one Bible name each). Toss the napkins in the middle of the table, and have students work together to line them up in correct historical order.

Daniel _____
 Noah _____
 King Saul _____
 Abraham _____
 Esther _____
 Paul _____
 Moses _____
 Samson _____

Noah
 Abraham
 Moses
 Samson
 King Saul
 Daniel
 Esther
 Paul

Time the students to see how long it takes them to get the names in proper order—shown in the preceding right-hand column. After each attempt tell them right or wrong. It's up to you as to how much you want to tell them is right or wrong on each attempt. When they finish, assess the biblical literacy of your group. If students didn't do too well, let them off the hook a bit given the pop quiz nature of the exercise. Point out that this quiz was given to hundreds of adult youth workers, and they didn't do well either (less than 20 percent got the names in proper order). Then discuss the following questions.

What does it actually prove if you can put these people in order?

Use this question to draw out a very important observation: Memorizing the facts isn't the point of studying God's Word. Getting to know God and enjoying an intimate relationship with Jesus is the point. The more we do that, the more likely we are to know this information naturally. The goal shouldn't be to memorize this list in a day, but to spend more time with God in a year. Then try the quiz again in a year, and see how you do.

Have the group look at the column labeled "What will the Word do to you or for you?" Ask—

Is your experience with God's Word delivering the results you've listed in this column? Is it keeping your way pure? Is it helping you know good from evil in areas such as making good decisions?

Discuss this question for a minute or two. If your students aren't getting these kinds of results, ask why not. Whose fault is it? Is the Word incapable of delivering on God's promises—or could it be we're not delivering on our part of the bargain (the actions in the column "What are we told to do with the Word?")?

What relevance can an ancient text have in today's postmodern, fast-paced society?

Elicit the observation that the Bible contains universal truth that transcends time and culture.

Share this illustration:

A Native American elder once described his own inner struggles this way: "Inside of me there are two dogs. One of the dogs is mean and evil. The other dog is good. The mean dog fights the good dog all the time." When someone asked him which dog wins, he reflected for a moment and replied, "The one I feed the most."

—George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950, Irish playwright)

Then ask—

Based on how much time you've spent with God's Word over the past month, which dog have you been feeding the most?

What do you need to do to make tomorrow a "good dog" day?

How do Paul's instructions and descriptions of God's Word fit with the overall theme of his letter to Timothy?

After some discussion explain that nothing matures our faith and commitments better than God's Word. Because Timothy was facing persecution and watching fellow Christians drop like flies (see Session 7), Paul devoted a lot of his letter to the one tool that could keep Timothy's faith strong—the Word of God.

6. Wrapping It Up

Bon Appétit!

People generally use two phrases to describe their Bible study time—*devotions* and *quiet time*. Ask your group if these phrases adequately describe how we should approach God's Word based on what they've just seen in Scripture. Give this challenge:

Come up with a stronger phrase that describes how we should connect with God's Word. This phrase should reflect the intensity and search-till-you-find-it attitude Scripture talks about.

Before closing with prayer explain that you want to give the group a jump-start in making tomorrow a “good dog” day. Point out the Bite-Sized Bible Study Ideas on the journal pages. Challenge your students to choose an idea before they leave and to start tomorrow (or sooner) in making God’s Word a part of their daily routines.

Bite-Sized Bible Study Ideas

Read John 1, and write down every detail about Jesus.

Read Colossians 1 and journal everything you learn about *you*.

Read 1 John 4, and draw a heart over every reference to love. Then make a list of everything you learn about love.

Own the book of Jude. It’s one chapter—only 25 verses.

Scour James for every practical instruction for living out your faith in Christ. Then *do* the instructions.