

2 TIMOTHY

MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL



TEACH IT COFFEEHOUSE SESSION 10

1. Materials

For this session each student will need—

- his or her Bible and pen
- optional: journal page for Session 10 (Using the student journal page is optional in the coffeehouse setting because table space may be limited.)

You'll also need—

- pencils with erasers
- optional: a few spare Bibles for students who forget theirs
- optional: “would you rather” questions

2. Session Intro

GOALS OF SESSION 10

As students experience this session, they will—

- discover a prescription for becoming useful and used in God's kingdom work.
- evaluate themselves and their student ministry in light of the qualities God looks for in people to accomplish his tasks.
- be challenged to pattern their lives after God's standards for leadership.

PRAYER

Pray together that this last session in 2 Timothy will serve as a launchpad for students to live out everything they've learned from this book of the Bible.

OPEN

Job Opportunity

Ask a few of the following “would you rather” questions, all of which are related to work situations. Either have each student take a turn answering one question or have the entire group respond to several or all of the questions.

Would you rather...

- **Work 9 to 5 with easy tasks or make up your own schedule with harder tasks?**
- **Work in a big office building or out of a hut in a foreign country?**
- **Make lots of money with no time off or make minimum wage with eight weeks of paid vacation?**
- **Work for your best friend or work for a parent?**
- **Work from your home or work from an office with a great view?**
- **Be a youth pastor in a big city or be a youth pastor in a small town?**
- **Work with a team or work by yourself?**
- **Work at a job with lots of travel or a job with no travel?**
- **Be a door-to-door salesman or a telemarketer?**
- **Live on a small salary while you work but have a great retirement plan or make a large salary with no retirement plan?**
- **Be a dancer or a choreographer (the person who makes up the dance)?**

- Be a mediocre professional football player or a great high school football coach?
- Sell ice cream at Walt Disney World or sell clothing at Hollister?
- Be a famous singer/band member or lead worship at a local church?
- Have someone work for you who couldn't spell or who couldn't add?
- Have someone work for you who is always late or always leaves early?
- Be a teacher or a preacher?
- Have someone work for you who talks too much or who never speaks to you?
- Have someone work for you who is lazy or someone who is bossy?

Finish with—

Would you rather stay comfortable and hope to be used by God or be uncomfortable and definitely be used by God?

Let the students kick around the pros and cons of saying yes to definitely being used by God, as well as the pros and cons of staying comfortable.

What are your fears about working for God?

Then transition into the study by saying something such as—

Lots of us say we'd like to be used by God, but we might be surprised at how many opportunities we miss because we're either not ready or not looking.

3. Digging In

Job Description

Point out that one of the main purposes of Paul's letter to Timothy was to pass the baton to the younger guy, so that he could continue Paul's work of sharing the gospel. We, too, are carrying on Paul's kingdom work in the place and time we're living. That's why Paul's message isn't just for Timothy—it's for us.

Tell the group—

1. Read 2 Timothy 2:15-26 from your Bibles.
2. In pencil underline (1) any actions of God's workmen and (2) any instructions Paul gives Timothy as God's workman.
3. Paul's main purpose in this passage is to encourage Timothy to be a person God can use. Therefore, *whatever Paul says to Timothy*—descriptions, actions, or instructions—is a reference to God's workman and should be marked.
4. If you are hesitant about marking in your Bibles, you can 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 information regarding God's workmen.

As your students work someone may ask about the meaning of the word *ignoble* (2 Timothy 2:20, NIV). This word is the opposite of *noble*, which Webster's defines as "possessing outstanding qualities" or "possessing very high or excellent qualities." *Ignoble* could be defined as being of low character.

After they've finished ask them to look over what they marked and select the following:

1. Choose two descriptions of God's workmen that would be good traits to possess. Write these on one side of a napkin.

2. Choose two actions or instructions that stand out to you for whatever reason. Write those on the other side of the napkin.

Ask students to tell you what they picked and give you a reason why. Here are possible observations from the passage.

Descriptions	Actions/Instructions
<i>If a person has cleansed himself or herself from dishonorable purposes, THEN that person...</i> (v. 21) -is ready to be an instrument for noble purposes (v. 21). -is made holy (v. 21). -is now useful to the Master (v. 21). -is prepared to do any good work (v. 21). -isn't quarrelsome (v. 24). -is kind to all (v. 24). -is able to teach (v. 24). -isn't resentful when wronged (v. 24). -is able to gently instruct those who oppose him or her (v. 25).	-Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved (v. 15). -Live as a workman who does not need to be ashamed (v. 15). -Handle God's Word of truth correctly (v. 15). -Avoid godless chatter (v. 16). -Flee from the evil desires of youth (v. 22). -Pursue righteousness (v. 22). -Pursue faith, love, peace with others who call on the Lord out of a pure heart (a youth group perhaps?) (v. 22). -Avoid foolish and stupid arguments (v. 23). -Don't quarrel (v. 24). -Be kind to everyone (v. 24).

4. Taking It Inward

Employee Evaluation

Ask the group—

Several of the instructions could be classified as defensive instructions, such as:

- Avoid godless chatter (v. 16).
- Flee from the evil desires of youth (v. 22).
- Avoid foolish and stupid arguments (v. 23).
- Don't quarrel (v. 24).

Which of these do you think would be the most destructive to God's work?

Other instructions could be classified as proactive instructions, such as:

- Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved (v. 15).
- Live as a workman who does not need to be ashamed (v. 15).
- Handle God's Word of truth correctly (v. 15).
- Pursue righteousness (v. 22).
- Pursue faith, love, peace with others who call on the Lord out of a pure heart (v. 22).
- Be kind to everyone (v. 24).

Choose one instruction and comment on why it would be beneficial to God's work.

Do you want to be used by God to do great things?

Let students discuss fears and hesitations, but hopefully their answer will be yes.

5. Cross-Checking

On the Job Training

Ask if anyone has ever asked the question “What’s God’s will for my life?” They may not realize it, but 2 Timothy 2:15-26 has just given them a great prescription for knowing and doing God’s will. If for the next several days the students commit to *doing* these descriptions, actions, and instructions in hopes of developing godly habits, they will be *doing* God’s will.

Tell the group that Scripture is full of situations in which young leaders such as Timothy wrestled with God’s will or calling on their lives. For the next few minutes, have your students look at three of these situations. Divvy up the following passages so that a fairly equal number of students are looking up each passage. If you’re using the optional journal page, have them read the passages under Cross-Checking and answer the questions in the chart for their particular passage.

Ask the questions about each passage in the following chart. Possible observations are printed here for your reference:

	Moses Exodus 3:4-12	Gideon Judges 6:1-6, 11-16	Jeremiah Jeremiah 1:1-8
What mission was God bringing to this potential leader?	<i>The mission was to rescue God’s people from slavery and bring them to a new land.</i>	<i>The mission was to save Israel out of evil Midian’s hand.</i>	<i>The mission was to be a prophet to the nations.</i>
What was the leader’s response?	<i>Who am I?</i>	<i>How can I do this? I’m the weakest one in the weakest clan.</i>	<i>I don’t know how to speak; I’m only a child.</i>
What did God say back to the leader?	<i>I will be with you.</i>	<i>I will be with you.</i>	<i>I am with you.</i>

After you’ve processed the questions, prompt a discussion of these passages using the following questions.

What common denominators did you see in all three of these situations?

- God came up with the plan (not the person in the passage).
- God chose a humble person to carry out the task.
- The potential leader always felt inadequate for the job.
- God never disagreed with the person about his shortcomings or inadequacies.
- God always assured the person of his presence. Evidently, that was enough.

How do these three situations line up with the leadership qualities we’ve seen in 2 Timothy?

This is a challenging question, and it may be tough to make a connection. But here’s the deal: If we have the leadership qualities outlined in 2 Timothy, we will be humble and obedient— traits that appear to be two of God’s faves. Humility can certainly trigger the response, “Who me? How can I?” Obedience causes us to move forward when God says, “I will be with you.”

What can this teach us about being useful to God?

6. Wrapping It Up

Career Advancement

Close the session by brainstorming about how the group might get more involved in God’s kingdom work. Let the ideas come from the group. But if you need to prime the pump a bit, here are some suggestions:

- We could split our group to start two or three more coffeehouse Bible studies.
- We could commit to meet once a week at the coffeehouse to continue Bible study.
- We could help at a food pantry or homeless shelter.
- We could adopt an inner-city classroom.

After they've tossed around four or five ideas, remind the group of the leadership qualities they uncovered in 2 Timothy (see their lists under Digging In). Point out that if their project is to have God-sized impact, before going any further, they must commit to living out the qualities, actions, and instructions God laid out for useful workmen. If they aren't willing to aim for these character qualities, they won't experience God-sized impact.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Because this is your final session in 2 Timothy, spend a few minutes helping your students reflect on their study experience using one or more of these options:

1. Have your students look over the marked-up pages in their Bibles. Ask them to share a specific Wow! moment or express a truth that they never want to forget.
2. If you used the journal pages, ask them to look over these and share a favorite session or meaningful exercise.
3. Ask them to share their big takeaway from 2 Timothy. What's the one thing they'll never forget from this book or the one change they have made as a result of this study?