



TEACH IT COLLEGE AGE SESSION 1

ONE WEEK OUT

You may want to send reminder notes to your gang to let them know the time and place the group will be meeting. Challenge them to read 2 Timothy before the first session; it's a short book. Explain why they'll be studying 2 Timothy and why it's relevant to young adults today. Paul and Timothy experienced many of the same frustrations we face—daily stuff that can get under our skin, friends falling away from the faith, non-friends belittling us because of our faith, and much more. The great thing in 2 Timothy is that God shows how we can follow him and overcome in all of these situations.

As you prepare for the first session, don't forget to allow time for reproducing student sheets and gathering the materials needed. (See the following Materials.)

Most importantly recruit a team to pray specifically for this Bible study. Supply the team with helpful specifics, such as names of students, when you're meeting, and the subject matter you'll be covering.

1. Materials

For this session each student will need—

- the 2 Timothy Scripture sheets
- the student journal page for Session 1
- a notebook in which to keep Scripture sheets and journal pages over the next few weeks (Insert the 2 Timothy Scripture sheets and Session 1 journal pages into the notebooks for this first session. Students will use the same Scripture sheets and add the journal pages from each session to the notebook from week to week.)
- his or her own Bible and pen

You'll also need—

- a whiteboard and markers
- colored pencils (at least two colors per student)
- optional: a computer or iPod to show a few video clips
- optional video clips:
 - a YouTube video of the 1950s filmstrip *Writing Better Social Letters*. Search for it by title.
 - a video clip from *You've Got Mail*: Joe Fox (Tom Hanks) checks his email: Chapter 2-3, "Morning log-ons," "Passersby"—DVD counter cues 00:06:10 to 00:07:42
 - a video clip from *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*: Yoda trains Luke Skywalker: Chapter 28, "Jedi Training"—DVD counter cues 01:00:56 to 01:03:29

2. Session Intro

GOALS OF SESSION 1

As students experience this session, they will—

- uncover the purpose of this letter by discovering the writer and recipient of 2 Timothy.

- look into the close relationship between Paul and Timothy and see what a source of encouragement they were to each other.
- be challenged to develop spiritual relationships similar to Paul and Timothy's.

PRAYER

Thank your group for being a part of this study, and remind them that whenever we set out to dig deeply into God's Word, we can expect to grow closer to God. But we can also expect the Enemy to try to knock us off course. Pray with the group that the students will stand firm in the will of God throughout this study—and that they'll discover what God has to say to them through this specific book of the Bible.

OPEN

You've Got Mail

To get things rolling read one or two of the following quotations about letter writing:

Letter writing is the only device for combining solitude with good company.
—Lord Byron (1788-1824, English Poet)

Sir, more than kisses, letters mingle souls. For, thus friends absent speak.
—John Donne in *To Sir Henry Wotton* (1572-1631, English Poet)

Letters are among the most significant memorial a person can leave behind them.
—Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe (1749-1832, German Poet)

After allowing the students to weigh in on the quotations, show one of the following film clips. Then discuss a few of the questions below.

OPTIONAL VIDEO CLIPS

- A YouTube video of 1950s filmstrip *Writing Better Social Letters*. Search for it by title.
- A video clip from *You've Got Mail*: Joe Fox (Tom Hanks) checks his email. (See Materials for counter cues.)

What's the best letter or email you've ever received? Why?

What's the worst letter or email you've ever received? Why?

Which would you rather do: send a Dear John letter or receive one?

3. Digging In



Writer Recon

Tell the group that 2 Timothy is a letter exchanged between two of Jesus' followers within 100 years of his ministry on earth. Because it's part of God's Word, we can also take it as a letter from God to us.

Ask—

What do you need to know to understand any letter?


-You need to know who wrote it.

-You need to know who it was written to.

-You need to know why it was written.

-You need to know the circumstances surrounding the letter (These often point to the reasons why it was written.)

Explain to your students they will be doing the next exercise in solitude. Tell them—

1. You should find places in the room or outside it nearby where you can have a few minutes alone with God.
2. You'll need your pens, colored pencils, and Scripture sheets.
3. Read 2 Timothy 1:1-18 and 4:6-9 from your Scripture sheets. As you read find and mark in colored pencil every mention of the writer of 2 Timothy, including pronouns, such as *I*, *me*, and *my*.
4. Let's agree on a simple symbol to use when marking the writer, such as a box or a stick figure. 

When most have finished (it's okay if some haven't), get the group back together, and work to create a profile of the author, Paul. Prompt them with the following questions, and as they tell you various facts about Paul, write them in two columns on the whiteboard. Your board will look something like this:

How was Paul's Christian walk described?	What was Paul's situation when he wrote this letter?
Chapter 1 -He was an apostle of Christ by the will of God (v. 1). -He served God as his forefathers did—with a clear conscience (v. 3). -He was a prisoner of the Lord (v. 8). -He was saved and called to a holy life (v. 9). -He was appointed a herald, apostle, and teacher of the gospel (v. 11). -He was not ashamed because he knew whom he had believed (v. 12). -He was solid and sold out about what he believed (v. 12).	Chapter 1 -He was suffering (v. 12). -He had been deserted by some close friends. (v. 15).
Chapter 4 -He has fought the good fight, finished the race, kept the faith (v. 7). -A crown of righteousness is waiting for him (v. 8).	Chapter 4 -He was being poured out like a drink offering (v. 6). -The time had come for his departure (v. 6). -He wanted Tim to come to him quickly (v. 9).

Now ask your students to examine the whiteboard. So far they don't know much about Paul. But have them write three things they want to remember about him in the space provided on the journal pages.

Paul is nearing the end of his life, and your students may feel like they're just getting started. But ask—

Is there anything in Paul's life that parallels yours?

What stands out to you about Paul and why?

Recipient Recon

Next have the group search 2 Timothy 1:1-6 for facts about the letter's recipient and mark them with a new symbol and a different color.

After students have read and marked the passage, work as a group to compile as much information as possible about the letter's recipient. Record it on the board. Your list will look similar to this:

RECIPIENT

- His name is Timothy (v. 2).
- He's Paul's dear son (v. 2).
- He's remembered in Paul's prayers (v. 3).
- He shed tears (v. 4).
- He has a sincere faith and heritage (v. 5).
- He has a gift of God in him through the laying on of Paul's hands (v. 6).

Now ask the group to assess the relationship between Paul and Timothy.

How well did these two know each other?

They knew each other very well and for a long time.

How would you describe their relationship?

They were very close.

Do you think it was a peer-to-peer relationship or a mentor-to-follower relationship?

They had a mentor-to-follower relationship.

4. Cross-Checking

Background Check

One way to discover more about Timothy and his relationship with Paul is to explore other Scripture references to them. Have your students read the following verses from their Bibles with the goal of discovering as much as possible about Timothy and his relationship with Paul. There is space on the journal pages for them to record this info.

Passage	What do you learn about Timothy?	What do you learn about Timothy's relationship with Paul?
Acts 16:1-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-He lived in Lystra.-His mother was a Jew and a believer.-His father was a Greek.-He was spoken well of by the brothers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Paul must have been impressed with him; Paul wanted to take him on a journey.
1 Corinthians 4:17	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-He was faithful in the Lord.-He followed Christ as Paul did.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-He was like a son to Paul.-Paul loved him.
1 Corinthians 16:10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-He carried on the work of the Lord just as Paul did.	
Philippians 2:19-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-He took a genuine interest in the welfare of others.-Paul had no one else like him.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-They served together as if father and son.
1 Thessalonians 3:2-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-He spread the gospel of Christ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-He was a brother and fellow worker of Paul.
Hebrews 13:23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Apparently, he was in prison but released.	

5. Taking It Inward

Mentor and Follower

When most of the students have finished (it's okay if some haven't), discuss the passages, drawing out key observations about Timothy's character. You may want to ask—

What type of home life did Timothy have? What might he have had to overcome?

It appears that his mom was a believer, but his dad wasn't. Mom and the kids must have gone to church while Dad stayed home, possibly praying to Zeus, a Greek god prominent in the city of Lystra.

How would you describe Timothy's character?

-He was spoken well of and respected by his elders even when he was young.

-He was trustworthy and unselfish.

Is Timothy someone you'd like to hang around with or does he sound like too much of an overachiever?

OPTIONAL VIDEO CLIP

Show a scene of Yoda training the young Luke Skywalker in *The Empire Strikes Back*. There are several to choose from; simply preview the movie and pick your favorite. If you need help a scene of Yoda training Luke Skywalker can be found in *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*. (See Materials for counter cues.) Several Web sites also have clips, including YouTube, which has one titled *Luke meets Yoda*.

Ask—

Based on what you've seen or what you know, what are some characteristics of a good mentor-to-follower relationship?

Then ask the following questions, and have students respond by writing a few names on the journal pages.

Who are a few significant people in your life who are mentors to you like Paul (or Yoda)?

What people in your life are like Timothy (or Luke Skywalker)—people to whom you are or could be a mentor?

Ask students to share with the group their answers to the last two questions. They may want to tell why someone is significant in their lives or explain which of the two questions is more difficult to answer.

6. Wrapping It Up

Rev up a Relationship

Ask your group why they think Paul wrote this letter to Timothy. Based on the info they've uncovered so far, they should have a fairly good idea. Ask them—

What level of urgency do you "hear" in Paul's voice?

What circumstances did he mention that could give us a clue?

The answers to these questions will point students to the purpose of the letter—and identifying Paul's purpose will help them understand all of the promises, the commands, and the hope they will discover in this short but powerful book.

After some discussion steer them to these conclusions:

-Paul is encouraging Timothy to stay strong in the faith.

-A lot of people have deserted Paul and the Christian faith; perhaps Paul doesn't want Timothy to bail like the others.

Close the session by asking your students to write one thing they can do in the coming week either to rev up or to begin a mentor-follower relationship with someone they listed. If they need suggestions offer these:

Text the person with whom you want to deepen the relationship.

Buy him or her a cup of coffee.

Send an email or note.

As you close in prayer, remind the group that God doesn't expect us to live the Christian life on our own. He provides the Pauls and the Timothys. It's our job to work on the relationships.