

2 TIMOTHY

MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL



TEACH IT COLLEGE AGE SESSION 10

1. Materials

For this session each student will need—

- the Scripture sheets for 2 Timothy
- the student journal page for Session 10
- his or her Bible, pen, and notebook

You'll also need—

- a whiteboard and markers
- colored pencils (at least three colors per student)
- optional: “would you rather” questions—you may want to create a digital slide presentation of these 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

Ask a volunteer to pray for your group. Since this is the last session in 2 Timothy, pray that it will serve as a launchpad for students to live out everything they've learned from this book of the Bible.

OPEN

Job Opportunity

Have your students work through the “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. You may want to copy them into presentation software and project them on a screen.

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 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?
- 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 someone who couldn't add?
- Have someone work for you who is always late or someone who always leaves early?
- Be a teacher or a preacher?
- Have someone work for you who talks too much or someone 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 Scripture sheets.

2. Mark with separate colors each mention of (1) any actions of God's workmen and (2) any instructions Paul gives Timothy as God's workman.

3. Let's decide on some symbols to use to designate a workman, such as a hard hat, saw, hammer,



or more.

You may want to explain that 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—should be marked.

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.

When they have finished, ask students to list what they have learned about God's workmen in the space provided on the journal page. Challenge them to make their lists as detailed as possible—they can use these lists the rest of their lives. Then have them check their lists as you read the following info.

Descriptions	Actions/Instructions
<p><i>If a person has cleansed himself or herself from dishonorable purposes, THEN that person...</i>(v. 21)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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 (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 students to circle on their journal page three *Descriptions* that they're nowhere near living up to and three *Actions/Instructions* that they haven't obeyed. Then ask for volunteers to share what they circled.

As you lead this part of the discussion, share that often in the church, we try to have it both ways: We want to be used by God to do great things, but we're not willing to give up our quarrels or our godless chatter—or we don't want to flee evil desires or do what it takes to live holy lives.

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 is 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, and peace with others who call on the Lord out of a pure heart (v. 22).
- Be kind to everyone (v. 24).

Choose one 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.

Then are we willing to... (stop quarreling, be more kind to each other, pursue righteousness)?
 Complete the phrase with the action or phrase your group struggles with most.

What opportunities do you have in front of you right now that God might be nudging you toward?

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.

Ask students to share with the group their favorite calling in Scripture. Responses might include: *Noah to build an ark, Abraham to move to a new land, Moses to rescue God’s people, Samson to destroy the Philistines, or many of the prophets, such as Jeremiah.*

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, students will look at three of these situations in solitude. Instruct students—

- 1. Find places where you can get alone with God.**
- 2. Take your Bibles, pens, and journal pages.**
- 3. Read the passages under Cross-Checking and answer the questions in the 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>

Call the group back together, and 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?

-A feeling of inadequacy for a task may be the first sign that God wants us.

-We don't need to worry about coming up with an idea for a plan; God will supply the plan.

Describe a time when you felt led to do something but also felt woefully inadequate to do the task.

Responses could range from personal size, such as talking about your faith with a friend, to industrial size, such as launching a ministry or a program.

What did you do?

6. Wrapping It Up

Career Advancement

Close the session by brainstorming how students 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 start a campus Bible study.

-We could start a lunch-hour Bible study at work or in your office building.

-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 their marked-up Scripture sheets. Ask them to share a specific Wow! moment or express a truth that they never want to forget.
2. Ask them to look over their journal pages 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?