

2 TIMOTHY F R E N E M I E S



TEACH IT HIGH SCHOOL 1 SESSION 7

1. Materials

For this session each student will need—

- the 2 Timothy Scripture sheets
- the student journal page for Session 7
- his or her Bible, pen, and notebook

You'll also need—

- a whiteboard and markers
- colored pencils (at least one color per student)
- movie trailer from the movie *How To Eat Fried Worms*—On the DVD select Main Menu, then Special Features, then Theatrical Trailers. Total time is 2:22. It should also be available online. On a search engine, such as Google, use the key words *How to Eat Fried Worms movie trailer*.

2. Session Intro

GOALS OF SESSION 7

As students experience this session, they will—

- examine some of Paul's relationships and see that not everyone was on his side.
- compare the struggles they may face on their school campuses with the lonely struggles Paul and Timothy sometimes experienced for the sake of Christ.
- be challenged to encourage and strengthen their friends to continue following Christ even when it's difficult.

PRAYER

Spend some time praying for the people in your students' lives who are antagonistic toward their faith.

OPEN

Odd Man Out

Show the trailer from *How to Eat Fried Worms*. (See instructions in the Materials List.) After watching the trailer, ask a few volunteers to share about any of the following life incidents:

- **a time when you suddenly felt like the odd man out in a group of friends.**
- **a time when you felt completely alone.**
- **a time when you were the victim of a bully.**
- **a time when you were the bully.**

After about five minutes, transition into the study by saying something such as—


Following Christ creates a pretty distinct line of demarcation between those who do and those who don't follow Christ. And when people are on opposite sides of the line, an atmosphere of

antagonism can occur. The apostle Paul experienced this extensively throughout his missionary career, and in 2 Timothy, he gives some insight into what this looks like.

3. Digging In

An Enemy List

Tell your students to—

Read 2 Timothy 1:14-17, 2 Timothy 2:15-18, and 2 Timothy 4:9-16 from your Bibles and with colored pencil draw a frowny face  over any names that represent some kind of trouble for Paul.

When most have finished ask your students what they found. Because some of these represent friends who turned away, we'll call them "frenemies." List the names and any info about these people on the whiteboard.

Frenemies

- All in Asia (including Phygelus and Hermogenes): They deserted Paul (1:15).
- Hymenaeus and Philetus: They wandered away from the truth; they destroyed the faith of others; their teaching spread like gangrene (2:17-18).
- Demas: He deserted Paul because he loved this world (4:10).
- Alexander the metalworker: He did much harm to Paul and strongly opposed Paul's message (4:14-15).
- Everyone at Paul's first defense: They all deserted him, but Paul didn't want it held against them (4:16).

4. Cross-Checking

The Scoop on Demas

Demas is an interesting character because of a passing statement Paul made about him in 2 Timothy 4:10. For the next few minutes, have the group focus on Demas to discover his history with Paul and his motivation for deserting. Ask volunteers to read aloud **Colossians 4:14** and **Philemon 1:23-24** from their Bibles.

Give students a minute to think of a scenario that might explain Demas' behavior, based on what Paul wrote about him. There's space for them to jot down their thoughts under The Scoop on Demas on the journal pages. Then discuss the following questions as a group.

What kind of story can we piece together about Demas?

Let students use their imaginations, but encourage them to stick close to the facts in Scripture, which include:

- At one time Demas was in Paul's inner circle of dear friends.
- He made the greetings list in two of Paul's letters.
- He must have built some great relationships with the folks in Philemon's church and in the Colossian church.

But why did he desert the cause of Christ?

He loved this world.

Think for a minute: How could people love this world so much that they'd desert the Christian faith?

- Like the rich young ruler (Luke 18:18-23), they want money and things more than a relationship with God.
- They love favorite sins and don't want to give them up.
- They don't want to take up their crosses and follow Christ. (They want the benefits of being a Christian, but not the obligations.)
- When the going gets tough, they're outta here.

LARGE-GROUP OPTION

Divide your group into smaller groups of eight to 10, and ask each group to construct a scenario that describes what happened to Demas. Encourage creativity and imagination. Ask for groups to share their scenarios.

What does Demas' story have to say to us today?

Even respected Christians who seem very committed can be distracted by the world's stuff and desert their callings.

5. Taking It Inward

Today on Dr. Phil

Have the class play Dr. Phil for a minute. Ask—

What do you think Paul's state of mind might have been, based on the people he named in his letter?

-He had a right to be depressed and discouraged based on the number of friends who'd turned away from him and what he believed.

-He may have been feeling deserted and lonely.

-His greatest fear may have been that Timothy would desert the faith, too. He was definitely trying to encourage Timothy.

Then discuss the following questions.

Is there ever a time when you feel like the only person on the planet who's trying to live for God? When does that typically happen?

Have you had any friends check out of Christianity to try something else (as Demas did)?

Chances are that many of your students are right there with Paul. They've seen friends—perhaps even adults they've looked up to—disappoint them by an inconsistent Christian life. Maybe they've seen them bail out completely. Ask—

What strength can you take from Paul's letter to Timothy?

Have the students look up 2 Timothy 4:16-18 if they need some extra encouragement.

6. Digging Deeper

A To-Do List for the Frenemies

Share that the Bible gives tons of insight on how to deal with those who are antagonistic toward us or the gospel. Friction can come from various directions—from those who are declared enemies of the faith, such as members of atheist or humanist organizations. Or antagonism might be more subtle and come from those who've been disillusioned by the church or put off by Christians in some way.

This next exercise sheds light on several unfriendly situations common to believers. Divide your group into four subgroups, and divvy up the passages below so that students in each group are looking up only one passage. Ask them to do both the Digging Deeper and the Taking It Inward exercises on the journal pages. The Bible references and possible observations are noted as follows:

Passage	The Situation	My Response
Matthew 5:44-48	-enemies -those who persecute me	-pray for them -love them -greet them
Galatians 6:1	a fellow believer caught in a sin	-restore him or her gently -watch out—don't get sucked into sin as well

2 Thessalonians 3:13-15	believers who aren't obedient	-don't hang out with them (in order to make them feel ashamed of their behavior) -don't treat them like enemies -warn them as fellow believers
James 5:19-20	believers who wander from the truth	do what you can to bring them back

7. Taking It Inward

Putting a Face with the Name

When most have finished call for the attention of your entire group. Ask for volunteers to give a brief account of the passage they read. Then ask students to share with the group their responses to these questions from Taking It Inward.

Are there any situations in your life that sound a lot like the situations in these passages? If so, what?

Responses might include: "enemies," such as classmates or teachers who are antagonistic toward the faith, parents or siblings who may not be supportive of their family member's faith, a Christian friend who has begun to experiment with the party scene at the expense of his or her relationship with Christ.

When it comes to these relationships, what are some specific ways you could live out the Scriptures we've just looked at?

Encourage students to get specific in their responses. Make "pray for my enemies" more like "write the person's name on a Post-it and put it on my mirror so that I will remember to pray for that person."

How could our student ministry help you handle these situations?

This can be a real introspective question for your ministry. Responses might include establishing a strategy for reaching out to students who've quit being active in their faith or creating accountability to encourage students to keep praying for their enemies.

8. Wrapping It Up

Onesiphor-ize Your Student Ministry

Before closing with prayer, have your group look again at 2 Timothy 1:15-16, focusing on Onesiphorus (pronounced *Oh-ness-IF-ar-us*). Then brainstorm this question:

In the middle of mass desertion, Paul singled out one guy—all because he refreshed Paul and wasn't ashamed of Paul's imprisonment. How can our student ministry be more like Onesiphorus to you—a place where you can get recharged and encouraged whenever you interact with people and live in situations that are antagonistic to the gospel?

Here are a few ideas:

- Create and maintain a safe place where every student is loved and accepted.*
- Develop a way to encourage Christians around the world who are persecuted for their faith.*
- Plan an activity, such as an Onesiphorus party, that will help students remember what Onesiphorus did for Paul. (Key in on the word refreshment that Paul used.)*

Close by praying that your student ministry can be a true refreshment stand for students as they seek to live the gospel in a non-gospel world.