



## TEACH IT MIDDLE SCHOOL SESSION 1

### ONE WEEK OUT

You may want to send reminder notes to your gang, letting 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 you think it's relevant to teens 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 prayer 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—

- an envelope containing a brief, encouraging note from you (see Open)
- the 2 Timothy Scripture sheets stuffed into an addressed envelope (see Digging In)
- the student journal page for Session 1
- a notebook in which to keep Scripture sheets and journal pages (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)
- action figures or pictures of Dynamic Duos (if using pictures, cut the duos apart so students can match the partners)
- optional: giant Post-it pad

### 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 students 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 remind your students we can also expect the Enemy to try to

knock us off course. Pray with the group that 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*

Prepare envelopes addressed to each of your students—and have some blank ones you can address on the spot for guests. Insert into each envelope a printed email, typed letter, or handwritten note (to save time you can use the same message of encouragement for each student). Mix it up so there's a good assortment of each format.

Invite students to open their envelopes and read their notes. Then ask—

**Do you ever get *real* mail?**

**Is real mail better than email? Why or why not?**

**Would you rather text or email a friend?**

**What's the first thing you look at when you get a text message, email, or letter?**

Elicit the answer: *"Who it's from."*

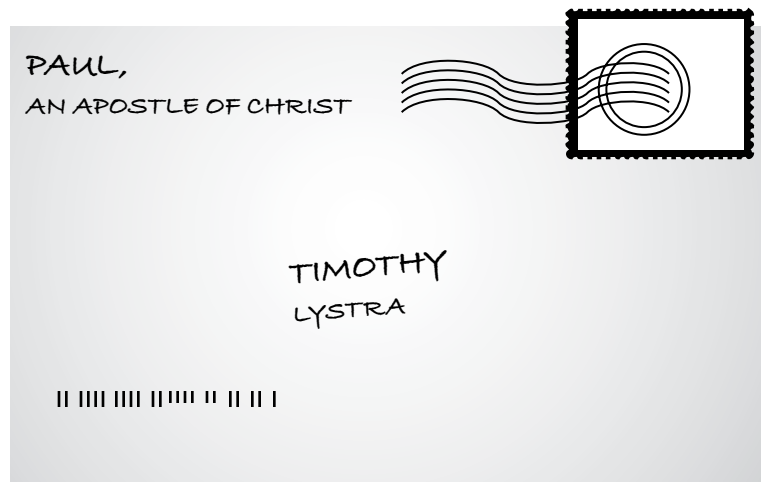
**Why?**

*A letter has no meaning unless you know who it came from.*

## 3. Digging In

*Writer Recon*

Hand out envelopes containing copies of the 2 Timothy Scripture sheets. Before the session address the envelopes as shown:



Have the students open these envelopes and pull out the letter to Timothy. Tell your students—

- 1. Look at the first few verses and circle who wrote the letter.**
- 2. Underline who the letter is written to.**

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

But to understand any letter, we need to know why it was written and what was going on at the time. The goal today is to find out as much as possible about the guy who wrote the letter and the guy who received it.

Because this is the first session in the series, they'll be looking at today's Scripture as a group. In the weeks to come, students will get increasing time alone with the Word.

Have your students read 2 Timothy 1:1-18 in unison from their Scripture sheets. Tell them—

**1. As you read use colored pencil to mark a P over every mention of Paul, the writer of the letter. I'll be prompting you to mark references to Paul, so you shouldn't be surprised by the interruptions.**

**2. Don't forget that pronouns, such as I, me, and my, count.**

(By the way, pronouns pop up a lot in Scripture, and students will be marking them often. If they need some help grasping this part of speech, create a tangible teaching aid you can pull out anytime you're dealing with pronouns. You could make models of the words out of clay or foam-core board or use refrigerator magnet letters to represent them.)

After the group has read and marked the verses, work together to create a profile of Paul. Prompt the students with the questions below, and as they tell you the facts based on what they marked in Scripture, record the info in two columns on the whiteboard. Your board will look something like this (but it's okay if it's less detailed):

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).

Now ask the students to look at the board. So far they don't know much about Paul. But have them write three things they want to remember about Paul in the space provided on their journal pages. Ask them—

**Is Paul someone you'd want to be like?**

**Why or why not?**

*Recipient Recon*

Next have the group use the Scripture sheets to search 2 Timothy 1:1-6 for facts about the letter's recipient. Tell your students—

**1. Use another color to mark facts about the letter's recipient with a T.**

**2. Fill in the Recipient Factoids in the space provided on your journal pages.**

Possible observations are noted below for the leader's reference.

**RECIPIENT FACTOIDS**

**Name:** *Timothy (v. 2)*

**Mom's name:** *Eunice (v. 5)*

**Grandmother's name:** *Lois (v. 5)*

**What was he like?** *Apparently, he was sensitive (v. 4).*

**What kind of faith did he have?** *sincere (v. 5)*

Now work as a group to assess the relationship between Paul and Timothy. Ask—

**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 (friend-to-friend) relationship or a mentor-to-follower relationship? (You may need to define "mentor-to-follower" using terms such as advisor- or teacher-to-student.)**

*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 check out other places where they're mentioned in the Bible. Have your students read the following verses from their Bibles, looking for the Timothy Info noted on the journal pages and below. Feel free to make this a contest between groups or individuals to see who finds the most detail.

**Acts 16:1-4**

**Philippians 2:19-22**

While the students are reading, write the following headers and questions on the board or on a giant Post-it note. Then work as a group to fill in the blanks—or have volunteers come up and fill them in. Have the students write the info in the space provided on the journal pages.

**TIMOTHY INFO**

**Hometown:** *Lystra*

**Mom's nationality:** *Jewish*   **A believer?** *yes*

**Dad's nationality:** *Greek*   **A believer?** *apparently not*

**How did people speak of him?** *well*

**In 2 Timothy Paul calls Tim "my dear son." Was Tim Paul's biological son?** *No, Tim's father was Greek. Tim was like a son to Paul (see Philippians 2:22).*

Then ask—

**What kind of home life did Timothy have?**

*It seems 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.*

## What traits of Timothy would you like to imitate?

Some possible responses:

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

## 5. Taking It Inward

*Mentor and Follower*

Toss out some action figures or pictures of mentor/follower Dynamic Duos. (You can do a Web search for a few images to print or project on a screen.) Present the members of these duos separately, and ask students to match them up with the right partner. After all of the duos have been matched, ask students to share their favorites and tell why. Here are some examples:

- Professor Bunsen Honeydew and Beaker (*The Muppets*)
- Doc Hudson and Lightning McQueen (*Cars*)
- Batman and Robin (*Batman*)
- Pinky and The Brain (*Pinky and The Brain*)
- Shaggy and Scooby (*Scooby-Doo*)
- Lilo and Stitch (*Lilo and Stitch*)
- Sonic and Tails (*Sonic the Hedgehog*)
- Nacho Libre and Esqueleto (*Nacho Libre*)
- Obi Wan Kenobi and Luke Skywalker (*Star Wars*)
- Mermaid Man and Barnacle Boy (*SpongeBob SquarePants*)
- SpongeBob and Patrick (*SpongeBob SquarePants*)
- Mario and Luigi (*Mario Bros.*)

Ask—

### Which of these duos most resembles the Paul-and-Timothy duo?

*Draw out the mentor/follower aspect of the relationship, as seen in duos, such as Batman and Robin or Obi Wan Kenobi and Luke Skywalker.*

Ask students to think about people who are important to them. Ask—

**Are there any Pauls in your lives—people you respect and can look to for spiritual guidance and teaching? Write their names in the space on your journal pages.**

**Are there any Tims in your life—people you can help along in their spiritual walks? Jot down their names, too.**

## 6. Wrapping It Up

*Rev up a Relationship*

Ask your group—

**Why do you think Paul wrote this letter?**

**What things did he mention that could give us a clue?**

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

After some discussion steer the group to these conclusions:

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

*-A lot of people have deserted Paul and stopped following Jesus; perhaps Paul doesn't want Timothy to bail out or quit like the others.*

Wrap up the session by asking your students to write on their journal pages specific, doable goals regarding a Paul or Timothy in their lives:

**I will text \_\_\_\_\_ this week.**

**I'll share \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ this week.**

**I'll send an ecard to \_\_\_\_\_ this week.**

**I will do \_\_\_\_\_ for my youth leader this week.**

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.