



## 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 for *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*

Begin by showing the trailer for the movie *How to Eat Fried Worms*. (See instructions in the Materials List.)

After viewing the trailer, ask your students to share about—

- **a time when you suddenly felt left 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 distinct line between those who do follow him and those who don't. And when people are on opposite sides of the line, an atmosphere of antagonism can occur. The**

apostle Paul experienced this a lot 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 draw with colored pencil a frowny face  over any names that represent some kind of trouble for Paul.**

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

#### 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 page. 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 their 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.

#### **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. 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. 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. Onesiphorus became somewhat of an oasis for Paul as Paul ministered in a world that was trying to destroy him and tear down his faith. 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 not friendly to the gospel?**

*Here are a few ideas:*

*-Create or maintain a safe place where every student is loved and accepted, in contrast to the unsafe place of the world they live in.*

*-Develop a way to encourage Christians around the world who are persecuted for their faith and to strengthen them to withstand hardships not too different than Paul's in 2 Timothy.*

*-Plan an activity that will help students remember what Onesiphorus did for Paul. Consider an Onesiphorus party. (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.