



## TEACH IT TALK SESSION 10

This talk guide is just that: a guide. It's not intended to be a manuscript to read aloud. It's here to give you ideas, structure, and stories to blend with your personal study (Prep It) as you prepare your talk.

The content complements the other Teach It guides and allows you to give a talk on the same topic students are studying in other settings, such as small groups, without too much overlap.

### 1. Materials (Optional)

- A video clip on how to start a fire with a flint spark—search a video sharing Web site, such as YouTube, with key words *start fire flint*.
- Clear plastic bag

### 2. Optional Openings

#### VISUAL ILLUSTRATION

Ask whether anyone has ever started a fire using something other than a match or a lighter. (You're going for stories about students lighting fires using some natural method, such as rubbing sticks or using a flint spark.) After a story or two, show the video clip on how to start a fire with a flint spark.

#### QUOTATIONS

Share one or two of the following quotations about excelling in the area in which you're gifted.

**Resolve that whatever you do, you will bring the whole man to it; that you will fling the whole weight of your being into it.**

—Orison Swett Marden (1850-1924, American writer, founder of *Success* magazine)

**Deep within man dwell those slumbering powers; powers that would astonish him, that he never dreamed of possessing; forces that would revolutionize his life if aroused and put into action.**

—Orison Swett Marden (1850-1924, American writer, founder of *Success* magazine)

**Too many people are ready to carry the stool when the piano needs to be moved.**

—Anonymous

### 3. Digging In

#### PERSONAL STORY

Tell a story about someone who excelled at a task because of his or her obvious talent or giftedness. Here's an example:

**I have a friend who's a graphic artist. He can't really draw cartoons any better than me, and he's not that great with paint or clay, but the things he can do on a computer are amazing. He'll take something that I'm working on and turn it into a real piece of art. I've seen him take a red frame**

and turn it into a slightly darker shade of red—and take two hours doing it. I have no idea how he has the patience to sit at that computer and change such small things. But he’s operating out of his passion, which gives him the patience and desire to want to do it right. The thing is, once he’s done, it really looks great. Even captivating. And all he did was change a few things on my screen. Yet it really does look ten times better. He’s an artist. He’s gifted.

Continue—

When we give our lives to Christ, we activate something that was planted in us when we were born but lay dormant until we said yes to Christ. God gives gifts to his followers for them to use to help the body of Christ, and ultimately, the world. It might be teaching, it might be helping, it might be leading, it might be encouraging. There are many gifts mentioned in Scripture. What these gifts help us do is take our work for God to a supernatural level. We’re all capable of doing things for God in our own power. But when we activate what God has given us, our spiritual gifts, we take things to a whole new level. It’s one thing to have a beautiful singing voice and to be able to sing a song well. People will go *ooh* and *ah* and may even cry. But it’s another thing to let God use that beautiful voice to encourage people in their relationships with him. That can actually bring transformation in someone’s life.

Do you remember a time growing up when your parent gave you a chore to do—maybe clean your room? And you may have done it out of duty because you wanted to be a good kid and respect your parent and obey what you were told to do. So you’d dutifully clean, but it would be more of a shuffling of piles—kicking stuff under your bed, hiding things in your closet, moving things around to give an appearance of clean. But what would happen when your parent gave you a little incentive—if you cleaned it *thoroughly* you could invite someone over or go do something fun? That was a whole different ballgame. Since you wanted to make sure you passed inspection, you’d ramp things up and actually clean, rather than give an appearance of clean.

Continue with—

In the spirit of passing the leadership baton to Timothy, Paul encouraged Timothy to do more than just go through the motions of working for God. Listen to these words from Paul to Timothy (and don’t forget that these words are for us, too):

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. (2 Timothy 1:6)

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)

#### 4. Taking It Inward

Continue—

What does it mean to fan the flame of the gift of God? And what does it look like to present oneself as approved, a workman who doesn’t need to be ashamed?

#### OPTIONAL MIX-INS

You may want to point out a few expositional points about 2 Timothy:

*-It’s pretty clear to see that Paul’s letter to Timothy was a “passing the baton” kind of letter.*

*-Timothy had worked with Paul and even cowrote Colossians with him (see Colossians 1:1).*

*-In describing God’s workman in 2 Timothy 2:15, Paul used the phrase “as one approved.” The Greek word for approved connoted a sense of being tested and found to be genuine or trustworthy. It was a word also used to describe genuine coinage, as opposed to counterfeit.*

## **FANNING THE FLAME**

If you've ever been around a campfire or a fire in a fireplace that's about to go out, you know what to do to get the fire going. You blow on it, or you fan it with a magazine or a paper plate. And soon the glowing red coals become a fire. Paul says this is how we become a gifted workman for God. We fan the flame of the gift or gifts God has given us.

How do we fan? What does this look like? Scripture talks in several places about spiritual gifts. You may want to write these references down:

Romans 12:3-10  
Ephesians 4:11-13  
1 Corinthians 12:1-12

When we say yes to Christ, it's like he lights the spark that fires up the gift. Jesus gives gifts to his followers for them to use to help the body of Christ become a vessel for redemption in the fallen world. And if you belong to Jesus, you have at least one of those gifts. Every believer has at least one spiritual gift.

Read these passages in Romans, Ephesians and 1 Corinthians, and let yourself get familiar with these gifts. You may want to make a list of all the gifts you see. Choose two or three that interest you, and start looking for places where you can use those gifts. As you use those gifts, be honest with yourself as to whether you find fulfillment in the tasks. Be even more honest with yourself as to whether you have any impact. Listen to the friends and mentors around you, and find out if they see impact when you test drive your spiritual gifts. Once you've identified one or two of your gifts, keep the flame burning by putting them to use whenever you have an opportunity. That's how you fan the flame God put inside you. The more that spark flames up, the more we become the type of workman God can use.

## **BEING AN APPROVED WORKMAN, NOT ASHAMED**

Paul gives a pretty specific picture of an approved workman a few verses later, with some very specific instructions.

### **Verse 16: Avoid Godless Chatter**

This one is self-explanatory. If the words you say aren't uplifting, do they need to be said? You've heard about how hard it is to put toothpaste back in the tube. Saying the wrong thing at any time is just like squeezing out the toothpaste. No amount of sorry can cover things. So the more you stay silent and keep words to yourself, the less frequently you'll have to worry about putting toothpaste back in the tube. The more you indulge in godless chatter, the less and less you'll be like God.

### **Verse 22: Flee the Evil Desires of Youth**

It doesn't take much imagination to know what the evil desires of youth might be. Think hormones. And the key word in this instruction? Flee. Not slowly back away. But flee. Picture how fast you tried to run as a kid when you were playing tag and didn't want to be "it." It's that kind of flee.

### **Verse 23: Don't Have Anything to Do with Foolish and Stupid Arguments**

Do you have any idea how much time we Christians waste in foolish and stupid arguments? And did you ever think you'd see the word stupid in the Bible? God is pretty adamant about our avoiding these kinds of arguments. Make a statement when you see yourself being pulled into stupid arguments—walk away.



## Verse 24: Don't Quarrel, but Be Kind to Everyone

This is a toughie. We like to strongly state our deeply held positions and opinions. If we're working with someone on a project, even a ministry project, and that someone has a different opinion about how to do something, our first inclination is to quarrel about it. But God has a word for that: don't. Just don't. If you want to be a workman who need not be ashamed, be kind to your coworker. As workmen for God, we need to keep ourselves in a position in which we can teach our coworkers (verse 24). That means we need to keep ourselves in a position for our coworkers to respect and listen to us.

### 5. Insight

Continue—

As a leader in your student ministry, you may want to make a commitment to your fellow students to be this kind of workman. Ask them to hold you accountable to the instructions you just communicated to them. You may want to ask for forgiveness for recent times when you haven't been spot-on in carrying out these instructions.

### 6. Wrapping It Up

Finish with—

I wonder what God could do with a group of students who are committed to fanning the flame of the gifts God has given them and who are committed to presenting themselves to God as workmen approved, who don't need to be ashamed.

It's easy to come up with reasons why we think we might be on the "workman disapproved" list. Maybe we think we're not good enough, or we've made mistakes that disqualify us to be used by God, or we just don't think we can be used for anything big. Well, if you think anything like that, you're in good company. Half the people God used in Scripture tried to show God why they should be on the workman disapproved list. But every time God came to someone for a task, he brought a promise of his presence with the request.

Give students an opportunity to make a presentation to God (to "present themselves"). Maybe you'd like to ask for students to stand as a show of their commitment. Or ask them to find something on their person or around the building they could present to God by laying it in a basket or on an altar. Put these things in a clear plastic bag, and keep them in a visible location for students to see during the next few weeks.

Close with—

When our lives are over, each of us will have an encounter with Jesus. Picture Jesus standing there and knowing exactly which gifts he put inside you—and also knowing exactly what you did with those gifts. Picture Jesus saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You've been faithful with a few things. How about I put you in charge of many things? Now come on in and share your master's happiness!" (Matthew 25:21, paraphrased)