

Teaching Plan
EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Date: July 14, 2019
Lesson Title: "Confidence"
Lesson Passage: 2 Timothy 1:3-14

ABOUT THIS LESSON

As Paul languished in a Roman prison, shortly before his execution, he knew he would now have to leave the missionary enterprise in the hands of young pastors like Timothy. This second letter to Timothy was written to instruct and encourage him, as the older apostle prepared to end his career of service as a witness to the gospel of Christ.

TEACHING/LEARNING GOALS

(1) Explain why 2 Timothy is sometimes called Paul's "last will and testament." (2) Describe Paul's personal relationship with Timothy.

BEGINNING THE LESSON

Relate this anecdote: After the death of his mother, David, her 40-year-old son, said, "Mom was the last remaining member of her generation. All her sisters are gone." He then paused and said: "I guess that puts me on the front row." Then comment: Timothy was in a position like that, since Paul was in prison and the time of his death was near. The destiny of the Christian mission would now depend upon Timothy and his generation. In this lesson, Paul tries to help his young protegee in ministry prepare for that responsibility.

TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Comment on the personal implications of Paul's comment in 2 Tim. 1:3-4: In his dungeon cell, Paul suffered terrible isolation. And his sense of impending death probably intensified his need to see his "beloved son" in the faith (1:2). The tears mentioned in verse 4 probably were shed when they last parted. NOTE: It is possible that Timothy participated in the tearful farewell at Miletus, describe in Acts 20:36-38.

2. Emphasize the significance of the reference to Timothy's early instruction in the faith in 2 Tim. 1:5: (1) We are told in Acts 16:1 that Timothy's mother was a Christian believer from a Jewish background; and, very likely, her mother, Lois, was also a converted Jewess. Since Timothy's mother, Eunice, had married a Greek (Acts 16:1), she apparently was not a strict orthodox Jewess, and it is possible that she was already a Christian when Timothy was born. (2) Timothy had been nurtured in the faith from his earliest years and, consequently, had become a believer himself ("I am reminded of your sincere faith," v. 5). (3) When Paul first met him in Lystra, Timothy enjoyed

an exemplary reputation among members of the Christian community (Acts 16:2). APPLICATION: Though we value the church organizations devoted to the teaching of children, the Christian home is the primary school of faith. (Church historians tell us that there was no provision for teaching children in the gathered church until about A.D. 125. They were instructed in the faith, as Timothy was, in the home.) The responsibility of Christian parents goes beyond dropping their children off at church on Sunday morning.

3. Explain "rekindle the gift of God that is within you" (v. 6):

(1) When God called Timothy into the Christian ministry, he gave him the spiritual gift (the *charisma*) needed to carry out this task. (2) Note the wording, "the gift that God gave you when I laid my hands on you" (TEV). It was God who conferred the gift, not Paul. (The laying on of hands, an ordination ritual, is simply a way of acknowledging God's gift.) (3) Paul urges Timothy to rekindle ("stir up," KJV) that gift. The verb translated "stir up" described the act of blowing on hot coals to make them burst into flame. APPLICATION: God's gifts can fall into disuse through neglect; they need to be continually renewed. (As the saying goes, "Use it or lose it.")

4. Verse 7 mentions three God-given attributes that would help Timothy overcome any timidity he might feel as he faced formidable opposition: (1) a spirit of power (staying power, a bold stability based on unshakable faith in God.), (2) love, the antithesis of fear ("There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear," 1 Jn. 4:18). This is true because love takes one's mind off himself and refocuses on others.) (3) "self-control" ("sound mind" in the KJV) translates a word that means "sober good sense," control of certain pleasures and appetites. (5) God has conferred these gifts upon Timothy to enable him to bear witness to Christ with the same boldness that Paul has shown, as he has suffered for the Lord's sake (v. 8).

5. Summarize verses 9-10: God saved us and has called us to be His own people, not because of anything we have done, but because of His own purpose and the love He had for us before the creation of the world. And now that Christ Jesus our Savior has come into the world, we have seen God's great love firsthand; for He has ended the reign of death and has made it possible for us to have eternal life.

6. Refer to Paul's expression of gratitude for Onesiphorus, who had traveled from Ephesus to Rome, repeatedly visited Paul in prison, ministering to his needs and cheering him up (2 Tim. 1:16-18).

CLOSING THE LESSON

Paraphrase 2 Tim. 1:14: "Protect and preserve the true teachings of the Christian faith that God has entrusted to you." *Note that one way to preserve the truth of the gospel is to commit it to memory, and suggest that the words from 2 Tim. 1:12, found in the hymn "I Know Whom I Have Believed," are well-worth memorizing.*