

# BIBLE DIGGING



## Key Verse

**2 Timothy 3: 15**  
**'Since childhood, you have known the holy Scriptures that are able to make you wise enough to have faith in Christ Jesus and be saved.'**

Through these studies, we'll follow the book of 2 Timothy. Paul is in prison, and nearing the end of his life. Many of his friends have deserted him, yet still he stays true to the gospel. He writes this last letter to Timothy, whom he regarded with great fondness. The passages explored here encourage us to keep growing in our love and learning about Jesus, to stick to the truth and not be ashamed of our beliefs. They encourage us to share the good news about God with others. These studies are of varying time length depending on how in-depth you wish to go, and can be used as straightforward question and answer sessions, to stimulate group discussion and sharing. Try to keep the group's answers personal and genuine, applying them to their own lives. A '★' indicates a practical activity to illustrate the points drawn out from the studies.

We've used the Contemporary English Version for these studies.

## Study 1

### 2 Timothy 1: 7-14

**Aim:** To discover that God has filled us with 'wonderful treasures'. He's done the same for the children attending the PEPEs. The gospel is a light to shine into the darkness, bringing hope.

 **5-15**  
minutes

Paul is chained up in prison – but he urges Timothy not to be ashamed of the gospel.

1. Verse 10b: How does Paul describe the good news about Jesus?  
★ Ask the group to think about what a shining light looks like; if you're inside, it might be a useful illustration to turn the lights on or off, to show the difference they make – or if you're in a bright room, shine a torch into a dark corner, or cupboard. If you're outside, shine a torch into a deep, dark bag!
2. What 'wonderful treasure' is within you?  
★ Spend a few minutes sharing what you think each other's gifts are. You will encourage this by going round the group first yourself, so be ready with a thought for each child.
3. Children in Brazil, Angola and Mozambique are also filled with 'wonderful treasure' from God; how might the pre-schools help them to discover their own talents and gifts?  
★ Each turn to the person next to you and say to them 'God thinks you're wonderful!'

## Study 2

### 2 Timothy 2: 1-13

**Aim:** To know that Jesus loves us completely, and we should keep our minds fixed on him. He loves the children at the PEPEs just the same, too.

 **10-15**  
minutes

1. Can Timothy become strong by himself (verse 1)? What will make him strong?
2. Paul uses three illustrations: a soldier, an athlete and a farmer.  
Invite the children to list the different ways in which soldiers obey commands, athletes obey rules, and farmers look after crops or animals to ensure they are successful. How can followers of Jesus live lives to please God?
3. Verse 8: what should we focus on?  
★ Try standing on one leg, with one or two eyes closed. It's very hard to do, and you'll probably wobble like crazy! Now try it again, but this time, all look forward and focus on the same point at eye level (hold up one finger for them to focus on); it's much easier when you're all focusing on the same thing, isn't it?
4. Sometimes it's hard when our friends move away or we do something that makes them not like us anymore. But the Bible tells us that Jesus will never leave us (verse 13). Even if we turn our backs on him. What would it be like to have a friend who always wants to be our friend?

## Study 3

### 2 Timothy 2: 20-24

15-30  
minutes

**Aim:** To discover that God wants us – and the children in the PEPEs – to live holy lives.

1. Verse 20: Think about the dishes illustration; do you have 'best china' or 'best glasses' at home?
- ★ Care labels: Show the children a care label from some clothing. Ask each child to think of their most special toy. Give them each a pen and paper, and get them to write out a list of 'care instructions' for how they treat these special things. These may include 'Don't drop it!', 'Don't put it in the bath!', 'Don't let the dog get hold of it!', 'Put it safe in its box every night' etc.
2. Verse 24: The teachers at the PEPEs are trained to be kind and patient to the children there; why do you think it is important to be kind and patient as a teacher? Are your teachers like this?
- ★ Drama time: In pairs, act out a classroom scenario. One child takes the role of teacher, one the role of pupil. Make up two versions of your scene; one where the teacher is kind and patient, and one where they are most definitely not. How does their attitude affect the pupil? Present the dramas to the group. Each scenario should be no more than two minutes in length.



## Study 4

### 2 Timothy 3: 10-14

15-30  
minutes

**Aim:** To discover that following Jesus isn't always easy, for us here or for the children living in poverty across the world. But we can all trust Jesus, at all times.

1. Ask your group to consider some of the following (or similar) questions: Have they ever found something they enjoy difficult to do? (Draw on specific activities they may find difficult such as schoolwork, football, playing an instrument) Why do they carry on practising/playing even if it isn't always easy?
2. Verse 12: If we live as Christians, should we expect an easy life?
  - ★ Lay a set of obstacles across the floor – use coats, books, cushions, cups, bags, chairs, tables etc – whatever you have to hand. Stand at the end of the obstacles, with a bag containing sweet treats – enough for one for each of the children. Each child must pick their way through the obstacle course to get to you. Specify whether they must go around, under or over each obstacle. When they reach you, reward them with their treat. When each child has completed the course and received their treat, ask the following question: The obstacle course was trickier than walking in a straight line to reach you; was it worth it? Link this point back to what Paul says in verse 12; Christianity isn't always an easy option, but the prize is certainly worth the trouble – and it's much, much better than the sweet treat you had for them!!
3. Is it different for the children in the PEPEs?

Invite your group to discuss whether following Jesus can sometimes be difficult for the children in PEPEs too. Help them think about some of the obstacles they've heard about in the letters from Mr Eyesenears. The aim is for them to see that for the children in PEPEs following Jesus can be even harder because of the many difficulties they face. Relate the discussion to the overall aim possibly by telling them that even though we find some things difficult in life, they're still worth doing. Following Jesus isn't always easy, for us or for the children in PEPE. But we can trust Jesus, at all times.

## Study 5

### 2 Timothy 3: 15-17

10-15  
minutes

**Aim:** To discover that reading the Bible and becoming familiar with it really helps us in the whole of our lives, and gives us a better perspective from which to help others in our world.

1. Chat it through: Tell the children about your favourite childhood books – why you enjoyed them and what you learnt from them. You may want to bring some of the books to the session. Ask the children what their favourite books are and if the books helped teach them something. The aim of the discussion is to show that what we read has an effect on our lives.
  2. Share a favourite scripture verse which has either inspired, impacted or influenced your life. The purpose is to show that what we read in the Bible helps us in our lives.
  3. What will reading the Bible train Christians to do? (verse 17)
- ★ Hand out kernels of unpopped popcorn. Ask the children to try to make them pop. When they're convinced they can't pop, hand out ready-popped popcorn for them to eat. Explain that the Bible can be compared to the popcorn. Popcorn can't be popped by just looking at it or touching it. It needs to be heated up in a pot of hot oil or in a popcorn machine. Likewise, just looking at the Bible won't help us. We need to read the Bible so that we can see what it says and be filled with it – just like the popped popcorn! Verse 15-16: We'll discover many treasures in the Bible which will help us know what is right and wrong, how to love God and how to love other people.
4. The above activity can be turned into a fundraiser. Package bags of popcorn with encouraging verses from 2 Timothy on the bags. Sell the bags to friends and family. Cut out and decorate cards in the shape of popcorn. They can either accompany the bags of popcorn or be sold separately. See the recipe on page 20.

## Study 6

### 2 Timothy 4: 1-5

10-20  
minutes

**Aim:** To encourage the group that, although God's message may not always be popular, it is still right, and it's important that we don't stop sharing it.

1. Chat it through: Ask the children questions along the following lines: what 'popular' means; who of them likes to be popular; is it always right to be popular; what would happen if their friends were doing something that they knew was wrong; would they follow and do the same as their friends?
- ★ Hand out a jelly baby/dried fruit to each of the children. Tell them to imagine that they have found out a big secret. They've discovered that jelly babies/dried fruit is a secret formula which makes all sad people happy, and poorly people better. Ask whether they would want to tell everyone about it. Ask them to imagine people who don't want them to tell everyone about their secret formula. Invite them to discuss whether they would still tell everyone or if they would keep the secret to themselves. The aim of this activity is to show that we often have to tell people what is right even if others tell us not to. This includes telling others about God's good message even if it is unpopular. Let them eat their jelly baby/dried fruit.
2. Invite the group to think of all the different ways we can shine God's love through what we do and what we say.
  3. A prayer activity: Invite the children to ask God to help them have confidence in sharing his love with others, like the churches who run PEPs. This can be done by asking them to pray out one-sentence prayers. You could encourage children to tell each other what Jesus has done for them.

