

Being a Christian

STEP 1 Life Need (5–10 minutes)

- Examine a poster that illustrates the different attitudes of players on a baseball team.
- ☐ “Who’s on First?” Teaching Aid, index cards numbered 1–10

STEP 2 Bible Learning (15–20 minutes)

- Bible Study:** Read about Timothy’s growth as a Christian.
 - ☐ *Bible Adventures* pp. 2–3, Bibles
- Bible Review:** Discover what made Timothy a Bible hero.
 - ☐ “Heroes of the Bible—Timothy” Teaching Aid
 - ☐ “Whiz Word,” Teaching Aid—assembled before class, “Game Instructions” Teaching Aid—photo-copy before class, paper fastener, whiteboard and marker or paper and pencil, dictionary

STEP 3 Bible Application (5–10 minutes)

- Identify habits that lead to spiritual growth.
 - ☐ *Bible Adventures* p. 1, Bibles, pencils

STEP 4 Life Response (about 5 minutes)

- Memory Work:** Develop realistic plans for growing strong spiritually.
 - ☐ *Bible Adventures* p. 4, pencils
- Optional Activity:** Prayer journal assignment

Memory Verse

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

—2 Peter 3:18

Bible Basis:

Timothy becomes a Christian and helps Paul in missionary work (Acts 16:1-3; 17:13-15; 1 and 2 Tim.).

Bible Truth:

To grow strong, a Christian needs to receive God’s Word and practice God’s ways.

Lesson Aim:

That your students will choose to develop habits that will help them grow spiritually.

Understanding the Bible

This week we will see how Timothy grows in his faith as he helps Paul in missionary work.

Timothy was the product of a mixed marriage. His mother was a Jewess named Eunice. His father’s name is unknown, but he was a Greek, or Gentile (Acts 16:1, 3). Since there is no further reference or allusion to Timothy’s father in Acts or the Epistles, some think that he may have died when Timothy was quite young. Timothy was nurtured and trained by his mother and his grandmother Lois (2 Tim. 1:5).

Timothy was probably living in Lystra when Paul made his first visit to that city (Acts 14:6). It also appears that Timothy was converted during that same visit (Acts 16:1). Timothy had developed a strong Christian faith by the time Paul came to Lystra on his second missionary journey. He was ready to be dedicated to missionary work as Paul’s helper. Timothy was one of Paul’s most constant companions from that time on (Acts 17:14; 19:22; 20:3-6; Rom. 16:21). Finally, 1 Timothy 1:3 shows us that Paul convinced him to work with the church at Ephesus.

Paul’s letters to Timothy reveal Paul’s affection for the younger man, as well as his concern for Timothy’s ministry. Timothy’s fine character was offset by his timidity. Paul

—continued on next page

☐ indicates items you will need to prepare before class

Understanding the Bible —cont'd

repeatedly counseled Timothy to be bold and confident in dealing with the difficulties of his work. Paul warned Timothy about things he must watch for in the church: false teachers who ignored good conscience as well as faith; lying and hypocrisy; disobedience; and those who professed to be believers but denied it by their acts. All this shows that Timothy was called to work in the church at a time when it was difficult.

Besides strengthening his young friend for dealing with such troubles, Paul also taught Timothy that worship and the business of the church should be conducted in an orderly fashion. With his instructions complete, Paul knew that Timothy would faithfully carry out the ministry God gave him.

TIPS

Classroom

What can you do in class to encourage positive habits?

- Remember that not all habits are bad. You can encourage good habits by complimenting students who practice them.
- It's a good idea to set aside time to discuss what will and will not be allowed in the class. Rules that govern habits need to be simple and clear. For example: think before you speak, joke about things that don't hurt people, respect others, and so on.
- Begin class with a prayer that your time together will build positive habits in each person. Don't make prayer a time to remind students of the rules, but to invite God's work in the class.
- Habits that are developed in the classroom will carry over into the week. Encourage your students to pray at the start of each day for God's help in following good habits.

Understanding Your Students

By this time in their lives, preteens have developed many habits. Some of these habits are good and some aren't. As with adults, it's not easy to change habits and develop new ones. Fortunately, with God's help, your

students can set the pattern for habits that will benefit them in their everyday lives.



PRESESSION ACTIVITIES

Choose from these activities to do as students arrive.

■ During this lesson your students will be discussing spiritual training. Bring several kinds of sports equipment to class, and set them out on a table. Students can then demonstrate the proper use of each piece. Have an adult supervise this activity for safety.

☐ sports equipment

■ Provide paper and pencil and ask students to list any activities in which they're involved. Next to each activity, students should write down the amount of time they spend playing or practicing this activity each week. This information can be shared during Life Response.

☐ paper and pencil

■ For Worship Time, use the songs for this quarter on the DisKit CD from the Creative Teaching Aids packet.

☐ DisKit CD, CD player



STEP 1

Life Need
(5–10 minutes)

Lesson Aim:

That your students will choose to develop habits that will help them grow spiritually.

Objective: That your students will evaluate the effect habits and actions can have on personal growth.

Materials:

- ☐ “Who’s on First?” Teaching Aid
- ☐ Index cards numbered 1–10

Before class, number 10 index cards from 1 to 10. Put one number on each card. Today’s Bible study (from Acts 16:1-3; 17:13-15; 1 and 2 Timothy) examines the importance of working with other Christians to do God’s work. To help your students connect with the lesson and start thinking about cooperation, have them study and discuss the “Who’s on First” Teaching Aid. It uses the example of a sports team to demonstrate the need for cooperation.



Display the “Who’s on First?” Teaching Aid 14 so all children can see it. Let students volunteer to briefly describe what’s going on in the picture. After all students have had an opportunity to do so, place cards numbered 1 through 10 face down and let students choose numbers. Going in order, let them read the thoughts of the player whose number they pulled.

After students have read the speech balloons for every player, move into a brief time of discussion with your students.

- ▶ **Which of these students would you want to have on your team? Why? Which of these students would you not want on your team? Why?** *(Allow for discussion. Most students will see and express the value of choosing players who care about the team, and not just about themselves or their needs.)*
- ▶ **Besides team sports, what are some tasks or jobs that are better done by a team than by one person?** *(Allow for all reasonable responses. Students may name things like projects at school or household tasks such as cleaning the basement or doing dishes. Be sure to mention any examples from your work or family life.)*
- ▶ **What happens when people work together to complete tasks?** *(The job gets done more quickly. The job is easier and more enjoyable when shared. And it often can get done better as well because everyone contributes what they do best.)*
- ▶ **A player’s attitude is as important as his abilities. What can these players do to become stronger players?** *(Keep a positive attitude and enjoy the game. Stick with the game no matter what happens. Try to see positive things about people.)*

We respect ball players who make it to every practice game and play their best. It’s hard to win if team members aren’t committed. The same can be said about the Christian life.



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STEP 2

Bible Learning
(15–20 minutes)

Bible Basis:

Timothy becomes a Christian and helps Paul in missionary work (Acts 16:1-3; 17:13-15; 1 and 2 Tim.).

Objective: That your students will identify habits and disciplines that help them grow spiritually.

Materials:

- ☐ Bible Adventures pp. 2–3, Bibles
- ☐ “Heroes of the Bible—Timothy” Teaching Aid
- ☐ “Whiz Word,” Teaching Aid—assembled before class, “Game Instruction” Teaching Aid—photocopy before class, paper fastener, whiteboard and marker or paper and pencil, dictionary

Bible Study

The Bible study tells about a man who, as a young Christian, went on an exciting missionary journey and, as a result, grew in his faith. Have students turn to pages 2 and 3 of *Bible Adventures*, “Growing in the Faith.” Ask a student to read the opening paragraph, giving students time to read the footnotes as they encounter them.

Next ask another student to read the first brief section of Scripture Spotlight, Acts 17:13.

- ▶ **How did some local Jews react to Paul’s preaching?** (*They stirred up the crowds in Berea. Ask a student to restate what this means. You could explain that some of Paul’s fellow Jews in Berea caused a riot because of Paul’s teaching.*)
- ▶ **Why do you think they did this?** Have a student look up Acts 17:1, 4-6 to gain some background for this answer. (*Many of the Jews at Thessalonica did not believe Paul’s message. So they followed Paul to Berea in order to turn the people there against Paul.*)

Have students go on to the next Scripture Spotlight, Acts 17:14-15.

- ▶ **Why do you think Paul had to leave?** (*Allow students to speculate. Scripture does not say, but it was probably to protect Paul [he was escorted to the coast] and to let the uprising against him cool down.*)
- ▶ **How might Silas and Timothy have felt?** (*Concerned for Paul’s safety; sad to see Paul leave; wondering what else might await them in Berea.*)
- ▶ **Why might the trip be hard for a young Christian?** (*Timothy may not have been very confident. It might have shaken him to see people want to hurt Paul because of Paul’s teaching. He may also have been homesick.*)


Have students look up and read aloud 2 Timothy 1:7.

- ▶ **How could this Bible verse help Timothy?** (*It may have helped Timothy realize he could depend on God to give him the confidence and strength he needed to do God’s work.*)

Have a volunteer read the transitional paragraph. Then have someone else read Paul’s words in 2 Timothy 3:14-17 from the Bible.

BIBLE STUDY BASED ON ACTS 16:1-3; 17:13-15; 1 & 2 TIMOTHY

GROWING IN THE FAITH



¹These women were Jewish, but Timothy’s father wasn’t. Eunice and Lois taught Timothy the Old Testament.

Even as a boy, Timothy learned the Scriptures. He was taught by his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois.¹ Later Eunice learned about Jesus from Paul. When Paul came to Lystra on his second journey around Asia Minor,² he asked Timothy to travel with him and Silas from town to town as missionaries. This was not always an easy trip for young Timothy.

Scripture Spotlight

Acts 17:13-15; 1 Timothy 4:12, 15

But when the Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the word of God at Berea, some of them went there too, agitating the crowds and stirring them up.


How did some local Jews react to Paul’s preaching? Why do you think they did this?

The believers

Immediately sent Paul to the coast, but Silas and Timothy stayed at Berea. Those who escorted Paul brought him to Athens and then left with instructions for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible.

Why do you think Paul had to leave? How might Silas and Timothy have felt? Why might the trip be hard for a young Christian? Read 2 Timothy 1:7. How could this Bible verse help Timothy?


Paul loved Timothy and taught him many things. Paul especially taught him about the Bible and the Savior, Jesus. Paul and Timothy visited the church in Ephesus.³ After Paul left, Timothy stayed behind and worked in the church in Ephesus.



²In New Testament times this was a Roman province; now it’s the country of Turkey.

³Paul stayed in Ephesus (where) the and began there

2



Following Paul's instructions helped Timothy grow stronger in his faith.

Read Paul's words in 2 Timothy 3:14-17. How did Paul encourage Timothy to grow in his faith? What could equip him to grow?

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. . . . Be diligent in these

matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress.

What was Paul telling Timothy? How can you set an example for others?

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► **How did Paul encourage Timothy to grow in his faith?** (*Paul told Timothy that he should continue living what he had learned since he was a child—the Scriptures. The Scriptures would be able to make him wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*)

► **What could equip him to grow?** (*The Bible comes from God, so Timothy could trust it to make him wise, and use it to help others grow as well.*)

Have students read silently the final Scripture Spotlight section, 1 Timothy 4:12, 15.

► **What was Paul telling Timothy?** (*Have students try to state these verses in their own words. Even though Timothy was young, he could be an example of godliness to others in the way he spoke and acted. Paul told him to live and grow so that others could see how he grew in his faith.*)

► **How can you set an example for others?** (*Have students suggest ways that preteens can be examples of godliness. This will be less threatening and won't put them on the spot.*)

Just as we exercise our bodies to develop them and be physically fit, we also can exercise our faith in God. Reading the Bible, praying, worshiping God, serving others—these are

some ways God gives us to grow close to Him.

Bible Review

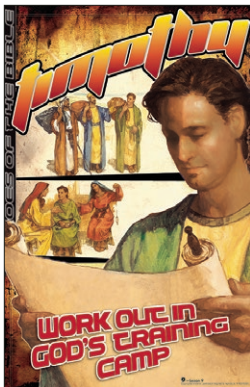
Display the “Heroes-of-the-Bible—Timothy” Teaching Aid.

► **Why would anyone choose Timothy as a hero? He wasn't a strong leader like Joseph or Peter. Timothy didn't lead an army into battle like Gideon. What makes Timothy a hero of the faith?** (*Timothy knew and practiced the Scriptures. Although Timothy might have been afraid or been tempted to stay home, he took risks in order to do the Lord's work. He also suffered imprisonment when he traveled.*)

Timothy had another quality that made him a hero. While Timothy was eager to serve the Lord, he also knew he had a lot to learn. And Paul taught him about growing in the faith.

To help students review key concepts and terms they have learned so far this quarter, have them play a round of the “Whiz Word” game, played previously in Lesson 5. If you played this game during Lesson 5, then it should already be assembled. If not, assemble the game and photocopy the “Game Instructions” Teaching Aid. Set out the spinner and clues for Lesson 9. The object is for students to get their teammates to guess the word in the cardholder. This game will also be used in Lesson 13.

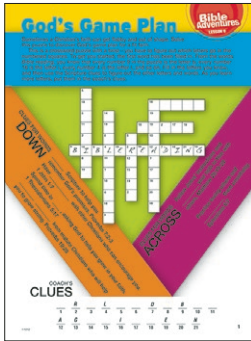
► **What new clue word would you use to describe what happens when you exercise your faith?**



STEP 3

Bible Application

(5–10 minutes)



Objective: That your students will identify habits that lead to spiritual growth.

Materials:

- ☐ Bible Adventures p. 1
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Pencils

- ▶ **Why do sports teams have training camps?** *(To get the players in shape for the season and prepare the players as they learn new strategies.)*
- ▶ **Suppose you were setting up a training schedule for Timothy. What would you include in your spiritual workout for him?** *(Timothy's workout might include studying and applying Scripture; setting an example of love, faith, and purity; serving the church.)*
- ▶ **We could say that Paul was Timothy's coach in God's training camp. How did Paul train Timothy in the faith?** *(Paul took Timothy with him on a missionary journey. Paul probably trained Timothy by example and by love.)*

Timothy's spiritual training began early. Later Paul instructed Timothy in the finer points of spiritual growth.

Have students find page 1 in *Bible Adventures* and read the directions. You'll notice that the words "Bible Reading" are already filled in. Using the letters in this word, students can fill in some of the other squares in the crossword puzzle. Allow a few minutes to look up the Scripture references, find the other words, and complete the puzzle. You may want to assign students to look up each verse to read aloud, then as a class, decide on the answer. Here are the correct answers. For words going across: Follow Jesus' instructions and *share* your faith . . . (**Matt. 28:19-20**); Practice loving others and *serve* them unselfishly (**Eph. 6:7**). For words going down: Memorize Scripture . . . (**Prov. 7:2-3**). Have *fellowship* with other Christians . . . (**1 John 1:7**). Spend time in *prayer*, asking God to help you grow in your faith. (**1 Thess. 5:17**). *Seek advice* from mature Christians . . . (**Prov. 19:20**).

- ▶ **How does a Christian stay fit spiritually?** *(Your students will probably give some of the answers from the crossword puzzle.)*

Bible reading is an exercise that should be done daily. Just as athletes need to know the rules of the game, a spiritual athlete finds his or her rules in the Bible.

A spiritual athlete lifts up the heavy weights and burdens of life to God through prayer. A Christian can seek advice from believers who have been exercising for a long time and are in top condition.

- ▶ **But what will happen when we don't exercise our spiritual muscles?** *(We become weak, tired, and ineffective Christians.)*

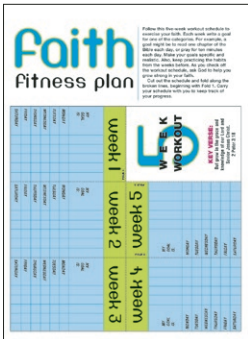
If you have time, students could write down spiritual "coaches" who have helped them grow in their faith.

STEP 4

Life Response
(5–10 minutes)

Bible Truth:

To grow strong, a Christian needs to receive God's Word and practice God's ways.



Objective: That your students will develop realistic plans for growing strong spiritually.

Materials:

□ Bible Adventures p. 4, pencils

Memory Work

Read the Key Verse, 2 Peter 3:18, together. The verse is printed on the workout schedule. God wants us to grow in our knowledge of Him.

- ▶ **What are some ways we can do that?** *(By following a regular plan of Bible study and prayer, by listening to Sunday school teachers and pastors, by serving and sharing with others in need.)*
- ▶ **Suppose you tried out for baseball and made the team. What would happen if you didn't practice once you were on the team?** *(You wouldn't develop the skills needed to make you a better player. The coach probably wouldn't let you play.)*

Many activities that we do include training programs and practices. The same is true for a spiritual training program.

Turn to page 4 in *Bible Adventures* and look at the “Faith Fitness Plan.” This plan can help us get our spiritual training programs started. Read the directions for the page first. Students will tear out the page, cut out the schedule, and fold it along the broken lines, beginning with fold 1.

Go over the schedule with your students. Encourage them to write down some short-term goals such as memorizing the books of the Bible or all the Key Verses this quarter. Next, students are to write down their long-term goals such as reading a chapter of the Bible each day or praying for five minutes each day.

Suggest that students keep their schedules in handy places and mark off their goals each week.

Spiritual exercise takes effort; but if you follow this workout schedule, you'll be pleased with the results—strong, well-developed spiritual muscles.

Closing Activities

Close in prayer, asking God's help in accomplishing the goals.

Optional Activity

For the prayer journal assignment this week, suggest that students keep their Faith Fitness Plan schedule for the week.