

II. Group discussion *Each number below includes a set of questions that relate to the scripture text. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better.*

Pray for God to open the hearts and minds of the group as you open the scriptures together.

Read II Timothy 3:14-17 aloud.

1. This letter was written to Timothy from Paul. Based on this paragraph, what can you say about these two people?

What would you say Timothy needed spiritually?

2. What were some spiritual resources that Paul said Timothy had available to support him?

Memory of material, memory of teachers, scripture.

How adequate were these resources?

See verse 17 – thoroughly equipped for every good work.

How often do you feel like you lack a spiritual resource?

In what ways do we have fewer tools at our disposal than Timothy?

In what ways do we have additional tools at our disposal?

The completed 66 books of scripture readily available, along with study resources, plus 2000 years of the church's wisdom.

3. According to verse 16, what can scripture do for us?

In what ways does this verse relate to accumulating Bible knowledge or information about God?

How do these functions point to something broader and deeper than acquiring information?

How do the scriptures form us? What habits help you to let scripture shape your heart and your life?

4. What are appropriate ways to use the Bible?

What are some inappropriate ways to use the Bible?

5. When has the Bible been a blessing for you?

When has the Bible been a challenge for you?

6. Have you ever known someone with a huge knowledge of scriptural facts but with severe gaps in their spiritual life? What were they missing from II Tim. 3:16?

How could somebody study the Bible without it affecting their heart?

When you open the Bible, how do you allow the Spirit to use it to transform you?

How could prayer be part of paying attention to the scriptures?

How could it not?

7. When would it be valuable for scripture to rebuke you?

What is the difference between the rebuke of scripture and beating someone up with the Bible?

What are the risks of rebuking someone with scripture?

Beating somebody up with scripture does more harm than good. The person will resent you and God.

How would you know that you were called to rebuke someone using scripture? What cautions would you use?

Rebuke is appropriate only if:

a. You have a close relationship and can speak frankly.

b. You listen more than you speak.

c. The person is likely to respond with repentance.

d. You have tried to send a message through gentler means first.

e. You have prayed for wisdom and humility.

III. Other resources

The point – Let the scriptures form you into the person God wants you to be.

Prayer

Pray Psalm 119:33-48 aloud. Talk about how someone under the Law of Moses could have found such comfort in scripture. Pray for ears to hear the word of God every time we open the Bible. Confess to God your struggles with the Bible.

Kid-friendly activity. *An activity designed to help kids and adults grow in faith together. Do this first, then dismiss the kids so the adults can talk.*

Everybody share your favorite verse.

Dismiss the kids to an art area with crayons & paper. Ask them to draw a picture of themselves living out their favorite scripture.

Work through the adult discussion while the kids color.

Gather the kids back and ask them to display their artwork. Give lots of praise. Then grown-ups also share stories of how their favorite verse affects their lives.

The Church has Left the Building

II Timothy 3 – Transformed by Scripture

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

The theme for this meeting: **The Bible transforms us.**

The Bible is long and complicated, yet we believe that God speaks through this book in unique ways. If we are going to be make a difference for God in a world that has forgotten God, we need to soak up the words of scripture. His words need to fill our hearts and overflow into words and actions that show we are God's people.

Scripture is a powerful tool to transform us. In II Timothy 3, Paul encourages Timothy to remember his teachers and the scriptures he has heard all his life. These scriptures offered Timothy (and us) everything he needed to honor God.

Leadership tip: Include a discussion of scripture in every group meeting, even if it is a short meeting or an off crowd. These ancient words point the way to the future.

I. Relate *Use a few of these to introduce the theme and "break the ice." No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage individuals through these questions.*

- ❖ What is your favorite Bible verse?
- ❖ What is a class or Bible study that impacted your life?
- ❖ Aside from the Bible, what is your favorite book?

"The Church has Left the Building" is a series of Small Group guides written in support of the Missional Church curriculum by David Wray and Chris Benjamin. It is designed around the concept of adults discussing material in Bible class and then processing it in small group meetings during the same week. These guides, as well as the Missional Church curriculum, are based on the book, *Treasure in Clay Jars*, by Lois Barrett and others.

Training tools and study guides are at www.collegehills.org, then Ministries, then LIFE groups.