

This small group resource was written for enrichment while studying *Pomo Timmy* in Sunday School, educational settings, small groups, families or individually. It is the hope of the authors that through this study groups will find tools to navigate the postmodern era in the light of Paul's instructions to Timothy. Thus, through debate and discussion, the church can avoid the traps of the modern scientific arrogance and postmodern relativism in order to walk in the relational truth of the mystery of Christ.

Chapter 1

Icebreaker: What do you predict the world will be like in 50 years?

Discussion Questions:

- The book *Pomo Timmy* contrasts the eras of modernity and post modernity. What are some differences between these?
- Michael Ferber asks on page 21, "What will a world without truths or standards look like"? Discuss and answer this question.
- On page 15 the author calls readers to "recognize their situated viewpoints and evaluate which aspects of their faith are as cultural as they are divine." Are there aspects of your faith that are more cultural than Biblical?
- The author differentiates between "knowledge" and "reality." This contrast is reflected in I Corinthians 13:12. How is this verse true for you?
- The author states, "A sure foundation must be laid in the church in order for the faith to continue." How can you as individuals work within your church to help secure this foundation?

Points for Prayer:

In Our Lives:

- We will recognize our knowledge falls short
- We will cling to the truth without arrogance
- We will be Pauls and Timothys in our generation.

In Our Church:

- Errors will be uprooted
- Sound doctrine will prevail
- We will demonstrate the relational truth of the gospel

Memory Verse: 1 Corinthians 13:12

Chapter 2

Icebreaker: If you knew today was your last day of work, what directions would you leave for your predecessor? What might you purposely not share?

Discussion Questions:

- What do you believe is the most fundamental doctrine for the church to maintain as it navigates the precipice between modernism and postmodernism?
- Paul encourages Timothy to watch his life and doctrine closely. What does this look like in your church? What does this look like for you personally?
- The book describes the emergent movement through a quote from an emergent website, which states, “we must imagine and pursue the development of new ways of being followers of Jesus Christ.” What might this look like and in what ways could this be a good thing?
- On page 35 Michael Ferber states, “doctrine for the sake of doctrine is ridiculous and pointless,” meaning that outside of a relationship with Christ doctrine loses its context. Why is relationship so central to doctrine?
- Why does the author assert that the philosophical changes occurring in society are more significant than political, economic, or cultural transformations? Do you agree?

Points for Prayer:

In Our Lives:

- That we will watch our life and doctrine closely
- That our doctrine will be centered in our relationship with Christ
- That our doctrine will be lived, not just known

In Our Church:

- That our church will meet the needs of this generation without abandoning sound doctrine
- That our doctrine will be linked to life and witness

Memory Verse: 1 Timothy 4:16

Chapter 3

Icebreaker: How is love defined differently in culture, church and the Bible?

Discussion Questions:

- The author suggests that the goal of the Christian life is love. If this is the case, is your faith community meeting this goal?
- In our contemporary society love can be interpreted in a myriad of ways. How does a Biblical definition of love differ from other definitions?
- Paul defines love in terms of a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith. How has Christ produced these in your life?
- The author describes how our consciences can become rooted in our own moral codes rather than the Holy Spirit. What consequences have you experienced as a result of a conscience not rooted in the will of God? What is the solution to a poor conscience?

- Michael Ferber states, “if the goal of Christianity is truly love, then the church as a whole is doing a very lousy job of reaching it.” How do you personally plan to change this image?

Points for Prayer:

In Our Lives:

- A pure heart
- A good conscience
- A sincere faith

In Our Church:

- We will be an instrument in God’s hand to purify hearts
- We will impact the conscience of our community
- We will advance the faith with truth and orthodoxy

Memory Verse: 1 Timothy 1:5

Chapter 4

Icebreaker: If you could live as any kind of animal or creature for one day, what would you choose? What would you avoid?

Discussion Questions:

- Michael Ferber discusses the mysteries of God and proclaims, “Mystery is not satisfied rationally but relationally.” Discuss how the mystery of Christ confounds modern and postmodern approaches and how relationship with Christ reveals God’s mysteries.
- The author discusses how Job’s friends attempted to use rationality to explain Job’s plight and how God ultimately reveals his complexity to Job relationally. Describe a time when someone attempted to rationally explain God or God’s movement in your life and failed.
- Discuss how we in the church can follow the model of Jesus by being humbled before being exalted.
- How can Godliness help us find balance and direction in a postmodern world?
- The author suggests that it is not easy for us to die to ourselves. How did Jesus overcome this? How can we?

Points of Prayer:

In Our Lives:

- We will no longer live for ourselves
- God would reveal Himself to us and through us
- That we will take the step from our heads to our hearts (from rationality to relationality)

In Our Church:

- We will accurately preach Jesus to the nations
- We will seek true Godliness as we move into the postmodern era

Memory Verse: 1 Timothy 3:16

Chapter 5

Icebreaker: Share about a time when someone's intercession (physical or spiritual) impacted your life significantly.

Discussion Questions:

- How can we intercede with Jesus in His mediation?
- Michael Ferber proposes that intercession can help us learn from other cultures and religions. Do you agree with this statement and how do you feel it could impact the effectiveness of the church?
- On page 60 the author asks if a total, all-encompassing rejection of other religions is necessary. Discuss your opinions on this subject.
- The book quotes Baker and Gay, who suggest that, "it will take congregations that live their worship as a transforming presence in their communities" to bridge today's culture. How do you believe the church is succeeding in this area and in what ways can it improve? How can you help facilitate these improvements?
- On page 59 the author states, "We can respond, be 'saved' and walk in right relationship with God even without fully understanding all that this involves. Discuss the relevance of this statement in your relationship with God.

Points for Prayer:

In Our Lives:

- We would be examples of the mysteries of God's love
- We would learn from others as we intercede
- We would live our worship

In Our Church:

- We would reach out to people in love
- We would not hinder the church from reaching the world in the postmodern era

Memory Verse: 1 Timothy 2:1-4

Chapter 6

Icebreaker: In which of the following skills are you most gifted: 1) creative plagiarism, 2) voice control, 3) office management 4) image projection

Discussion Questions:

- Paul recognizes character as the most important aspect of leadership. Why is this the case?
- In *Right from Wrong*, Josh McDowell roots morality in the character of God. The example given in the book is the link between the precept “do not lie,” the principle of Truth and the person of God. What other precepts are rooted in the person of God?
- Why is morality in a postmodern society a “tricky” subject?
- Which of the following character traits do you need to improve the most? (self control, hospitality, teaching, gentleness, quarrellessness, not a lover of money, have a good reputation with outsiders, blamelessness, have one spouse, manage family, temperate, seek dishonest gain, hold to the truth, tested)
- How do you personally plan to fulfill the closing sentence of this chapter: “Blameless leaders, who understand and respect the values of people outside of the faith, will defy postmodern doubts and reflect their loving creator.”

Points of Prayer:

In Our Lives:

- Our character will reflect God’s character
- We will manifest self-control, hospitality, teaching, gentleness, quarrellessness, blamelessness, well-managed family, temperate, honest gain, and truth.

In Our Church:

- Our leaders will be people of tremendous character
- Character will be more important than any other quality in leadership selection

Memory Verse: 1 Timothy 3:1

Chapter 7

Icebreaker: Discuss how your habits of diet and exercise this week have preserved your body for longer service to God or destined it for early retirement from God’s plan.

Discussion Questions:

- On page 80 Michael Ferber quips that doughnuts have become Christian crack. Do you feel the church today has neglected the importance of good physical health?
- The author proposes that the heart and body are related. Discuss how this statement applies to you.
- Discuss how you substitute food and other things for friendships, purpose and relationship with God.

- In I Corinthians Paul states that he beats his body and makes it his slave so that he might not be disqualified for the prize. What areas of your life need additional attention so that you might not be disqualified for the prize?
- Michael Ferber suggests that God created the body in such a way that it knows what it needs. In what ways can you better listen to your body?

Points for Prayer:

In Our Lives:

- God will fill us with his love and remove emptiness
- We will listen to our bodies and have good health so that we may be effective ministers of the gospel
- For physical, emotional, mental and spiritual discipline

In Our Church:

- We lead our community to find purpose and fulfillment in Christ
- We promote physical health within the Body of Christ
- We promote physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health in our community

Memory Verse: 1 Timothy 4:8b-9

Chapter 8

Icebreaker: If you had not just read this chapter and were handed \$1,000,000, what would you have done with it? What would you do with it in light of this chapter?

Discussion Questions:

- What is the difference between, “money is the root of all evil” and “the love of money is the root of all evil?” Why is this difference significant?
- The author links the avoidance of the love of money to contentment. How are these related? In what times of your life have discontentment led to a love for money? Has this been resolved in your life?
- Paul describes three steps in the downward money spiral: 1) temptation, 2) trap, 3) ruin and destruction. What famous examples can you cite that illustrate this process?
- What percentage of resources coming into your church goes to help people outside of the congregation? What percentage of resources coming into your family goes to help people outside of your family? Do these proportions need to change?
- On page 90 the author relates Tony Campolo’s advice for dealing with wealth. Are you presently living according to this advice? If not, what would your life look like if you did?

Points for Prayer:

In Our Lives:

- We would find contentment with what we have
- We would not fall into the money trap
- We would focus more on helping others than helping ourselves

In Our Church:

- We would build the kingdom, not our castle
- We would bless many outsiders rather than a few insiders

Memory Verse: 1 Timothy 6:10

Chapter 9

Icebreaker: Which, if either, is less acceptable: male bashing or women bashing?

Discussion Questions:

- Are your opinions on gender roles strongly established? If so, how did you form these views?
- How would your spiritual life be different if the opposite gender had not plays a part?
- Michael Ferber describes Christ as the ultimate head of the household and emphasizes that through mutual submission to His headship a family can unite in the bonds of love. In your family, how do you mutually submit to Christ?
- The author states, “regardless of how we interpret these passages, each of us can agree that we bring a lot of baggage to our interpretations of Scripture based on our gender, ethnicity, denomination, geography and other factors. How is this true for you?”
- This chapter discusses how the gospel is liberating for two groups of people in the New Testament: women and slaves. In what ways has the gospel been liberating in your life?

Points for Prayer:

In Our Lives:

- We would recognize our backgrounds affect the ways in which we approach Scripture
- We would love and respect those who are different than we are

In Our Church:

- We would submit to the Lordship of Christ
- We would find ways to value and empower all members

Memory Verse: Galatians 3:28

Chapter 10

Icebreaker: How have you seen the concept of “family” change over the course of your life?

Discussion Questions:

- What tensions have you witnessed between older and younger generations in the church?
- Preferences on church liturgy and worship style frequently differ between generations. What solutions exist to this tension?
- The author describes the widows of the contemporary world as invisible people who lack support networks including the homeless, mentally ill and prisoners. How do (or could) you include these people in your church family?
- The younger widows in Ephesus struggled with narcissism, dating and marrying nonbelievers, being idle, gossiping, and being busybodies. The author notes that these activities opened the door for the influence of the false teachers. How could this be so?
- The author roots primary responsibility for spiritual discipleship in the family not the church. If this is the case, how is your family doing?

Points for Prayer:

In Our Lives:

- We will respect and try to learn from other generations
- We will take care of the widows and orphans of our generation
- We will recognize false teaching and avoid it

In Our Church:

- Our families will take responsibility for spiritual development
- We will have unity in the midst of diversity

Memory Verse: 1 Timothy 5:1-2

Chapter 11

Icebreaker: The tongue has the power to bless or curse. Spend some time affirming one another by having each group member share what they appreciate about the others.

Discussion Questions:

- The author roots every problem Timothy is facing in the church of Ephesus to problems of the tongue. How is this so?
- The tongue can be used for good or evil. What are the most encouraging and most harmful things others have said to you?

- The author describes how the false teachers of Ephesus tried to force their own theology upon the weakest members of the community. What are the most effective ways to work through theological divisions in the church?
- How is language a limiting factor in our relationships with God and one another? How have you personally experienced this?
- The author states that this generation needs voices of hope to help rise above the quagmire of relativism. How do you personally plan to be such a voice? How will you begin today?

Points for Prayer:

In Our Lives:

- Tongues will be instruments of peace
- Voices will be filled with hope

In Our Churches:

- We will work through conflicts with grace and discernment
- We will be voices of hope for this generation

This resource is available for free at <http://pomotimmy.com>. For more copies of this resource, other Bible Studies based on *Pomo Timmy*, or to order copies of the book *Pomo Timmy: 1 Timothy for the Postmodern World* go to <http://pomotimmy.com>.