A Young Example 1 Timothy 4:12

Session 1: Too young?

Motivation:
Divide youth in to two teams. Ask each to compile a list of things that teenagers are too young to do. (drink, drive, gamble, vote, go to college, teach school, etc.) Teams score points for answers not duplicated by the other team.

Discuss: What are some things that frighten you about Christian life or something you feel you can’t do because you are too young or inexperienced (teach Sunday School, witness, preach, sing, pray out loud, etc.)? Even as a teenager, you are an important part of this church & God has a place of service for you now.

Examination:
Read Jeremiah 1:6-9 & discuss the following questions:
How does Jeremiah respond to God’s request to tell others about his message?
Has God ever asked you to do something that made you feel like Jeremiah did? If so, what did you do? (Give youth a chance to share, and share an example from your own life. Mention Biblical characters God used at a young age, such as David, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, & Mary.)

God will never lead you where His grace cannot sustain you. He will provide what you need for the task He gives you.

Handout cards with 1 Timothy 4:12. (You may also want to display a poster with 1 Timothy 4:12 on the wall.

Background:
Our focus for this study is 1 Timothy 4:12. Timothy was a young man whom Paul calls his “son in the faith.” He followed Jesus and the example of Paul, his mother, and his grandmother. Even at a young age, Paul entrusted Timothy with the leadership of the church at Ephesus. He knew Timothy might feel inadequate for the job, and that others may even disrespect Timothy because of his age. But Paul knew God had called and gifted Timothy. He was confident in God’s ability to use Timothy to lead this church.

Read 1 Timothy 4:12 together, then discuss the following questions.

Who are the believers? (All Christians, including from kids to adults)

Notice Paul didn’t say set an example for the lost or heathen. It is easy to be just a little bit better than those who don’t know God. If we truly follow Christ our life is always going to be an example for the lost.

But to set an example for believers—those already trying to live like Christ— is a little harder. We must compare our actions to Christ instead of others (saved or lost). This verse tells us to be so much like Christ that even other Christians can follow our example.

In what areas are we to set an example? (speech, life, love, faith, and purity)

Preview the upcoming study, & Encourage the youth to take the card & memorize the 1 Timothy 4:12.

Application:
Over the next several weeks we will look at each area in detail, but for now, let’s think of one way to be an example in each area.

Divide into 5 groups. Assign each group one of the example areas (speech, life, love, faith, purity), construction paper, & markers. Ask youth to illustrate one way to be an example in that area, then ask groups to share.

Read Jeremiah 1:7-8 together.

Think again about something you feel inadequate to do for Christ. Remember that no one is too young to be used by God.

Prayer: Ask youth to pray silently as you guide them with the following suggestions, then close by praying for the youth.

Thank God that you are not too young to be used by Him. Ask Him to give you opportunities to serve Him. Ask for the Holy Spirit to give you guidance and courage for doing His work. Ask Him to show you specifically what He is calling you to do. Thank God for choosing to use you.

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Motivation: Print game sheets at the end of the lesson and cut in half. Divide into two teams. Call one member of team A to the front. Give him the first game sheet (at end of the lesson). The player must help his or her team guess the word at the top without using any of the words underneath. (No hand motions allowed either.) If the team doesn’t not guess within 1 minute, the other team gets a chance to guess. Call one member from team B and continue using the next game sheet. Play through the sheets, or as long as time allows, then tally points. (Have someone stand beside the players and watch for the forbidden words. Give a warning after the first, and lose a turn if they use another. Be sure the teams cannot see through the back of the paper.

Review/Debrief: Hand out cards with 1 Timothy 4:12 to any who do not still have one from last session. Ask the group to read the verse together. Remind the youth that even young Christians are to be an example among other believers. The first area Paul names is speech. In the game we played, was it hard to describe something without using certain words? You had to think carefully before you spoke or the wrong words would slip. The Christian life is the same way. To set an example in speech, we must choose our words carefully, taking the time to think before we speak.

Examination:
Cut apart and hand out the scripture questions provided. Ask pairs to read & answer the question. When pairs are finished, discuss questions among the group.

Read James 3:2. How can a person be perfect?
Does anyone know someone like that? Maybe no one can control it completely, but most of us don’t really try.

Read James 3:3. How is the tongue like a horse’s bit?
Show picture of horse with bridal and bit. Ask: Who has ever ridden a horse? What does the bit do? Just like a bit, our tongue is a very small part of us, but has a great effect on our whole lives.

Read James 3:4. How is the tongue like a rudder on a ship?
Show picture of a ship and point out the rudder.

Again, although a rudder is very small compared to the ship, a little movement has a big effect on the direction of the ship, as the tongue does on our lives.

Read James 3:5-6. How is the tongue like a spark and fire?
These are very strong words: it can set a person’s life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

Show lighter--starts with a spark, but has the power to destroy whole cities. Have you ever seen or heard the beginning of a rumor? It may start small, but is usually greatly exaggerated before the truth is found & can destroy someone’s reputation, cause them to lose friendships, jobs, & even their life.

Read James 3:7-8. How is the tongue like an animal that cannot be tamed?
Name some animals that cannot usually be tamed. List their characteristics. (wild, uncontrollable, dangerous)

Read James 3:9-10. What are ways we praise God? What are ways we curse people? (Include the words we use on social media, through they aren’t technically “speech.”)

Discuss examples of a fountain and tree/vine in verses 11-12.

These things are never found in nature. It is impossible. Paul tells us to set an example with our speech. We cannot live a consistent Christian life if our words do not reflect Christ.

Application:
Read Ephesians 4:29. The tongue can do a lot of damage, but it can also do a lot of good. The tongue can edify or build up others, but it takes practice--starting now. Turn to the person on your right & share some words that will edify or encourage the person in their walk with Christ.

Read 1 Timothy 4:12 again together. Encourage youth to memorize the verse. Perhaps offer a small prize for those who memorize the verse by the end of the study.

Close in prayer asking the Holy Spirit to control our tongues.
Read James 3:2. How can a person be perfect?

Read James 3:3. How is the tongue like a horse’s bit?

Read James 3:4. How is the tongue like a rudder on a ship?

Read James 3:5-6. How is the tongue like a spark and fire?

Read James 3:7-8. How is the tongue like an animal that cannot be tamed?

Read James 3:9-10. What are ways we praise God? What are ways we curse people?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHOPPER</th>
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LECTURE
A Young Example
Session 3: Life/Conduct

**Motivation:**
Quick Change Artist: Divide students into pairs. Ask pairs to stand and face each other. Give them time to observe each other’s appearance, then have them turn back to back. Instruct each to change one thing about their appearance, then pairs face each other and try to spot the change.

**Transition:** Read 1 Tim 4:12 together. Give out cards if needed.

Today we are going to study how to be an example in life or conduct. When you become a Christian, you are a new person. Like in the game, those who look at you should be able to see a change in your life. You are now to be an example in LIFE.

**Examination:**
Make a chart with the Old Self and New Self. Go through Colossians 3:1-17 verse by verse together and ask youth to name things that describe the Old or New self, Have a volunteer for each column list them on the chart. Go back and circle those that are related to life/conduct. Take time to discuss each one.

**Example:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Self</th>
<th>Old Self</th>
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<tr>
<td>Seeking things above</td>
<td>Mind on earthly things</td>
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<td>Mind on things above</td>
<td>immorality, impurity,</td>
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<td>Hidden with God in</td>
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Those who do not know Christ or attend church will often use the lives of those who claim to be Christians as an excuse to reject Christ or the church.

“I’m just as good as ________________,” they may say.

Don’t be anyone’s excuse for not coming to Jesus. Live in a way that points to Him. Admit it and repent when you fail, then start again. We do not have to give the impression of being perfect, but of striving to be more like Christ daily.

But remember, 1 Timothy 4:12 tells us to be an example among the believers. If we are trying at all through the power of the Holy Spirit to live for Christ, we WILL be an example to the world. But we must also be an example for the believers around us, both younger and older. Other Christians may be watching you. You can be a stumbling block or a stepping stone in their faith. A stumbling block causes someone to trip up, A stepping stone helps them step up in their walk with Christ.

**Application:**
Play “Live Out Loud” by Stephen Curtis Chapman or another song that encourages us to live our faith.
https://youtu.be/tVLHTqdkwZ0

Ask youth to listen to the words and consider if they live their Christianity “out loud.”

**Read** Matthew 5:16.

End with this question: Can other see a difference in the way you live because Christ lives in you?

**Pray:** Give youth the following suggestions as they pray silently, then have a volunteer pray out loud.

Ask God to help our lives to shine in such a way that it brings attention to and glorifies Him before ALL men, both believers and unbelievers. Pray specifically for those in their sphere of influence.

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A Young Example
Session 4: Love

Motivation:
Honey, If You Love Me: Start with a volunteer who will be “it.” The student chooses another student in the room, kneels in front of him or her, and says, “Honey, if you love me, would you smile?” The student must reply without smiling, “Honey, I love you, but I just can’t smile.” If the person smiles, he or she becomes “it,” then chooses another student and repeats the question. If the chosen student does not smile, “it” can try one more time before trying someone else. It is not allowed to physically touch the other student. Play for about 10 minutes.

Transition: Say: There are certain things we do if we love people. In this game, it was a simple smile, but in the Christian life, it is so much more.

Read 1 Timothy 4:12 together from the cards, stopping at LOVE (speech, life, love). Remind kids about memorizing the verse in their preferred Bible version.

Examination:
This reading uses a variety of Scripture to remind us what godly love really is. Ask 3 volunteers to read the skit “God is Love”

Divide into groups of 2-3. Assign each one of the following verses and questions. (Cut apart sheet at the end of lesson. Answers will vary by Bible version.) Give around 5-7 minutes, then discuss together.

1. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 What is love and what does love do? (patient, kind, rejoices with truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things) What is love not and not do? jealous, brag, arrogant, rude, selfish, keep record of wrong, rejoice in unrighteousness

2. Mark 12:28-30 What is the greatest command? (Love the Lord your God) How do we love God? (with all our heart, soul, mind, strength) What is one example of each area? (varies)

3. Mark 12:28-31 What is the second greatest command? (Love your neighbor as yourself) Who is our neighbor? (Anyone we meet) How can we love our neighbor? (meet their needs, etc.)

4. Galatians 5:14 How much do we love our neighbor? (as much as we love ourselves) How do we love ourselves? (take care of ourselves, feed ourselves, brush our teeth, buy ourselves things, do things good for us, etc.)

5. Matthew 5:43-45 Who should we love? (our enemies) What is one way we love our enemies in this passage? (pray for them) Why do we love our enemies? (to be like our Father in Heaven- remember He loved us when we were His enemies)

Application:
(say name of a youth in each blank)

People around you are saying, __________, if you love me would you help me with this problem, ______________, if you love me would you encourage me when down, ______________, if you love me would you stand up for me when others make fun. ______________, if you love me would you say “no” when I’m pressuring you to do wrong. ______________, if you love me would you tell me about Jesus.

No, they are not saying these things out loud, but the world is begging to be loved and God wants to love them through YOU.

Read John 13:35.

People will not know you are a Christ-follower by how good you are or how much you go to church. They will know by your love for others.

Set an example among the believers in the way you love God, others, yourself, and your enemies.

Ask youth to think of 2-3 people they have trouble loving. Ask them to pray specifically God will use them to show love to that person. Give them time to pray silently then close in prayer or ask a volunteer to pray.
1. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 What is love and what does love do?  

2. Mark 12:28-30 What is the greatest command?  
   How do we love God?  

3. Mark 12:28-31 What is the second greatest command? Who is our neighbor?  

4. Galatians 5:14 How much do we love our neighbor? How do we love ourselves?  

5. Matthew 5:43-45 Who should we love? How do we love our enemies? Why do we love our enemies?
A Young Example
Session 5: Faith

Motivation:
Lead a couple of volunteer youth on a faith walk around the room. Blindfold the volunteer, then have other youth stand as obstacles around the room. Choose one youth to be the guide, giving correct directions, while other youth distract and mislead the volunteer. No one is allowed to physically touch the volunteer.

Debrief:
Discuss how the blindfolded youth needed faith in their guide. They had to recognize the guide’s voice and trust his or her directions instead of the other voices around him or her. Compare this to having faith in and listening to God despite what others are saying or doing. Remind youth to do this we must spend time with God in order to be able to recognize His voice.

Discuss ways we show faith in everyday things, such as sitting on chair trusting it will hold us, or believing we will have a meal today, etc.

An African impala can jump ten feet high and thirty feet across, yet it can be kept in a short fence. Why? The impala will not jump if it cannot see where its feet will land. It depends on sight instead of faith.

Examination:

Read 1 Timothy 4:12 together from the board or cards, stopping at FAITH (speech, life, love, faith). Remind kids about memorizing the verse in their preferred Bible version.

Even as a young person, you can set an example in your faith.

Read 1 Timothy 1:1-2. Who is this book, actually a letter, written to? (the young preacher Timothy) How does Paul describe Timothy? (my true son in the faith)

What is faith? (let youth give definitions, then read the Webster’s 1828 Definition, especially 3&4 from http://webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/FAITH)

Read Hebrews 11:1-3. What is the Bible’s definition of faith? (the assurance of things hoped for; the conviction of things not seen)


Tony Evans states, “Faith is acting like something is so, even when it’s not so, that it might be so simply because God said so.”

What if you don’t have much faith? Like the disciples, ask God to increase your faith.

Read Luke 17:5-6. The mustard seed is about the size of a dot on on a page. We don’t have to worry about having a lot of faith. With only a God can do much!

Our faith must be partnered with love or it means nothing for us. (1 Corinthians 13:2)

As Christians we are to walk by faith, not by sight. (2 Corinthians 5:7) Refer back to the beginning activity. Ask for specific examples of walking by faith in the Christian life.

Application:
Faith is believing the truth of God’s Word despite the devil’s lies in your mind. The voice in our heads may say, “I can’t change, things will always be this way, I am wasting my time, this won’t work, God can’t use me, God won’t answer my prayer.”

What lies do you need to combat with faith? Is there a statement you repeat to yourself similar to these that is not from faith? Think specifically about the things you tell yourself or Satan tells you. Think instead of what God tells you. For example, “I am a new creation in Christ, I can do all things through Christ, with God nothing is impossible, etc.”

Pauls says even those how are young should be an example in faith among other believers.

Divide into groups of 2-3 and ask them to answer the question: How can you be an example in your faith?

Take time to share and discuss answers.

Close in prayer asking God to increase our faith, replace the lies in our minds with His truth, and help us to be an example of faith in our family, church, and the world.

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A Young Example
Session 6: Purity

Motivation:
Divide youth into 2 teams. Provide a large bowl of water, a towel, and a bar of Ivory soap for each team. In a relay format, have each team member come wash their hands with the soap for 30 seconds. Use a phone or stopwatch to time each team. The team with the smallest soap at the end of the game wins.

Transition:
Review 1 Timothy 4:12, emphasizing purity. Ivory soap claims to be pure, so using it will make your hands clean without irritating. It even floats in water! Our theme verse tells us to be an example in purity. What do you think of when you hear the word purity? (After youth share, give the dictionary definition from http://webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/Purity)

Examination:
Read 1 John 3:1-3.
What are we called? (We are the children of God)
Based on our own actions, what should be we called? (God’s enemies, His slaves, etc.)
We do not deserve His love, but His love is so extra gave to that we can become His children.
Discuss the difference between a child and a servant.
--story of translator
What is the hope mentioned? (becoming like Jesus)
What does everyone who hopes in Jesus do? (purifies self just as He is pure-Christian means Christ-like or Little Christ. We strive to be like Him.)

3 Areas of Purity in a Christian

Purity of Heart
Read Psalm 24:3-4 & Matthew 5:8
• Right Motives: come to God with no hidden agenda
• Clean; free from sin through confession & forgiveness

Purity of Mind
Read Titus 1:15-16
Thoughts --Discuss what it meant to have our “Mind in the gutter.”
Outward purity begins on the inside with the heart, then mind, then actions

Purity of Body
Read 1 Timothy 5:1-2
• Responsibility of Christian young men is to treat girls as sisters in purity. (With respect, protection, looking out for them instead of leading them to sin.)
• The pressure is of purity is often put off upon the girls (though they are still responsible for their purity also), but Christian young men are responsible for how they treat sisters in Christ.
Read 1 Corinthians 6:18-20
• The Holy Spirit lives in you from the point of salvation--you are a temple.
• Discuss how you should treat a temple/church differently from other buildings.
• Apply that to our bodies (not just in sexuality, but health, drugs/alcohol, etc.)

Remind youth that setting an example means in purity we act like Christ even on weekends with our friends. We set an example for both believers here at church and unbelievers in the world.

Application:
Use this song as a closing prayer. Ask youth to sing and pray the words to God. Give Us Clean Hands.
https://youtu.be/fm1L3wDfPKQ.

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A Young Example
Bonus Session: Game Night

Use this game for a fun way to review the Bible study from the last 6 weeks.

Print and cut apart the categories and phrases on the next page (or make up your own phrases for each category). Divide into 2-4 teams. Have a volunteer from one team come choose a phrase. Give the category to the group, then give the student 2 minutes to draw the phrase while his or her team guesses. If the team does not guess correctly, let the other team guess from the current drawing. Alternate teams using a different artist each time and award a point for correct answers.

Speech: President, tongue, rudder, gossip, sing
Life: DNA, Adam & Eve, garden, the book of Genesis
Love: marriage, Mary & Joseph, hugs & kisses
Jesus’ Crucifixion
Faith: Heaven, Baptism, move mountains, walk on water
Purity: shower, baby powder, mind out of the gutter, not guilty

Debrief:
Say 1 Timothy 4:12 together.

Speech, Life (conduct), Love, Faith, Purity--Is there any part of life Paul left out in this verse? So we are to be an example in everything we do, everyday of our lives, so others can follow our example as we follow the example of Jesus.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:1.

That sounds like such a bold statement, but Paul strove daily to be like Christ & came so close that others who imitated him were imitating Christ. We must do the same. Set an example. Strive to Be like Jesus.

Write each category from 1 Timothy 4:12 at the top of a sheet of paper. Place sheets on the walls around the room. Ask youth to move to the sheet with the area that he or she needs God to work in help him or her be a better example. Ask groups at each sheet to pray together for growth in that area.
Speech: President
Speech: tongue
Speech: rudder
Speech: gossip
Speech: sing
Life: DNA
Life: Adam & Eve
Life: garden
Life: the book of Genesis
Love: marriage

Love: Mary & Joseph
Love: Hugs & Kisses
Love: Jesus’ Crucifixion
Faith: Heaven
Faith: Baptism
Faith: Move Mountains
Faith: Walk on Water
Purity: Shower
Purity: baby powder
Purity: gutter
Purity: Not Guilty