

He encourages us to seek mature righteousness—faith, love, peace—joining those who are in honest and serious prayer before God. We do not know when God will change a person’s heart, turning them to truth, but we must continue to spread hope.

Paul’s challenge to Timothy is one we can apply to our lives today. The examples he illustrates are perfect for your students. They should spread His hope and talk of His faithfulness. They should work hard to live like Jesus. And they should focus on being positive, encouraging, and affirming of others. Students should also be aware of people who might tempt them to do things that are not in God’s plan for their lives as believers.

Many children, teens, and adults get tricked into doing things, and living in ways that cause harm to themselves and others. Many times these victims are deceived by people they thought loved and cared about them. As believers, we must be the ones to step up and help them know the truth. There are several factors involved in making people vulnerable to harmful situations, including self esteem, identity, and social grooming.

The ministries highlighted in this study are TraffickStop, River Ministry, and the No Más Violencia (No More Violence) Campaign. These ministries were created to combat human trafficking in our state and the violence in Mexico and along the Texas border. Research shows that the majority of individuals lured into trafficking or organized violence are teenagers like your students.

Use this study and the activities below to help students learn about these situations and what they can do to help bring awareness to others. Just helping students recognize signs of activity that seem out of the ordinary can save a life.

Read 2 Timothy 2:9b-10 before your Bible study session with

your students. Pray and ask God to give you direction as you lead in this session. Ask God to show you where you may need to make changes in your life related to standing up for others.

Spotlight Ministries:

TraffickStop is an initiative of the Christian Life Commission to educate, advocate, and engage in the issues of human trafficking with individuals, community groups, universities, social service agencies, churches, law enforcement, healthcare service providers, and schools.

According to the United Nations, human trafficking is now the second largest criminal industry in the world. It is estimated that 27-30 million people worldwide are enslaved today. Too often we think of such statements and brush them off as something we do not have to deal with, thinking it affects another part of the world. But the truth is, it is happening in the United States of America. It is happening in Texas. It could be happening in your city.

Our state has the longest international border in the United States. Its geographical area makes it difficult to police. The Interstate 10 corridor is one of the country’s major human trafficking routes, with Houston as its major hub, due largely to its international port. Texas has been reported to have 25 percent of all trafficking victims. Eighty percent of those impacted are women and girls, some as young as 12 years old. Boys and girls are recruited, coerced, or taken from airports, train stations, malls, schools, parks, youth centers, and theme parks.

The River Ministry and the No Más Violencia campaign are partnering to work with churches affected by the violence in Mexico and on the border. No Más Violencia has also been used

What Can I DO

- Give every student a marker. Remind the teens of what 2 Timothy 2:9-10 said.
- Ask the students to hold the hand they don’t write with, palm facing up. Instruct the students to take the markers and write the word “FREEDOM” in capital letters on their palm.
- When the students look at their palm, they’ll be reminded of the Scripture in 2 Timothy. Encourage students not to wash the verse off until they have spent a day at school.
- How are we being Christlike when we encourage those around us? This year make an effort to value and encourage others.

Standing Up and Speaking Out

- Provide magazines and ask students to point out ads that misrepresent the truth, (ie: cigarette ads). Ask them to show examples they find in media, culture, and politics that glamorize sex and violence. Explain that these are things that contribute to human exploitation. (For example, the word “pimp” is used in a joking manner, but it is actually the name of someone who is a sex trafficker.) Ask the students how they feel about using that word now.
- Give them examples, such as video games (ex: Grand Theft Auto), cultural attitudes towards women’s worth, strip clubs, pornography, etc.
- Ask the students to help end sexual exploitation and violence by not using language such as “pimp” or looking at pornography, nude pictures, or joking about violence.
- Ask the students to organize a fundraising event to support

the ministries of TraffickStop and No Más Violencia. They can expand on the “Museum in Chains” idea and create awareness for those in their church. They can also ask people to bring Bibles or a bundle of gospel tracts for their admittance. At the end of this event they can collect money for the Mary Hill Davis Offering to support these ministries and many others.

Prayer Time

Remind your students that we should always be aware of the things around us. Pray for people who are hurting, for courage to take a stand, and for the freedom of modern-day slaves.

Resources

Brochures: TraffickStop brochure, Traffick911 brochure, No Más Violencia brochure

Magazine: Fulfilled (2011), WMU.

Websites: www.TraffickStop.org, www.Facebook.com/TraffickStop.org, www.Traffick911.com, www.caase.org, www.NoMasViolencia.org, www.TexasBaptists.org/riverministry.

Additional resources at www.MaryHillDavis.org



Liz Encinia received her Master’s Degree in Christian Education from Dallas Baptist University and is currently serving as the Age-Level Consultant for WMU of Texas. Having been on student leadership teams for more than 10 years, she knows the dedication and sacrifice it takes to minister and mentor students.



Mary Hill Davis, president of Texas WMU from 1906 to 1931, saw Texas as a rich harvest field with its mixture of Anglo, Black, European, and Mexican populations. In 1910 she led the Baptist women of Texas to set aside a week to pray for the needs in the state and to take up an offering as they did for foreign and home missions. Following her death in 1934, the Texas missions offering was named in her memory.

Purpose: There are thousands of men, women, and children in Texas who are suffering because of human trafficking and violence. How can you and your students help take a stand for those who are unable to stand up for themselves? As of 2010, over half the world’s population is under the age of 24! Just like you, we know that students reach students.

Your students can be the first to share Jesus with people who desperately long for hope. Real hope. You can make a difference by challenging your students to step out and join Jesus as He befriended all people. With God’s help, they can reach the next generation of Texans and beyond.

This study is dedicated to helping you challenge and prepare your students to advocate for those who are suffering.

Introduction:

The 2011 theme for the Week of Prayer for Texas Missions is “Unchained...Set Free.” The focus of the youth study will be on two ministries advocating for those who cannot stand up for themselves. The Scripture passage is 2 Timothy 2:9b-10. Paul writes this letter to Timothy while sitting in jail for the cause of Christ. Paul reminds Timothy

that although he is in chains, the “hope” of God is not. Many children, teens, and adults get lured into lifestyles they did not choose. In a way, they are also living in chains. Like Timothy, we should speak out on behalf of others.

Later in this chapter Paul tells Timothy to remind people that the Word of the Lord is sure, and that God will remain true to His Word. As believers we, too, are urged to tell about all the wonderful things God has done. He has brought us out of the darkness of our unbelief into the light, as Christians who believe in God.

Paul reminds believers to concentrate on doing their best for God-work they will not be ashamed of, speaking the truth. We should not get caught up in the kind of language or talk we find around us; instead, we must evaluate whether words are used for good or for

evil. If we are not careful, we could easily be led down a path that God never intended, by following those who might try to deceive us.

Theme:
“Unchained...Set Free”

Scripture:
2 Timothy 2:9b-10

Date:
September 11-18, 2011

Suggested Music:
“Amazing Grace: My Chains are Gone” (Chris Tomlin)
“Amazing Grace”
“Open My Eyes”
“He Set Me Free”

MHD Offering Goal:
\$4,110,000

in schools to give young people a valid option to drug addiction, loitering, and violence. Mexican officials report that violence killed 6,290 people last year, and more than 1,000 in the first eight weeks of 2009.

The primary cause of the violence is a spiritual problem. Fewer mission groups are serving on the border because of safety concerns. This means that not only are people missing out on medical and food resources, but they are not hearing about the hope of Christ.

The River Ministry is organizing churches along the border to hold training conferences for church members on how to work with people who are affected by the violence. They will also be working to educate youth, in the hope this will keep them from getting caught up in the violence.

Before the Session:

1. Display the week of prayer poster.
2. Display the Scripture Poster, found on the Mary Hill Davis website (www.maryhilldavis.org).
3. Create an area in your room called “The Museum in Chains.” Hang six pictures with their coordinating stories and make the area look like something they might see in a museum. You may decorate with chains, cuffs, or anything that gives the feeling of being captured. Have pens and paper available for the students. These stories can be found at www.maryhilldavis.org under “Curriculum” in the Youth section.

During the Session:

Truth and A Lie Game

- Hand out a card to each student.

- Instruct students to write three statements about themselves. One must be a true statement. The other two must be untrue. (The more outrageous all three statements are, the better. Encourage students to think of odd information about themselves that no one else would know.)
- Have either the student or a group leader read from the card. After all three statements have been read, have the students vote on which statement they believe to be true. Then have the student in question reveal the truthful statement.
- Ask the students what makes this activity fun. Ask them if they found out something they did not know. Would they have found out these truths if they hadn’t shared them in class? What if they had made decisions based on the lies they believed?
- Say: “Our study today is going to help us understand the harsh reality of the truth about human trafficking and violence in our state.”

What Does the Bible Say?

- Ask the teens if they have ever had an experience where they met someone and found out that person was a runaway or had wounds, whip marks, and/or bruises at various stages of healing. Ask the students if they have ever just ignored what they saw because they didn’t want to “get involved.”
- Ask: Why do you think this happens? Make a list of the pros and cons of getting involved. What does it say about us if we don’t care about others when their situation seems complicated? What do you think God thinks about this?
- If you have more than four or five students, divide them into groups. Give each group a large piece of paper and

some markers. Instruct groups to create a list of what it means to speak up for others. Tell the groups to hold onto their lists.

- Give the groups (or individuals) the following Scripture passages on a note card or small piece of paper: 2 Timothy 2:9b-10, 2 Timothy 2:13, 15-16; 2 Timothy 2:22-26.
- Give the groups (or individuals) a piece of paper and a pen. Ask them to write down what these Scriptures teach about speaking up. Discuss what they learned in the large group.
- Some important points to remember to help guide your discussion: We are discussing the hard truth that people—men, women, and children—are suffering due to violence and trafficking in our state. God wants us to remind people of His love and exhort them to flee from evil. Youth must be aware of the horrible situations around them and figure out how to stand up for others.
- 2 Timothy 2:22-26 tell us there are things in the world that can blind us to the truth. Music we listen to, shows we watch on TV, daily conversations, clothes we wear, and books we read can cause us to be comfortable with “evil things.” We may not recognize certain things as “evil” because we’ve never viewed them in that way before. We can easily be deceived.
- Add to the discussion with some truths you learned from the Scriptures.
- Ask the students to pull out the lists they made earlier about what it means to speak up for others. How do these lists fit with what we learned from Scripture?
- Tell the students the definition for the word “advocate.”

Definition: Advocate - a person who speaks or writes in support or defense of a person, cause, etc. Ask the students to make a list of advocates and what they do.

- Continue the discussion by asking one or more of the following questions:

When is it the hardest to stand up for others? Why?

Do you think people in our society are respectful enough of each other? Why or why not?

When others see you treating people with respect, are they more likely to be respectful of others too?

How does standing up for others impact our Christian witness with others, or does it?

Relating To My World

- Share about the two ministries highlighted in this study. Give as much information as you can, but remember to be wise about how much detail you give when it relates to trafficking. Share about how these ministries affect teenagers just like them every day.
- Remind youth that trafficking is going on in our state, and students in the schools they attend might be victims. Explain that human trafficking is not something happening only in third-world countries, but something happening right here in the U.S. Tell them that Texas is a hub for trafficking due to our size, major highways, and port cities.
- Explain that human trafficking is basically modern-day slavery, where people are being used for sex and labor. And that, in most cases, these people were kidnapped, tricked, and even sold to other people for profit.

Share this story: “Taken From Her Driveway”

Debbie was called by a friend who asked if she could drop by her house to visit. (Debbie met her friend in the driveway and visited with her for a while. Her friend showed up with two others in a nice car.) As she was saying good-bye and leaned in for a hug, the girl pulled her into the vehicle, where they tied her up and held her at gunpoint. She was then forced into the sex trade where she was made to sleep with multiple guys in one night. She was only fifteen years old.

Share this story: “Given Kachepa”

Given Kachepa and seven other Zambian boys were recruited by a Baptist missionary to sing in his traveling choir in exchange for a better chance at life and a way to support their families and village. The ministry never paid the boys a dime or kept any promises. After months of deception, the boys quit in disgust and exhaustion. Their manager quickly reported the boys to the INS. The boys were arrested and thrown into jail, awaiting their fate. A family in Colleyville, Texas, came to the rescue when they remembered the choir performing for their church. Given Kachepa was taken in by this family and now has the life he was promised.

More information on this story can be found at:

www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2007/march/13.30.html

- Note that this last story is an example of a rare good ending for a victim of trafficking.
- Inform students that those involved in organized violence target teenagers for membership. When we think about the violence along the Texas-Mexico border, we automatically think the gangs referred to look like those we may see in

our home towns. But there is a difference. Surprisingly, these “organizations” look for the students who are the best of the best.

- Share that recruitment for these organizations targets students who are leaders and have the potential to influence others. This gives them a better edge, because these students will be “smart” about how they are involved in the violence and will be less likely to get caught.
- Explain that the people affected by the violence along the border also include their Christian brothers and sisters. Many pastors are literally living in a war zone. One pastor says, “I know this is a dangerous place to live. I have concerns for the safety of my family. We are struggling financially because our church members are losing their jobs, and many are afraid to come to church because of safety concerns; but I cannot leave because God has called me to serve in this community.”

Listen To My Story

- *Ask the students to visit your “Museum in Chains.” Tell them to read each story and write down any similarities they find between the stories.*
- *When everyone has finished going through the museum, have them discuss the similarities they found. (Similarities should include low self esteem, peer pressure, and identity issues.)*
- *Say that because the teenagers personally struggled with these issues, it made them vulnerable to being lured into these industries.*
- *Ask the students what they could have shared with the people in the stories to help them with the issues they struggled with.*