



# 2 Timothy

Keeping the Faith:  
Remaining Steadfast in the  
Face of Opposition

10-Week Study

Kara Cary

# 2 Timothy

*Keeping the Faith:*

*Remaining Steadfast in the Face of Opposition*

“By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.”

2 Timothy 1:14

The Small Group Facilitator's Guide

*Keeping the Faith: Remaining Steadfast in the Face of Opposition*

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## About the Author

Kara Cary married her high school sweetheart, Stephen. They have two children and live in the metro Atlanta area. Kara holds a bachelor's degree in business finance and later started her own calligraphy business. She focused primarily on the wedding industry until the Lord led her to seminary. Kara earned a master's degree in Biblical and Theological Studies through Dallas Theological Seminary where she concentrated on women's Bible study and women's ministry along with theology and Bible.

Kara is passionate about helping women study God's Word for themselves. She has been leading small groups, teaching, and facilitating Bible studies in various capacities for over 20 years. Early in marriage and as a mom with little children at home, God nurtured this passion and pressed it upon her heart to step out in obedience and return to school for further quipping. This led her to Dallas Theological Seminary. Her heart is to encourage women in all stages of their faith journey to prioritize spending time in God's Word, which has the power to transform lives. Kara believes that women's Bible studies provide incredible opportunities for personal exploration of Scripture and meaningful discussions in community with other women.

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This leader's guide begins with tips for structuring the weeks and facilitating small group discussions, followed by week-by-week guidance and theological ideas that may arise during small group discussions. It concludes with some "helpful cues" for moments when facilitating may feel challenging.

### Tips for your group:

Week 1 is written as an introduction to the study, allowing the teacher—if there is a large group teaching time—to explain the structure of the inductive study method and go more in-depth into the historical background of 2 Timothy. You can also include a fun large group icebreaker, like *Two Truths & a Lie*, to help participants get to know the teacher, teaching team, or small group leaders. This introductory week also provides an opportunity for small groups to get to know one another before digging into the text. If you're doing this study on your own, use Week 1 to explore the historical context independently and work through the introduction questions. Feel free to check out recommended resources on my website ([karacary.com](http://karacary.com)) if you would like to study further.

Week 10 is designed to complete the final verses of 2 Timothy and to provide a fun wrap-up time together (we brought small canvases and paints for the women to paint or write their favorite verse from the study to take home).

If you are a teacher teaching this study and you would like some ideas for introductory time or wrap-up on the last week, feel free to send me a message on my website or social media!

If possible, consider holding a small group facilitator "huddle" an hour before Bible study attendees arrive to walk through any potentially difficult topics that may come up in that week's lesson. This guide is designed to help prepare facilitators for those kinds of conversations. This time can also be used to discuss any issues arising in small groups, allowing leaders to support one another and share ideas for how to respond. It also provides time to go through the week's questions together. Since the role of a facilitator is to encourage discussion, this gathering gives leaders a space to share what God is teaching them each week with one another!

## Tips for Facilitating Small Group Discussion

### Personal Study Preparation:

- ❖ This study uses the ESV version. Commit to completing the homework.
- ❖ Start your study time with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to help you understand and apply the passage to your own life. This is a great time to pray for the women in your group as they study and for what is going on in their lives.
- ❖ Take your time going through the questions and writing your answers in the spaces provided.
- ❖ If you are stuck on a question, pray for understanding, move on if needed, and come back to it. You can also look up other translations or use an English dictionary.
- ❖ Take time to really consider the application questions. God's Word transforms lives, and if we are asking the women in our groups to do this, we can set an example for them.

### Facilitating Small Groups:

- ❖ Make sure the women have all received their studies.
- ❖ Start and end your group on time! It goes fast and you will want to maximize fruitful discussion and be on time for the large group teaching if there is one afterward.
  - A little tip, use your phone to set an alarm 5-10 minutes before the end of the small group to give time to wrap up the discussion and pray before moving to the large group teaching time or dismissing.
- ❖ Always begin with prayer.
- ❖ Share with your ladies that no matter their Bible study experience level or where they are in their faith journey, everyone is studying, learning, and helping each other grow in their relationship with God.
- ❖ In your first week together, explain to your ladies that your role is to facilitate discussion, not dispense information. Avoid answering your own questions. Of course, rephrase, reword, or repeat any questions. A vibrant discussion can be hindered if the members think the leader will do most of the talking.
- ❖ Feel free to ask follow-up questions to spark further discussion, especially with quieter groups.
- ❖ While facilitating, you are still encouraged to interject your experience on a few questions to relate with the ladies and be vulnerable to help build connection!
- ❖ Be comfortable with silence! Some women need a little more time to open up and share, and this gives everyone in the group the opportunity to share what God taught them that week. Share this with your ladies on your first week together.
- ❖ Encourage more than one answer with something like, "Did anyone have anything different/additional to add?" "What did everyone else think?"

- ❖ Affirm the women's answers. If something is said that is not biblical you can ask, "What verse did you see that in?" You can also open it up for the group and ask, "What did you all see on this one?"
- ❖ In the beginning, the women may tend to look to you as they answer, but the hope is for them to engage with one another in healthy discussion. Follow-up questions and questions posed back to the group is a great way to help this along.
- ❖ Controversy may happen, and that is ok. Point the ladies back to the text, and if needed, offer to chat with anyone after group so that you can make sure to get through all the questions.
- ❖ Always end with prayer. Decide how you will take prayer requests before and communicate it to your group on your first week together.
  - Some ideas: pass around a notebook for everyone to write their request, give everyone a notecard to write their request and then mix them up and give everyone a card to pray over for that week.

#### Communication:

- ❖ If you can, contact the women in your group individually to introduce yourself prior to your first week.
- ❖ During your first week, ask your ladies if they are comfortable with being on a group thread for weekly reminders, prayer request updates, etc.
- ❖ If you can, check in with your ladies throughout the study. Keep it simple, just let them know you are praying for them/their prayer request. You can use this as a time to affirm them letting them know you appreciated the insight they shared in group that week.
- ❖ Be warm and welcoming, help the women feel at ease, especially if they are new!

#### Other Helpful Things:

- ❖ Everything that is shared in the group is confidential. During your first week, let your women know this so they aren't worried if they share something that it will be passed along to others.
- ❖ If you are having a large group teaching time, invite your ladies to sit together.
  - Makes them feel comfortable if they don't know anyone
  - Makes them feel connected
- ❖ If you have an issue that comes up and you are not sure how to handle it, please feel free to contact your leaders or coordinators for help!
- ❖ There are some helpful cues on page for you to use for different circumstances if you need help or get stuck!

Every large group Bible study or church may have different policies; however, these are a couple of things your group may consider sharing with your ladies during your first week:

The use of commentaries in discussion:

- ❖ We want to refrain from *talking* about commentaries in our discussion- woman should be encouraged to continue using them in their personal study, just not name-dropping titles in small group discussions :)
- ❖ Commentaries are not the same as a study Bible!
- ❖ The women are all at different stages in their faith journey, so if one woman starts sharing what she is finding in her commentaries, that can make other women feel not spiritual enough, or that they are doing something wrong by only using the Bible
- ❖ God's Word is sufficient, and we can be confident to study His Word.
- ❖ This is not to be legalistic and robotic, simply to make every woman feel confident in studying God's Word!

Political commentary:

- ❖ We want to refrain from name-dropping specific political names, parties, etc.
- ❖ We want everyone to come and focus on God's Word and not feel worried about political divisiveness.





## Week 1: Introduction and Overview

Start your group on time and open with prayer

Introductions

- ❖ Have everyone in the group share their name, family, if they work what they do, are they new to Bible Study, and maybe one other fun question you have prepared

Share with your ladies a little bit more about you -

- ❖ About your family, how long you have been a part of this church or Bible study, where you grew up, a condensed faith story/background, and anything else you'd like to share that may help the women connect with you

Go over:

- ❖ Let your ladies know this is their time to share and discuss what God is teaching them and that you are there to facilitate, not correct or teach, but simply to help guide and spur on the discussion among the group.
- ❖ That you are ok with what may feel like “awkward” silence, that is intentional. Some women need a little more time to open up and share, and this gives everyone in the group the opportunity to share what God taught them that week.
- ❖ Encourage them to be mindful of all the women in the group, and some are not as quick to jump in to answer, and you want everyone to have the opportunity to share what God is teaching them.
- ❖ Communicate your plan for taking prayer requests.
- ❖ Cover the “other helpful things you can share with your ladies during your first week” on the page above about commentaries and politics.
- ❖ Tell them the structure of the Bible study (i.e. will you have small group discussion and then large group teaching if your group has this, where they should meet, remind them of the timing of each week, and that you will start on time).

Go over week 1 questions

Pray to close



## Week 2: Fan Your Flame

*2 Timothy 1:1-7*

Remember what time small group time ends and set an alarm for a 5-10 minute warning to give time to wrap up, take prayer requests, pray, and close.

There are a lot of questions to get through. Give yourself grace and do your best to get to them all.

- ❖ Remember, if the “quiet one” in the group came ready and excited to share on the last question on the last day, and you don’t get to it, she may leave feeling discouraged and may not share in the future.
- ❖ Feel free to use the “helpful cues” on pages 18-21 to rein in a very vocal group or a very quiet group.
- ❖ You can get through the 2 observation days each week pretty quickly, telling your ladies, “let’s cover these observation questions quickly, maybe 1 person each question.” That way, you can spend more time discussing the interpretation and application questions.
- ❖ Over time and when you get a feel of what type of group you have, the use numbers is great, especially with a more vocal group, i.e. “I would love to hear from maybe 2 people on this one,” or “So we can move to the next day, is there 1 person who is willing to share on this one?”
  - If you have a quiet group, you can use this too, but maybe more like “I would love to hear from a few of you on this question.” A quiet group is a great one to fill in follow-up questions like, “Does anyone else respond similarly?” “Or differently?” “How so?”

This week does not have any major issues or theological topics that should arise, but always be prepared for shifts in the discussion.



## Week 3: Guard the Truth

*2 Timothy 1:8–18*

Take a minute to evaluate how the first 2 weeks have gone. How did you find the balance between keeping the discussion moving and allowing time for rich conversation? What do you need to tweak this week?

How is your communication with the women in your group going?

- ❖ While group threads are easier and great for weekly reminders and prayer requests, individual communication can feel more personal and build a connection more quickly. When a woman feels connected, she is more likely to remain committed and attend regularly.
- ❖ You can split the group in half and reach out to half of your ladies one day and half the next day. You don't have to engage in a long conversation; just let them know you are praying for them or ask if there is anything specific you can pray for that week. Or simply let them know you really appreciated something they shared during your small group time.

Theological topic that might come up: Predestination.

- ❖ It is more likely to come up next week in chapter 2; however, some women may pick up on the language (seen in the next bullet point) that is used in this week's text.
- ❖ Vs. 9 says that we have been saved and called to a holy calling...before the ages.
- ❖ You can tell your ladies that their questions may be covered more next week. These verses are cross-references in next week's homework on another question that may bring up predestination
  - Romans 8:28–30; Ephesians 1:3–5; Mark 13:19–20



## Week 4: Be Strong and Endure

*2 Timothy 2:1-13*

Reminder: feel free to restate any questions or ask follow-up questions if needed. While your role is facilitating, it is not meant to feel mechanical or robotic; create a warm environment where women feel free to share and contribute. Help your ladies feel like they can relate to you during discussion by picking only a couple of questions to share a brief answer.

Take a minute to reflect on what's working well in your group: discussion, communication, prayer. Think through any adjustments you may need to make. If needed, reach out to another small group leader to brainstorm ideas with you. (This is great if doing a large Bible study and have a small group leader huddle time before the study each week.)

Theological topic that might come up: Suffering.

- ❖ In verse 3 Paul tells Timothy/us to share in suffering. The theology of suffering is one that many people struggle with.
- ❖ Scripture is clear: there will be suffering in this broken world until Jesus comes and restores all things. His Word says that believers will suffer.
- ❖ Day 2, Questions 2&3; Day 4, Questions 2&4; and Days 5, Questions 3,4, & 5 ask about suffering or pushback for our faith.
- ❖ Think through the women in your group and be ready to respond with love and grace if someone is struggling with this.

Be ready to point your group to what scripture has to say about trials and suffering, and the hope we have that one day Jesus will restore all things! If someone shares a difficult situation, and it's appropriate, be willing to pause and pray over them. You can also offer to continue the conversation after group, then gently guide the discussion back to the homework questions.

Theological topic that might come up: Predestination.

- ❖ It may come up on Day 4, Question 3.
- ❖ Romans 8:28–30; Eph. 1:3–5; and Mark 13:19–20 are the cross-references in the homework.
- ❖ You can ask the Bible study leader about the church’s or Bible study’s position on this topic ahead of time so that, if a discussion becomes heated or the “helpful cues” aren’t working, you can gently share the church or study’s stance on this issue is. You can then offer to meet with the participant afterward or direct them to the pastors or Bible study leader for further conversation and clarification. Then move on to the remaining homework questions.



## Week 5: Live Boldly

*2 Timothy 2:14–26*

Take a moment to reflect on how you are facilitating. Are you find it easier and more natural to guide and promote deeper discussion? Do you need to make any changes as you have reached the halfway point of the study?

Think about the women in your group. Are there some who have not attended regularly? What encouragement might they need? How can you help the women who haven't shared much feel more comfortable and confident to do so? Remind your ladies we are all learning and growing, and it helps build one another up to hear what God is teaching all of us each week!

Possible issue that could come up: "Saying that the resurrection has already happened" from verse 18 may or may not come up in discussion, as it is not a specific homework question, or may have confused some ladies. Below is some helpful info if needed. If there is a large group teaching time, the teacher might also cover this then.

- ❖ The false teachers were treating the resurrection as a spiritual experience (a form of Gnosticism)
- ❖ Multiple issues surrounding resurrection:
  - The resurrection of Christ is foundational to our faith; without it, our faith is futile.
  - The hope of a future resurrection of bodies, we see in Scripture, is a real event that will take place at the end of the age.
  - A few verses your ladies can study further on the subject of the resurrection, both Jesus' resurrection and the future resurrection of bodies:
    - 1 Cor. 15 (particularly 15:53–54, but all of chapter 15 speaks on the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of bodies when Jesus returns)
    - 1 Thess. 4:13–18; Acts 24:15; John 5:28–29



## Week 6: Reject the Ways of the World

*2 Timothy 3:1–9*

Theological topic that might come up: Eschatology (theology of the end times)

- ❖ The “last days” may bring up the end times, so be prepared for side tangents and how to respond if the discussion gets heated or off track. That is not the overall point of this passage, so focus on bringing the women back to the homework questions.

This week has some heavy content: a list of sins. Yes, the text refers to false teachers and worldliness, but we are all sinners and struggle with some of the things in these verses. Some of these topics may be tender for certain women in your group, so be mindful and approach them with care and compassion. Think through and personal stories anyone has shared in previous weeks that might indicate to you that some of the vices from this passage might have stirred up some difficult things.

- ❖ “Abusive” - this is a sensitive topic, but the word in the original language means slander/blasphemy. If a woman opens up and shares a story regarding this, listen, use some of the “helpful cues,” and if appropriate, stop and pray over the situation before moving the group along to the next question.
- ❖ “Weak women” could bring up potential discussions about the value of women. You could have some women believe that Paul doesn’t value women and sees them as weak and easy to prey upon. If it gets off the rails and if you need, here are just a few passages where we can see Paul’s value of women:
  - Chloe- 1 Cor. 1:11
  - Priscilla (Prisca)- Rom. 16:3; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 4:19
  - Phoebe- Rom. 16:1
  - Mary- Rom. 16:6
  - Tryphena and Tryphosa- Rom. 16:12
  - Persis- Rom. 16:12

- Euodia and Syntyche- Phil. 4:2
  - Apphia- Philemon 2
  - Claudia- 2 Tim. 4:21
- ❖ Some may have a hard time with Paul's urging of Timothy to "avoid such people" in verse 5.
- He's not talking about unbelievers. He's talking about those who had infiltrated the church intentionally to lure away (wolves in sheep's clothing).





## Week 7: Live a Godly Life

*2 Timothy 3:10-17*

Theological topic that might come up: Suffering.

- ❖ This week is not as heavy on the topic of suffering as week 4, but verse 12 says that those who desire to live a godly life will be persecuted.
- ❖ Day 2, Question 5 may bring it up more specifically.
- ❖ Refer back to week 4 in this guide if you need to.

Day 4 question 2 may not be new for many in your group, but be aware of anyone who might not yet be a believer but may want to make this decision.

- ❖ For those who have already surrendered their lives to Christ, focus on the first question or ask a follow-up like, “Who first shared their faith with you and how did it impact your faith?” Or “How can you share this truth with someone this week?”

Theological topic that might come up: inspiration and sufficiency of Scripture

- ❖ There is a little blurb in the glossary on the Doctrine of Scripture. There is more to it than what is in the glossary, that is just a very brief highlight to help add some clarity.
- ❖ 2 Pet. 1:3 also may be helpful = “His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness”



## Week 8 Be Prepared

*2 Timothy 4:1–8*

At this point, think about the women in your group—especially those who may be new to Bible study or have never done a 10-week study before. Are they feeling tired or struggling to stay committed? How can you come alongside them and encourage them to keep going?

Give them encouragement that there is still so much to gain by coming and participating in the discussion. Start talking to them about week 10, encouraging them to come for that last week, as the final verses will be covered and there are still questions to go through as a group.

Be prepared to reign in rabbit trails that may come up with day 3 asking about those with “itching ears” and “wandering off into myths” and what that looks like today.

Be prepared for any women who may struggle with thinking about heaven or a lack of excitement for it.

- ❖ Randy Alcorn’s *Heaven* is a great resource for anyone interested.



## Week 9 Live a Life of Sincerity

*2 Timothy 4:9-18*

This week's passage highlights those who turned away from Paul or caused him harm. It may bring up painful experiences for some women. Be ready to listen and respond with love and grace. If the conversation begins to go off track, be prepared to gently rein it in and guide the group back to the study questions.

Day 4, Question 2 may prompt some women to share things that are either unhealthy or not appropriate for a group setting. We do not want this to lead to gossip. The question is meant to help us be aware of anyone around us who oppose the gospel and not be influenced by them. Be prepared to gently step in if needed and help redirect the conversation.

Day 5 question 1, there may be varying answers on this one. Some commentators believe the lion's mouth is referencing past trials and the evils of this world that Paul was rescued from.



## Week 10

### *2 Timothy 4:19–22 and Review*

Prior to this final meeting together, reach out to your ladies and encourage them to come, they don't want to miss the teaching on the final verses and wrap-up time.

\*If you are leading the Bible study or are the teacher for the study and would like some ideas, please feel free to reach out to me via social media or fill out a form on my website ([karacary.com](http://karacary.com))

Take some time to evaluate how small group went over the course of the study. What things went well and what things could you work on for next time?

If your Bible study leader is ok with it, maybe ask the ladies in your group for some feedback of how the study went.

If your Bible study leader hasn't planned a specific activity for the final day, take your time walking through the final questions and review them with your group. This can be a meaningful opportunity for the women to share how the study has impacted them and encouraged growth or change in their lives—it may be a wonderful time of mutual encouragement.



## Helpful Cues

### Small Group Helpful Cues

These are some examples if you are stuck or need help!

#### Cues to affirm your ladies:

- ❖ “That is a beautiful thought, can anyone else relate to that?”
- ❖ “I had not thought about that before, thank you for sharing!”
- ❖ “I love that, that is so encouraging!”

#### Cues if a member asks you a question:

- ❖ Pose the question to the rest of the group, “What do you all think?”
- ❖ Re-read the text
- ❖ Encourage everyone to study it and come back the next week with what they found

#### Cues to help make connections within the group:

- ❖ “Does anyone else respond in a similar way?”
- ❖ “What about others who may respond differently, what is that response for you?” and follow up with “Can anyone else relate to that?”
- ❖ Can make it a little lighter and how you can relate:
  - “So it’s not just me?!” and then follow it up with, “Can anyone else relate?”
- ❖ If women respond that yes they can relate, ask them to share what it looks like for them.
- ❖ Relating to and connecting with the ladies by sharing how you respond similarly using a short example is great.

Cues for when someone shares something personal or hard:

- ❖ “Thank you for being open and vulnerable with us and sharing that.”
- ❖ “Thank you for sharing that personal story. I know it isn’t always easy to share those kinds of things.”
- ❖ “I can only imagine what that was like, thank you for sharing it with us.”
- ❖ “I will be praying for that, let me know if you would like for me to share that in our group prayer requests.”
- ❖ Always be willing to pause and pray right then, if appropriate, before continuing on with the questions.

Cues for a quieter group:

- ❖ “We haven’t heard from someone on this side of the room yet, would anyone be willing to share?”
- ❖ “I would love to hear from at least 2 more on this question.”
- ❖ “I would hate to skip this question and move on without it being answered, is anyone willing to jump in on this one?”
- ❖ For questions with cross-references or that point to a specific verse, you can ask if someone could read that verse for the group.
- ❖ If the group remains quiet over time, maybe think through some follow-up questions to foster more discussion.

Cues for a more vocal group:

- ❖ “I hate to break up this great discussion, but let’s move on to the next question, if we have time, at the end we can come back to it.”
- ❖ “I am so encouraged by this conversation! I would love to hear your thoughts on the next question!”
- ❖ “That is wonderful, I am learning so much from this discussion! Moving on to the next question...”
- ❖ “We can move through these next few questions quickly, maybe just one person answer on these next few!”

Cues for groups with an over-sharer or who go off-topic easily:

- ❖ “Thank you so much for sharing, does anyone else have anything they would like to share on this one?”
- ❖ “Let’s look back at the question again and see if anyone else has any insight on this one.”
- ❖ “I love hearing how studying God’s Word applies to all areas of our lives! Let’s move on to the next question!”
- ❖ If it is a continual issue, maybe a side conversation could help- remind the over-sharer that we want everyone to have the opportunity to share with the group what God is teaching them.

Cues if someone brings up political comments repeatedly:

- ❖ “Politics do impact our lives, and it is so important to be involved. Let’s come back to this question.”
- ❖ “I don’t want to interrupt, but we have a couple of days of homework left to cover! Let’s move to the next question.”
- ❖ “Thank you for opening up about that, let’s come back to the passage for day \_\_\_\_ (whatever day you are on). Does anyone see anything different on this question?”
- ❖ If someone does bring up specific political parties/candidates repeatedly, have a private conversation with that member outside of small group time.

Cues for incorrect theology:

- ❖ If someone shares something incorrect dealing with core theology, mainly salvation issues, then lovingly step in and remind them what God’s Word says (below are just a few possible examples):
  - “We believe that God’s Word shows us [Then fill in the blank as fits the scenario], “I would love to talk more with you about this afterward if you are interested!”
  - Just a few references related to salvation depending on the scenario and what aspect of it is in question, this is just a short list:
    - Romans 10:9 says, “if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”
    - Luke 1: 68 (He accomplished redemption)
    - Romans 5:1 (justified by faith), 5:1–19 so good for a deeper explanation of our salvation- 5:8–9 (while we were sinners, Christ died for us...justified by His blood)
    - John 14:6 (“I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”)

- “We believe God’s Word is clear about salvation, I would love to talk with you more after!”
- On marriage “We at [fill in the blank with your church or Bible study] believe in a Biblical view of marriage- and that is between 1 man and 1 woman. I would love to talk about this more afterward and look together to see what the Bible says about this topic.”
- “If you want to know more about what [fill in the blank with your church or Bible study group] believes about this topic, I encourage you to take a look at this section on the church’s website: [share the link or where they can find the values/beliefs]”
- ❖ If someone shares something that isn’t a salvation issue, here are just a few examples below but you can fill in the blank with the specific thing that comes up:
  - “The theology of suffering is a hard one, I know. I wrestle with it at times too. I would love to study this further together this week if you are interested?”
  - “This is a subject that even many wise theologians have come to different conclusions on, so maybe we can take some time to study this further on our own and see what we learn about it from God’s Word about it.”
  - There may be theological topics that come up in discussion that will be covered in the teaching or that you will have a heads up from this leader’s guide. Feel free to consult your church or Bible study group to know their stance on these particular theological issues.