



**The Extended Family Makeover - Part 1**  
**By Rev. Rose-Marie Litwin**  
**August 14, 2011**  
**1 & 2 Timothy**

You may have noticed that I don't have any kids! Yet if you asked me, I would tell you that I believe I have dozens of them. As a single woman I know that God has called me to help families grow kids into spiritual champions. While the best place for this to happen is in the home, even the best of homes with dedicated Christian parents need help. Today, very few of the homes kids are growing up in have two dedicated Christian parents. Therefore, it's vital that others take an interest in and speak into the lives of these kids.

So how do we transform kids into spiritual champions? Paul was an apostle who took a young man named Timothy under his wing and began to disciple him, began to groom him into a spiritual leader. In the New Testament we have two personal letters Paul writes to Timothy. In these letters we get some insights into this relationship and how Paul, as a spiritual father, was used by God to raise up Timothy as a spiritual champion. Through Paul, Timothy was equipped to pastor and lead through a very difficult church situation in Ephesus. In the next couple of weeks we will be looking at these two letters and a few other places in Scripture where Timothy and Paul's relationship is revealed, to figure out what it takes to raise up kids who are spiritual champions.

If we open our Bibles to 2 Timothy chapter 1 we will find that Timothy was a lot like many kids in our world today. 2 Timothy 1:5: *"I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also."* Timothy, like many kids today, has a faith that comes from mom and grandma. Paul comes onto the scene as a guy who fills kind of an extended family role in Timothy's life. Not just as a man outside Timothy's immediate family, but as a pastor filling an absent father, grandparent or extended family role. As we read these personal letters we are going to get a glimpse at how God used Paul to transform Timothy into a spiritual champion and as we do, we are going to receive some insights into how we can become effective extended family members to the kids in our lives, and also help them to become all that God intends them to be.



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First, we become an extended spiritual family when we own the responsibility of mentoring kids spiritually. (1 Timothy 1:2): “*To Timothy my true son in the faith*”.

2 Timothy 1:2: “*To Timothy my dear son*”. Paul didn’t tiptoe around his responsibility to raise this kid up as a spiritual champion. He said this is my responsibility. I’m going to own it. I’m going to claim it. I’m going to go for it!

Do we do that? Do we unabashedly, accept that we are responsible for the spiritual growth and development of the kids God puts in our lives? Paul does, he claims it, he owns it—“*Timothy my true son in the faith*.” Timothy, let’s get it out on the table where everyone, including you, can see that I am taking responsibility for spiritual growth and development in your life. And Timothy isn’t even his kid!

So if you’re thinking this *Faith@Home* stuff doesn’t apply to you, because you don’t have kids or because your kids are grown and gone or because you don’t have grandkids, or because you are single— guess what, Paul was single. He didn’t have children or grandchildren of his own, but he still saw it as his responsibility to pass the faith on to the next generation. Maybe you are a grandparent and your grandkids live far away. There are dozens of kids here at Banwell and in the Windsor area who could use a spiritual grandparent, dad or friend.

Second, you can still make a difference from a distance. Like Tom and Susan Holmes who use the phone and computer to keep in contact with their grandkids who live in California and Ireland. They make an effort to stay as connected as possible sending faith-based gifts, praying for and with them and allowing their Christian faith to be a natural part of their relationships. They intentionally invest in the children spiritually. They could make all the excuses in the world, but distance hasn’t prevented them from claiming the responsibility that God wants to use them to transform their grandchildren into spiritual champions (even from thousands of miles away).

Paul owned it, he claimed it, he said this is my responsibility. The Holmes, own it! Do you own the responsibility in the lives of the kids God has put in your life? The first step in transforming children into spiritual champions is to **OWN** the responsibility!

Excerpts taken from Mark Holmen and David Tiexeira “Take it Home; Inspiration and Events to Help Parents Spiritually Transform their children”  
Gospel Light, 2008, pg. 234-236

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