

**Text: Acts 16:1-3; II Timothy 1:3-9a**

**Title: “What Boys Need Most”**

Let's open our Bibles today to Acts 16. One of the leading figures in the New Testament is a man named Timothy. We're first introduced to him here in Acts 16, but he'll show up in some very important places later in Acts and the letters of the Apostle Paul as Timothy becomes a member of Paul's missionary team. Two of the letters of the NT are addressed directly to Timothy who, at that point, is probably the pastor of the church in Ephesus. So here is a man whom God used in a powerful way in history; and we learn the factors that shaped his life. Read Acts 16:1-3.

Now turn to II Timothy 1:3. It is rare that we have the opportunity to look back into the childhood of a biblical person and see what factors contributed to them becoming the persons whom God used in a remarkable way. We have that opportunity with Timothy. Read II Timothy 1:3-9a.

Today in the series “Home/Hope” I'm here to talk about “What Boys Need Most.” What boys need most is exactly what girls need most. They need to discover their place and take their place in God's glorious kingdom purposes. Timothy's name means “honors God,” so apparently at least one of his parents longed for Timothy to live up that noble name. Timothy's place was a preacher of the Gospel. Your son or daughter may discover they have a different place. But as parents and grandparents we have to be absolutely committed to the task of helping our children know, love, serve and obey God ... and to find their place in God's glorious quest to spread His fame to the nations.

**PHOTO ILLUSTRATION** – On September 3, 1939 the king of England, King George VI, made perhaps the most important speech of his life warning the British nation of the growing threat of Nazi Germany under Adolph Hitler ... the threat that would become WWII. Those who knew the king well knew that he had to overcome a tremendous handicap in order to make the speech that would move a nation to prepare for war. The handicap? He stammered. When George VI was born to Queen Victoria his birth was not welcomed with joy; it came on the anniversary of two other family deaths. So every year George's birthdays were sad times for his family and he took it all very personally. George's father was a stern, overbearing man who had little patience with children which added to George's feelings of inadequacy that affected him most of his life. To make matters worse George had a Nanny named Mrs. Green who basically ignored George, sometimes even forgetting to feed him. They forced George to write with his right hand, even though he was prone to be left-handed. He wanted desperately to please his father but regularly was made to understand that he did not. So George developed a dreadful sense of unworthiness. And by the time he was 8 years old he developed a stammer in his speech which he never entirely overcame. When George became the king of England he was forced to make public speeches, but he was horrified because of his severe stammering. At that point a speech therapist named Lionel Logue came into his life. Logue coached the king and encouraged him to where he was able to speak to the nation and give them courage to face one of their darkest hours. As you watch this video clip from “The King's Speech” you will see in

the background the encouraging face of Lionel Logue reassuring the fearful king. SHOW VIDEO.

That story shows us the importance of how we raise our kids. Certainly we want them to develop a healthy sense of value and confidence. But more importantly, for those of us who are believers, we want our kids to glorify God by finding and filling their place in His great Kingdom's purposes. There's some indication that Timothy may have been a fearful young man. But thankfully he had people in his life that helped him fulfill God's purpose. So let's learn from his story what our boys (and girls) need most. They need ...

## 1. LEADERSHIP

Acts 16:1 says that when Paul came to Lystra he discovered "a disciple named Timothy." Now disciples are made, not born. So obviously someone invested in Timothy's life to help him become a follower of Jesus Christ. Of course that means he was saved. He had put his trust in Christ. But to be a disciple is not just a one-time decision; it is a life-long process of learning to follow Jesus. And for Timothy this process started with...

### **THE FEMALE FIGURES IN HIS LIFE.**

Acts 16:1 tells us that Timothy's mother was a Jewish woman and a believer named Eunice. So Timothy's mom had more than a cultural religion. She had become a convictional believer ... one who had put her faith and trust in Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of her life. Parents, you can't *pass* on to your kids what you don't *possess* yourself. But it wasn't just Timothy's mother's faith; it was also his grandmother's faith.

**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.**

Notice their faith "lived" in them. That word "lived" means "to dwell in." It wasn't just a surface faith; it was a deep, solid faith. It was like a tsunami wave that rolled forward multiple generations. And we know from later in II Timothy that these women imbedded the Word of God into Timothy's life.

**2 Timothy 3:15 - From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.**

Presumably the faith that lived in Timothy was a result of his mother and grandmother imbedding the Word of God into his life. They read it, talked about it and obeyed it. Your faith can't *live* in your children until it *lives* in you.

### **NOTICE THE MALE FIGURES IN HIS LIFE.**

Acts 16:1 says that Timothy's father was a Greek. But that's all we know. Apparently, for whatever reason, Tim's dad was a non-factor in his life spiritually. And that's sad because one of things boys need most is to have a dad whose love for God is so strong that it can't help but be conveyed to his children. Timothy's *biological* father may have failed at this point, but thankfully Timothy also had a *spiritual* father ... the Apostle Paul. In his letters Paul was fond of calling Timothy his son in the faith.

There's so much confusion over gender issues in our culture today. (You know this if you've followed the sad story of Bruce/Caitlyn Jenner.) Church we have the opportunity to model the good and beautiful purposes of God as He created male and female to be married and to have children. Then children benefit from the *unique* qualities of having godly dad and mother in their lives. But we live in a world broken by sin and so sometimes children need others to come alongside to help them develop into passionate followers of Jesus Christ.

As a result of the impact of these important people in his life Timothy became a disciple. I'm so thankful for the hundreds of men and women who are volunteering in VBS this coming week. They have the opportunity to come alongside some young boys and girls to help them come to know Christ and follow Him all their lives.

Well, Acts 16 says that Paul is immediately impressed with Timothy and sees his potential in God's great Kingdom purposes. So boys need leadership. But also they need...

## **2. AFFIRMATION**

**2 Timothy 1:3 - I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers.**

This is not just to build up their sense of self-esteem. More than that, they need a healthy sense of "God-esteem." When we tell a child, "I thank God for you," we are saying God is a good God. In His rich goodness He has blessed us through you. There are many grown men walking around today who still can't get over the fact that their dad never encouraged them. Boys also need:

## **3. PRAYER**

**2 Timothy 1:3b - Night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers.**

Dads and moms, do you fervently, seriously pray for your children? When you pray you are releasing God's very best in the lives of your children. You need to pray with them and pray for them. Our boys (and girls) also need...

## **4. AFFECTION**

That's right. Boys need affection. Previous generations didn't take this that seriously. The thought was you have to toughen them up ... slug them, don't hug them. I don't see that in the Word of God. Timothy's spiritual father expressed affection to him:

## **2 Timothy 1:4 - Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy**

Physical and emotional harshness (abuse) creates fearful children. Remember what happened to King George VI as a boy? We'll see in a moment that Timothy many have had a fearful side to him. But he had a man who loved him and constantly prayed for him and genuinely cared about him. Boys need to see the tough and the tender side of manhood. So boys need affection, but they also they need a sense of ...

## **5. CALLING**

### **2 Timothy 1:6 - For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.**

Paul helped Timothy recognize God's calling upon his life. Acts 16:1 says that Paul wanted to take Timothy along with him on his missionary team. Whether it happened in the church at Lystra or some other church, Paul and other elders of the church recognized God's call upon Timothy's life, so they "ordained" him by setting him apart for the Gospel ministry. I Timothy 4:14 tells us that someone prophesied over Timothy, strongly exhorting him to take his place in God's great kingdom's work. They laid hands on him indicating their prayerful desire for God's Spirit and grace to be upon him. And Paul now admonishes Timothy to develop and fan into flame this gift of God's calling.

Now not all kids will become preachers or missionaries in the official sense of the word. But as Christian parents we have to be passionate about helping our children discover the unique thing God is calling them to do. And it will not be just to make money, or have nice things, or live the good life. We have to help our kids catch a vision of the calling of God upon their lives as Christ-followers to make His fame known among the nations. Anything short of that will be selling our kids short.

There's something else our boys need:

## **6. COURAGE**

What if every boy (and girl) had these words spoken over their lives? **Read II Timothy 1:7-9.**

We need sons and daughters who will be courageous enough to make much of Jesus. If the Gospel is to be taken to all the nations ... if the testimony of Jesus will be strong in our kids in the next generation it will require courageous young men and women.

So tell me, moms and dads, is your faith living in you strongly enough that it can roll like a wave into the lives of your children? How about it grandparents?

You see, it's all about the Gospel...

**2 Timothy 1:9 – (God) has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,**