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GENERATION TO GENERATION Michael B. Beaugh  
Deuteronomy 6:4-9; II Timothy 1:3-5 August 23, 2009  
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I have always been intrigued with II Timothy 1:5. It tells us that Timothy's faith in Jesus Christ came by way of his grandmother Lois. She made sure her grandson knew Jesus.

**The movie "Road to Redemption" is about a grandfather who gets a chance to share his faith with his granddaughter.** The movie begins with the granddaughter Amanda stealing \$250,000 from her mob boss and losing it at the race track. She knows she is in big trouble. Her boyfriend Alan decides he knows what to do. He burns down the mob boss's office to cover up the theft. However, the boss knows everything. He knows Amanda took the money, and he knows Alan set fire to his office.

In this first film clip, Amanda discovers that her house has been ransacked by her boss's goons who are looking for the money. She and Alan are trying to figure what to do to avoid becoming fish bait in Lake Mead. As she digs through the mess in her house, she finds a photo that gives her an idea. It involves her long lost grandfather who has "millions".

Clip #1 – 00:14:39-00:16:34

Isn't that interesting? For Amanda and Alan, her grandfather's new religion is a sign that he has gone soft and will be an easy mark for the money. Amanda finds him in a VA hospital in Flagstaff, Arizona. Grandfather Nathan actually does agree to give Amanda the money, but on one condition – that she drive him to his favorite fishing hole in Redemption, Montana. Of course, she agrees and the rest of the movie is a road trip with the bad guys chasing them across Utah.

**What Amanda doesn't realize is that this road trip will change her life in a way she never dreamed of.** It is because along the way Nathan reveals the change that Jesus Christ has brought to his life.

In this next clip, Amanda and her grandfather are taking a travelling break in Arches National Park near Moab, Utah. Amanda learns that her grandfather has a fatal heart condition. She also learns how his faith sustains him.

Clip #2 – 00:33:37-00:35:05

I like the way Nathan's sharing is personal and seems to come naturally to him. He gets other chances to share, especially after they nearly get killed when their car stalls on a train track. It is night. They are trying to figure what to do. Suddenly, they hear a train whistle. They look and see a

train bearing down on them. They scramble to get out of the car, but Amanda can't get out. Her sweater is caught in the seat mechanism. Nathan runs to her door and pulls her free just seconds before the train demolishes the car. As you can imagine, Amanda starts thinking about her own mortality. **Near death experiences have a way of getting our attention.**

A Christian motorcycle gang rescues them. One rider is wearing a jacket with a patch that says "Jesus is No. 1." Underneath it a patch says "Satan is a punk."

In this next clip, Nathan and Amanda are now driving a 1972 Plymouth Barracuda. They are on their way again to Redemption, Montana. The bad guys are about to catch up with them. They will be running for their lives. But now Amanda is beginning to realize just how special her grandfather has become for her. She expresses to him her change in attitude. It is another chance for him to share with her the meaning of his faith.

Clip #3 – 00:59:01-1:01:30

The chase is on. The bad guys are after them. The stress is too much for Nathan. He collapses. He ends up in the emergency room of a hospital. The doctor tells Amanda there is nothing that can be done. It is only a matter of time before he dies. The news devastates Amanda. She jumps in the car and drives out into the desert. She gets out and falls on her knees. She cries out to God for help, **and she asks Christ to come into her heart.** This is exactly what Nathan hoped for. At one point in the movie, he tells her that fishing in Montana was never his objective. He dreamed up this trip so he could spend time with his granddaughter and share his faith with her.

As I watched this movie, I was proud of Nathan. Here was a grandparent type as a lead character making a difference in someone's life. **He confirms that we are never too old**, even though sometimes we act like we are. Or we feel like God has nothing else for us to do. Or we just don't care anymore.

**I wanted to talk with someone about this, and so I decided to ask Lois about the influence she had on her grandson Timothy.** When I found her, she was sitting at her kitchen table writing what looked like a letter. She asked me to wait for her to finish. Finally, she put her pen down, folded the letter, and put it in an envelope. I couldn't see the address on it, but I could tell just by the stationery that it was to a special person.

I introduced myself and told her how impressed I was that the Apostle Paul mentioned her in his letter to Timothy (II Timothy 1:5). **I wanted to know how she had such a positive influence on her grandson.**

She asked me to sit down. I just kept talking about how proud she must be that Timothy became a missionary traveling with Paul, and that Paul

used Timothy to deliver letters to churches, and that Timothy became the pastor of the mega church in Ephesus. I said something like, "I can see that Timothy comes from good stock."

Grandmother Lois got this great big smile on her face. She said, "Would you like a chocolate chip cookie? I just made them." She got up and brought a plate of cookies to the table. The chocolate chips were still melted. As she sat down again, she said, "**Timmy's faith had nothing to do with good stock. It's not like you inherit faith.**"

I took a warm cookie and just held it. "Go ahead and take a bite," she said. I took a bite. Suddenly, I wanted Lois to be my grandmother.

I said, "That's the best cookie I have ever tasted!" She watched as I took another bite and another. I could feel my whole insides melting like those chocolate chips. I said, "This must be what heaven is like."

Lois laughed as if she were getting as much joy out of watching me eat the cookie as I was eating it.

"So," I said, "if good stock doesn't explain Timothy's faith, what does?"

Her face suddenly changed like I said something that disappointed her. She pushed the plate of cookies toward me, "Have another one."

I said, "I get the feeling you don't want to answer my question."

She said, "I get the feeling you don't want to hear the answer."

That kind of shocked me. "Okay," I said, "I'm all ears."

"Well, that's part of your problem," she said. "**It takes more than ears. It takes more than words. It takes chocolate chip cookies.**" She noticed my confused look but kept going. "I didn't come to know Jesus Christ until I was already a grandmother. I grew up knowing there was a God. I did my best to be a good person. Mostly I think I was trying to please my parents, to fit in. I got married, had children, and then grandchildren, but religion was just something I had inherited. We didn't even have Timmy circumcised, one of the main requirements of my religion then.

"Then a man named Paul showed up in Lystra. He came to our synagogue and spoke about a man named Jesus. Said he was the Son of God. Said Jesus died on a cross for my sins. Said if you believe in him, he will come in and make his home with you. He will live in you forever and you will live with him forever. And if you don't believe in him, you will be separated from God forever."

Lois picked up a cookie and took a bite. She continued. "Then Paul said something that really got my attention. He said this good news is for your family, too. I thought about my daughter Eunice and my grandson Timmy. If what Paul was saying was true, I wanted them to know Jesus, too. I wanted them to be with me in eternity. **Right there on the spot, I opened my heart and asked God to forgive me and asked Jesus to come inside to stay forever.**"

"So you started making Timothy go to church with you," I said.

Lois smiled again. "At first, I thought it was all about telling him what was good for him. You know, like, Paul said to do this. Paul said to do that. Go to church. Get a haircut. That sort of thing. He was a teenager then. Good luck with that approach.

"No, **I came to realize that Jesus' love for me is like a plate of warm chocolate chip cookies.** Nothing tastes better! I finally learned that all God expected of me was to serve him cookies. I knew he had to taste it for himself. So I'd put a plate of cookies in front of him and say, 'This is what heaven is like – eating warm chocolate chip cookies with your family.' Or I'd say, 'Reading about Jesus' sacrifice for me is like eating warm chocolate chip cookies.' Or I would say, 'When I eat one of these cookies, I know God loves me.' Then I would say, "Wouldn't you like some of these cookies?" At first, it was just about cookies for him. He always said yes. Finally, one day he tasted what I tasted. He said yes to Jesus. And the rest is history. Someday we will be eating cookies together in heaven."

"It couldn't be that simple," I said.

"You can work at it a lot harder, if you want to, but it will just be a waste of time." She picked up the letter she had been writing and handed it to me. "Here," she said, "I wrote this for you."

A bit bewildered, I nevertheless took the envelope. Sure enough, my name was on it. When I got back to my car, I opened it. Inside was the recipe for "Lois's Homemade Heavenly Chocolate Chip Cookies." At the bottom she wrote these words, "You're never too old. It's never too late."

That's God's message for me in our movie. Nathan comes to know Christ late in his life. Then, at the age of 75, God gives him the chance to share his faith with his granddaughter, and she gives her life to Christ. They end up together fishing on his favorite lake in Redemption, Wyoming. In this next clip, they are planning their future together.

Clip #4 – 01:21:32-01:24:20

More and more children and grandchildren are growing up without knowing God. They do not know the Bible. They do not know the stories about Jesus Christ.

Will our children and grandchildren have faith? Will they live with the assurance of eternity with God? Will they have the anchor that holds them in the storm and the light that guides them through the dark? Will they have the peace of God in their hearts? Will they find their place in the Body of Christ and serve Him among the people of God? It can be so, by the grace of God. It's never too late.