

BEING A PAWN

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.

—1 Timothy 4:12

INTRODUCTION

Do you ever get frustrated because it seems like you're not old enough to do anything important? Maybe you'd really like to serve God in a meaningful way, but you have to be all grown up to be a pastor or a missionary or something like that. Well, you don't have to wait for years before God can begin using you to build his kingdom. Jesus made it very clear that children are a vital part of God's family. In fact, he told everyone else that they needed to become *like* children if they wanted to be part of that family! So don't feel bad because you're "just a kid." We're going to take a look at what you can do right now to make a huge impact in the world.

Today's devotion is based on 1 Timothy 4:12, which says, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity." The devotion is called "Being a Pawn."

DEVOTION

Kelly stood on a giant chessboard at the Renaissance fair. She'd been chosen to be a pawn in a human chess match! As part of a show, two noblemen were playing the game. "Bishop takes rook!" said the nobleman controlling the black "pieces." The black bishop moved three squares diagonally to replace the white rook.

Kelly feared her side was losing. But the other nobleman said, "Pawn to knight's eight." He meant her! She moved ahead one square. Then she understood. When a lowly pawn reaches the end of the board, it can become a powerful queen. A crown was placed on her head, and now she had the black king trapped.

"Checkmate!" an official declared.

Never imagine you don't matter because you're little. A pawn can win a chess game! Likewise, God can use a young kid like you to make a big difference in the world. God is making great changes in your heart. The way you talk and act as a result sets a powerful example for others. You can inspire people (even adults) to live a more godly life.

PEOPLE IN BIBLE TIMES

Young Timothy made a big difference in the world. Traveling with the apostle Paul, Timothy helped spread the gospel. And his behavior set a good example for others. (See Philippians 2:22.)

QUESTIONS

1. If you were old enough, what kinds of things would you like to do to serve God?
2. Can you think of other young people in the Bible, besides Timothy, whom God used in a powerful way?

Some examples are: David, who killed Goliath, which encouraged the whole Israelite army to attack the Philistines; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who refused to bow down to King Nebuchadnezzar's golden statue, inspiring the king to give glory to God; the boy in the crowd of five thousand people, who offered his food to Jesus so that everyone could be fed.

3. Have you heard of any kids living today who have done great things to serve God and help others?
4. How can obeying your parents, learning the Bible, and growing spiritually at this stage of your life be a way of serving God?

One answer: It trains you and prepares you so you'll be able to do important work for God later. Remember, even Jesus went through a period of training and spiritual growth (see Luke 2:41–52) before he began his ministry!

5. In what other important ways, besides setting a good example for others, can you serve God, even at your young age?

Some answers are: praying for people; teaching others your age what you know about Jesus, God, and the Bible; giving some of your own money to the church or to Christian organizations; writing letters of encouragement to missionaries; etc.