

Making Ministry Fashionable

Sometimes changing the world begins after changing the  clothes in your own closet.

Lindsay Giambattista, founder of Taylor's Closet (TC) clothing store in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., started by giving her extra clothing to at-risk teen girls when she was 14. She then began gathering outfits from friends and family, and soon she had an entire store full of merchandise. From there, Giambattista acquired a building and launched a full-scale ministry boutique.

TC is no ordinary thrift store, however. Giambattista's boutique has made designer clothing available to young women and girls who would not be able to purchase such items for free.

"Our goal is to provide a wonderful shopping experience for girls in need so they in turn can grasp the extravagant love of God for them in a practical way," Giambattista says.

"My faith is the sole reason behind what I do. Although TC started out as a community service project for high school, as it grew it hit me that the entire purpose of the organization has nothing to do with clothing. It all has to do with the love of God, which we represent through beautiful clothes."

Since opening the store in 2006, Giambattista has garnered national attention for her vision, has received donations from top labels and designers, and has even launched a mentoring program for girls. The Awaken program is an eight-week class for girls 18 years and older who are taught cooking, sewing and art lessons in a family-like setting. Through Awaken, these girls also learn the reason behind all the compassion they are being shown: God's Word.

When asked what inspired the ministry name, Giambattista

responds simply, "It's from my twin sister, who died at birth. Her name was Taylor."