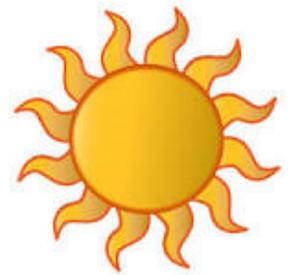


The Family Friend



A collection of articles and quotes to aid your family in daily living.

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My Mother's Bedstand

by

Steve Higginbotham

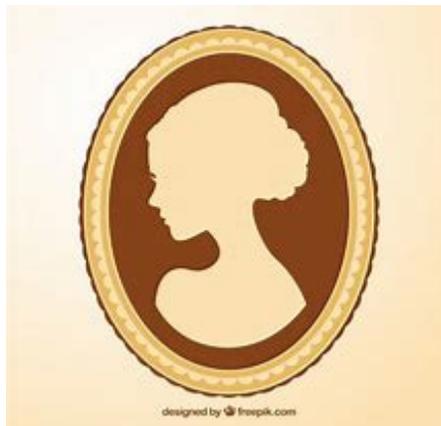
It's 2:00 a.m. and I am on "Day 6" of my vigil with my mother. On Saturday afternoon, June 15, my mother suffered a fall in her bedroom. The injury she sustained will soon take her life.

These past six days have been very difficult. As I am writing these words, I am watching my mom struggle for life with every short, labored, breath. If it weren't for the wrist band she is wearing, I'm not even sure I would be able to recognize her as my mother.

The medical staff has done extremely well at keeping her out of pain. However, the pain I have been feeling has been unabated.

A few hours ago, I checked my voicemail and discovered an unheard message. It was from my mother moments after she fell. In this voicemail, she expressed her awareness of the seriousness of her fall, and so she ended her call with what I believe she thought could be

her final words to me. She said, "Steve, I love you. Goodbye." Less than two minutes later, her brain injury had robbed her of her ability to speak.



How I now regret mowing my yard last Saturday afternoon and missing my mom's phone call. And, how I regret missing my opportunity to answer her desperate call, and saying, "I love you too, Mom."

However, as painful as this week has been, I was able to find relief for my pain when I entered her bedroom and looked at her bedstand.

On my mom's bedstand were four well-worn Bibles. A couple of the Bibles belonged to my dad, but the top Bible belonged to my mom. I sat down and perused mom's well-worn Bible, and saw notes, highlights, and underlines that

divulged that she was a student of God's word.

Next to her Bibles was a "Daily Bible Reading Schedule." Seeing this schedule reminded me of my days as a boy back at home. At night, when everything got quiet and I was settled in for bed, I would hear the voices of my mom and dad, taking turns, reading their Bibles aloud.

Also, on Mom's bedstand was a Bible Encyclopedia. Mom wasn't content with a shallow understanding of God's word, but she desired to know more...Bible backgrounds, geography, and customs.

In view of the past six days, I needed to see my mom's bedstand. That bedstand has taken the edge off my pain and given me reassurance. Mom's bedstand has served as a reminder to me that I'll get to respond to that missed phone call someday and say, "I love you too, Mom."

Editor's note: Steve's mother, Rose Marie Higginbotham passed away June 21, 2019, shortly after this article was posted.

A Grandmother's Legacy

I have a number of books but one of them in particular is very special to me. It is neither rare nor valuable as far as books go. It is obviously old and the pages are yellow and brittle and the cover is very worn. You can find better books at a garage sale or on the bookshelf at the local Goodwill store. The title might help you understand a little of its value. It is called *The Story of the Bible* and was written by Charles Foster. It is a children's book that contains a simplified summary of each book of the Bible. Again, however, you can find much nicer children's Bible storybooks at the local bookstore.

The value of the book for me lies in its original owner. You see, this book belonged to my great-grandmother. She died when I was a baby and I do not remember her but I have heard stories about her. She and her family were Christians but as a young woman she married a man who was not a Christian. It was not long, however, before he became a Christian through her good example.

As children were born she began to teach them about God and his Word. She must have literally worn out the binding of this book reading it to her children. At one point she repaired the binding with denim material no doubt taken from the sewing box and cut from a pair of men's overalls.

My mother lived with her grandparents when she was small and remembered her grandmother reading stories to

her from the book and speaking of the God that she knew so well.

My mother grew up, however, without obeying the Gospel that she had learned about from her grandmother. She too married and had children of her own. When we were small, however, my brother and I knew little of God, the Bible, or churches. Other children in the neighborhood often went to Sunday school, but we stayed home and wondered what it was all about.

Years passed and when I was twelve years old I had a bicycle accident that resulted in a serious head injury that kept me in the hospital for more than a week. As I lay in the hospital my mother realized from her early teaching that she was not in a relationship with God that would allow her to pray for me and that she needed to make some changes in her life.

After I had recovered sufficiently my mother began to take my brother and I, along with my grandmother, to Bible school and church services. Eventually both my mother and grandmother were baptized. My father, however, did not want anything to do with churches or religion. In time, however, he also became a Christian through the influence of my mother.

In a very real sense I owe my own relationship with God to Bible stories read from this book to my mother when she was a child. I might easily have grown up and not known or cared about God had it not been for the godly influence of a grandmother.

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In one of Jesus' parables he likened the kingdom of God to a seed that is sown, germinates, and produces fruit that is eventually harvested. It is usually called the Parable of the Growing Seed and goes like this: "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain--first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come" (Mark 4:26-29 NIV).

The simple act of reading Bible stories to children may not seem too exciting or important in our fast paced world. The fact remains, however, that even though many years had passed, the seed that was planted eventually germinated in the heart of its hearer and like a growing plant has continued to bear fruit even several generations later.

Yes, this is a very special book, not because of its monetary value but because it connects the members of my family who have come to know Jesus with the one who planted the seed in the mind of a child long ago.

—Phillip Eichman, Irmo, SC

