



Seasons In Time

ENCOUNTERING GOD FACE TO FACE...
IN OUR BRIEF JOURNEY THROUGH LIFE

Life Season IV – My Middle Age Years and God (Continued)

Parenting My Parents, Until...

Dad was always so strong, so wise and so present in my life. He was my hero, my role model and my stability as I grew up as boy. By watching his example, I learned how to think straight, treat my wife and be a father and a man. He was an Instructor Pilot during the WWII and Korean War eras training military pilots. Later he became an FAA inspector governing civilian pilots. When I was in High School, Dad taught me to fly and navigate a plane to reach its destination. That's why it was so painful to see his aged body slowly deteriorating that he could no longer care for himself. Finally at nearly 91, cancer took away Dad's dignity and his life. *Near the end, I was forced to make decisions for him...as if I was his parent and he was my child!*

Mother was truly the anchor, the heart and the stabilizing force for our family. She loved us more than life and made sure we were cared for in so many wonderful and heart-touching ways. All my domestic abilities, being sensitive to others, and maintaining a faithful heart towards my husband came from my mother's example as I grew up as a little girl. Watching her health deteriorate as she aged and having to make decisions for her was so difficult. But my most heartbreaking decision was to move her to a facility near to her brothers and sisters where she could be properly cared for. She didn't want to leave the little southern town where we lived. *Every visit to North Carolina was heartrending. She looked like a little child left all alone!*



The physical end of the aging process is devastating! We try to shove it out of our minds, but if we live long enough we'll understand Solomon's account in Eccles. 12...diminishing vision and hearing, unsteadiness, disorientation, fear and loss of mobility. Sadly, this is an ever-present reminder and reality of the tragic consequences of sin...even for the believer who is secure in Christ. So, what are adult children to do for faltering parents? Foremost, follow Jesus' example to assure they're properly cared for, either personally (*John 19:26-27*) or through skilled professionals. Make certain of their faith in the Savior. Always love and honor them showing patience regardless of their declining condition (*Eph. 6:1-3*). Ask them to rehearse lessons they've learned in life and to pray God's blessings over your children (*Ps. 37:25; Gen. 48:15-16*). *Finally, be always grateful that, though the Christian dies, eternal life and the glories of heaven await. Forever there will be no tears, sickness or death (Ps. 116:15; Rev. 21:4).*

As I gazed out the window of the California bound airliner, I was lost in the precious memories of my Dad. I knew it was the last time I would see him in this life. Mother met me at the airport and we drove straight to the hospital. When we walked in his room, there he was...just a shell of the man that was my hero. He couldn't speak because of the tracheotomy, but he could write on a clipboard during short times when his strength returned. When he awoke, he broke out in a big smile and reached for his clipboard. We "talked" for hours about flying, life and heaven! I will forever keep those treasured words he wrote. Though he and mother looked to me to make decisions, Dad was still my hero in life...and in death! *When I spoke at his funeral, I knew he wasn't "dead." He was more alive than ever with his glorious Savior that he always honored.*

She looked like a beautiful angel sitting quietly in a chair as we walked into her Assisted Living room. Mother knew my deep love for her and that my husband and I had regularly driven hundreds of miles to be by her side. Before we arrived that day, she had been told by her doctor she only had a short time to live because of her rapidly deteriorating health. Knowing the end was near, we shared with her about the Savior and His deep love for her. With child-like faith, she re-confirmed her trust in Him. As soft tears streamed down my face, my husband reached for her hand and lovingly asked, "Sarah, who do you want to see when you open your eyes in heaven?" With a gentle smile her eyes searched mine and she whispered, "GOD!" *Three weeks later her desire was granted. She fell asleep and awoke in her eternal home, embraced by her loving Heavenly Father.*

Next: More Stories from My Middle Age Years - Can't Go To Church...Too Busy!

