

SHOWNOTES - Mike Wilcut (02/50)

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SPEAKERS

Mike Wilcut (Guest), Scott Hilton (Host)

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Scott Hilton (Host) 00:11

Welcome to The That's My Dad Podcast. We're here today with Mike Wilcut, welcome! Thank you for being here. Mike and I have been friends for a number of years. 25-30 I think 30. Yeah, yeah. So most of the people we have as guests here, we select them, because we've seen the fruits of their labor. And I know your children very well. Yeah. So, you know, you know, when you when you meet a person that says a lot about who raised them, and I know, I know them. And I know that you're a special guy, because I know who your kids are. So that's why you're here. Okay, so we're gonna try to learn a little bit from you, we're gonna pick your brain a little bit. We're really trying to reach young guys who maybe didn't have a great father growing up, and to try to help them learn what that means to be a father, what do you have to do? So, Mike, you and I have never talked about your relationship with your dad or about your dad at all. So I think that's a good place to start.

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 01:22

Okay. It's interesting to think about that. And I've been thinking, what would I say and sharing about my dad and everything. And it's an interesting story. Because we had, I grew up I was born in 48, you know, and when you lived through the 50s, and 60s and times weren't all that good for a lot of people. And my dad was just a hard working man. And my mom and dad got married very young. And in that day, it wasn't that unusual. But we kind of raised my brother and I raised our parents. I think my dad was 17 when I was born, okay. And my brothers two years older than me. So I started early, they got off to an early start. And you can imagine how it was, and it was a rocky road for my mom and dad. And I didn't realize it till now. I don't know somebody said something if some time ago, and I never lived in a home that we owned, all the time. I lived at home. We lived in rental homes all the time. And my mom and dad eventually bought a house and they enjoyed it for many years and everything. But I grew up in rental homes. And we moved a lot. My dad was in construction kind of work. And I've gone to school and Blue Mountain Elementary School, Jacksonville State, our Jacksonville, elementary school, back to Blue Mountain, then sacks, then the south side, and then to Lincoln, and then back to South Side. So I shifted around in schools and stuff a lot. But my dad became a Christian man. When I was pretty young, I remember it. But he didn't leave it out. The I don't know how, you

know, things change and times get rough and you move and, and all those kinds of things. Something happened. Anyway. He was he was a tough guy. And he believed in work. Matter of fact, he had, he had a tag on the front of his truck that said, I fight poverty. I work. Wow. That was his motto for life.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 03:51

Can we get one of those? Very many of them. I don't know

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 03:55

if they still got up or not. But I remember that that tag and Athol brother, he believes in that. Because when I was young, we lived in South Side and I'm saying young I was 12 years old, maybe our summer job my brother and I were on we were on top of a rock pile. We were down on the soil place and they were dredging sand to build interstate 59. And that's the date yourself Mike. There was no interstate but in our job was to pick mud balls out of those rock piles and you're 12 years old. I guess I was I might have been 12 I don't know. It was young. It was I wasn't any older than 12 I might have been younger. But all day long. There's no shade tree on a on a rock pile. You're out in the sun all day. And that's what we did. And that's the kind of jobs he would find for us. But we made 50 cents an hour.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 04:56

Did you have to pay taxes out of that

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 04:58

did not pay But that was the kind of work he found for us. But I just kind of hung out with daddy. And I watched him work on lawn mowers and things like that. And, and I learned a lot. And back when I was a kid living in Aniston, I was walking down the street one day and, and we lived in kind of a community. And this guy couldn't crank his mower. And I was probably eight years old. But he couldn't crank his lawn more. So I said, you haven't trouble with your mower? And he said, Yeah, he's, I said, Can I try it? And I looked at it, and I did a couple of things to it. I got a crank for him. So he cut his grass. And that man was amazed.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 05:43

Because your dad taught you how to do something? He did. Yeah, we talked about that. Previously about me teaching muscle on how to do what we call man things. Yeah. So your dad, so you hung out with him sounds like and it was just a matter of stuff rubbed off on you?

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 06:00

Did he taught me how to do almost any kind of thing you'd need to do around your house. He

wasn't a great woodworker. But he could he could get put with things together. I learned later how to do it better. Yeah, but he was a welder. He was a mechanic. He ran heavy equipment. And he came up in a hard time when the men that did what he did would not teach you had to work. Because there was a fear there that if they taught you how to operate a dragline, or a piece of equipment, that you would get their job. Oh, wow. So that they they weren't, they weren't very helpful to teach you really what you need to know how to run something. But my dad had a lot of mechanical skills. His dad was actually a pretty famous guy in the steam engine. Day your granddad, my granddad, he was well known for knowing how to repair and like steam engines run and run like they should really he ran an old what we call it all meal. Yeah. And that's a meal where they would bring cottonseed and crush it, get the oil out of it. And it was powered by steam engine. So he's he's pretty famous for that.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 07:25

So did you get to know him? Your your granddad,

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 07:27

I didn't get to know him real well, because by the time I come along, he'd already retired while he was doing some jobs, but it wasn't nothing like he normally did. But he died in his 60s. But alcohol had its issues in our home, really in with my granddad and my dad and his two brothers and, and I could see it. Yeah, I could see the pattern of their lives. And the coast, they were all so close to being the same. And they would get together from time to time. And I could see it in all three of them. And I thought I don't want to go down that road. Wow. That's not good. My dad was a heavy smoker. My brother and I never smoked. Because we saw what it would do. Right? We hated it.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 08:27

So you had to make it a choice. And we talked about that a lot. Here, you had to make a conscious choice of saying, I'm not going to follow that path. We do your what we call a script flipper. You flip the script on, on what your family was doing. And to me that's so important. Because the young young men that I've spent my life working with a lot of them have to be script flippers. They have to make a choice. And the thing that I'm finding I'm hearing over and over as we do more and more of these interviews is that guys like yourself, just say, Well, I'm just gonna make a choice. I'm gonna do better. I'm not gonna do those things that I know are going to destroy me. So was you say they were alcohol was an issue? Was it? Was it a debilitating thing in your, in your family? Or? Or was it? Some people manage it differently than others?

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 09:22

Well, I don't think anyone ever had to go to a rehab with it. But I witnessed to both of his mom and dad's brothers in they were on up in years. And the Lord moved in their life and they got saved and they quit drinking.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 09:46

And that amazing how people quit drinking when they it is

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 09:48

amazing. I have seen it several times when they didn't go through a 12 step program or anything. God took them and deliver it Right. I'm telling you, I know man that was he was just a town drunk. He didn't even have an automobile. He would walk every day where he went. And he worked uptown. And he lived in Southside. But I witnessed to that man. And it was about two weeks later, I came out. I was in the choir at church. I came out, you know, how traditional Baptist Church, everybody was seated, and then the choir comes out. And when I was in the choir, we came out, and I looked, and there in the balcony was that man, Wow, I like fell out. He didn't drink after that. So he hit drunk all his life. But God can do anything.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 10:45

So that's a story that needs to be told. Because we hear so much about it's a disease, you got to go through treatment. And I'm not against any of that. Don't get me wrong. But my granddad was a smoker, but both my granddad for smoker. So you know what they did, they both quit cold turkey. In fact, my granddaddy decided that he was not going to tell my grandmother he had quit smoking, because he had found something else to nag him about. So he just put the cigarettes down, and and didn't say anything to anybody. And then we all realize a couple months later, while he's quit. So you're telling me that this guy made a decision to drop a bad habit? How did how did alcohol affect your family? Do you think

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 11:31

you're it was not good? It was not good at all. I saw fights between my dad and his brother. I saw fights between my dad and my mom. And to this day, I can't forget those. It's embedded in your memory. It is it's implanted there. And I mean, I remember when I was a little fellow, I probably wouldn't. Five years old, I can still remember seeing my uncle come flying through our bedroom. One night, where my dad had hit him. They had already gone to bed and they were drunk. And I don't know what was I don't know what was said or done. I just know I saw my uncle come flying through our bedroom, you know, hit the wall. And I saw my dad. And he was he did some things I always do. My mom that hurts. But it did. And as I got older, he did the last thing he ever did. Because I told him, I was a grown man. Then mom got to the phone and she called me. And I came over. And I had to tell him, don't you ever, ever do this can there be consequences? And I'm minute, by minute. And in he didn't after that. But my dad got got saved. At a young man, he he wanted to be saved. His his dad was was rough. In his mom was rough. And therefore he became rough. He didn't know how to live. You know, he didn't he didn't have a model. The men he worked with were horrible. I mean, I worked with him. As an adult. I worked with him. And I saw how they lived and how they taught and the habits ahead. You know, in it, his life was just a struggle. And I began to understand that, you know, he hadn't had a model, right? But when he became a Christian, he changed. And he loved my mom. My mom was a cancer patient. And after Daddy got his life together, you couldn't ask for a better model than what he'd had forever. He cared for her. Oh, he cared for her. He loved her so

much. And he loved me and my brother. And he loved serving God. He would he and Gordon Miller would go every week. I don't know if they went every day or not. But it was every week. They visited people, homes and hospitals. And he kept a little pad in his pocket and his pencil and he a break that pad out and he could tell you how everybody in that church was doing well. And he was praying for them or they had prayed. He had a workshop away from the house. And he didn't pray at the house. My dad would go to his workshop. And he had a little stool. I got it. I still got it. And then he would get down on that stool. And he would pray. Man, would he pray and whatnot needed him so much. It was there for me. Wow. Because my life came apart when I was in my mid 20s. I mean, I hit rock bottom. And and I moved back home with my parents. And they received me. No problem. They knew what had happened. And they loved me. And they took care of me. I got back on my feet. God sent me a wonderful wife and a family. Yeah. And that's a whole nother story in itself, but I was so blessed. But my dad took care of me. My mom, did. They were there for me in thick and thin.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 16:13

Did you find it difficult to forgive your dad for the rough times that you had gone through? What was the process there?

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 16:21

I still think about it. But I forgiven him. And he knows that he knew that my mom and dad are both passed now. But he knew he trusted me. He trusted me more than anybody in the world.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 16:36

How important do you think it was? That you forgave him? And what do you think your life would have been like without offering him that forgiveness?

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 16:45

I think it would have destroyed me. unforgiveness is worse than cancer. It will destroy you. It will absolutely crush you. And I couldn't live with unforgiveness. I had to. I had to forgive it. forgetting it. We live in a body of flesh. And we got to deal with it. It creeps back up. But you just said I forgiven him for that. I'm free. He's forgiven. I forgiven him. And and I can live with it that way.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 17:20

And your dad, even with his faults. I think there's a message there to our to our listeners. That number one, you were willing to forgive him? You know, I'm thinking there might be a dad, listen, and he says I have really messed up. I've not been right to my kids. Like your children. My experience has been that they're always willing to forgive if you're willing to ask for it. And like it's saying, I think you're right. So you forgive forgave your dad, even in spite of the fact that you know, you've witnessed the fights and the results of alcoholism, you forgave him. And

I think that's a message that needs to be Yeah. be out there for dads. The other part of your story that you know, Mike, I didn't know this. This was the first time I've heard this. And I can see in your eyes that there are some, there's still some pain there is. And I think that young men out there need to know that you can work through that pain. Because here's what I know about you. It's not it's nothing that you told me is what Alex would have expected. You're a reputable man in the community. You had a great job. You have great children, you have great grandchildren. They're not great grandchildren. They're great as an adjective there. I mean, you've got what outsiders look at Mike Wilcott and say, Man, this this guy's got it might he probably never had a challenge he must have come out of he's born with a silver spoon in his mouth. But that's not the truth. You had to make a choice to turn things around to flip the script on your family. So what was it like? First of all, Mike and Carol, y'all weren't quite the Brady Bunch. But it was it was a it was a nest of family. If you were in your 20s thinking, yeah. And so all of a sudden, you go from zero to 60. In 3.5 seconds, you go from being a single man living with your parents to being within a year been married before kids that tell me how you made the adjustment to do that?

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 19:34

Well, it's not easy. Number one is you make sure you're in church every week.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 19:43

So you can learn or so you can maintain your sanity. So you can send the kids to the nursery or

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 19:49

well that's part of it. That you have you have to maintain a spiritual closeness there. That is it. just has to be there. You can't make it without it. And, and you have to learn. And one of the big decisions I had to make. Okay, I'm a father to the twins. I'm a stepdad to these other two children. But I told myself, Mike, you're going to love all for these kids as though they're all yours. Wow. And don't you ever forget that? And I've told myself that, and I have tried my best to leave that. Because you can't, you can't have a home that's filled with love. And one of the children call your stepdad and to, you know, there can't be a divide there.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 20:44

Well, I know you for years before I ever knew that. I mean, it was never brought up at all. And I don't I don't even know how I found that out. But yeah, they, Tammy and Barry see you as their, their your all they know. And I think they have healthy respect for their birth father as well. But yeah, you did a great job. So is that the key to this, it was sort of a blended family is that you think that's the key just to make up your mind?

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 21:15

It is, it's a big key, we have to make up our mind that you know that love never fails. And when you really understand what that means, you can see it in action. And it never fails. It never

you really understand what that means, you can see it in action. And it never fails. It never failed.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 21:34

So a couple of things is we kind of wind down here. If you were able to sit down with your dad one more time. And pour your heart out to them. What would you say to them?

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 21:51

Well, I tell him, I love him. I wish he knew that. But I tell him again, you can't tell him too much. I will tell him thank you for teaching me the value of work. Because that's that's a principle that all people need to know. We need to know how to work. God give us abilities with our hands and eyes and ears and minds to work to produce. We're not idle. And I would thank him for teaching me that invaluable lesson. And I would thank him for forgiving me for the times that I missed it. And the mistakes that I made. And I'd forgive him for anything he ever did. To me. That's all gone. Because I loved him. And he I think he knew that.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 22:49

So that's a message to the young guy who's out there struggling with the relationship he has with his dad. It's it can be fixed. It's never too late.

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 22:57

Forgiveness is like a miracle.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 23:02

We have one little thing to do before we finish up. We sneaked and got one of your kids to share with us a little story about about to you and we want to have you watch that and then share with us how you feel about it.



23:21

My dad is a good dad, because he always set a godly example for his children. He led by example. He worked hard every day as a mechanical engineer, and would come home and work hard for his family. During Christmas, we had our very young saints workshop in the basement and didn't realize it now that I'm grown and have children of my own. I really appreciate all my dad did for us. That's my dad.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 23:50

Like what it feel like to have every grown daughter remember something you did when she

Like what's it feel like to have every grown daughter remember something you did when she was a little girl?

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Mike Wilcut (Guest) 23:56

It's pretty humbling it really is. But I did put in the time. But it was worth every second of it simply second

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Scott Hilton (Host) 24:07

by remember those gifts. And she told me exactly what all you had built her. This. They remember that more than anything you could have bought at the store. Because that was your way of showing them you loved them to meet Mike Welker, do you think this guy's got it all together? And you do, but it didn't come easy. And I think that's the takeaway from this is to the the young man out there who's just thinking, Man, I'll never be like that guy. Well, this this guy, he made some things happen and God made some things and I think his message, Mike's messages to you is that if you're allow God to do some things in your life, if you're willing to forgive some people, you're willing to reconcile with some people. You can have a wonderful life, just like my kids. Thanks for setting an example. Thank you. That'll conclude this episode of that's my dad. App your we'll be back next week. We're changing the direction of fatherless children, giving them some hope. Trying to give them a chance and encouragement inspire them to flip that script to do what Mike did, and to make it better for your children than it was for you. Thanks for being with us. See you next week.

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25:27

Thanks so much for tuning in today. This has been the that's my dad podcast with our host Scott Hilton, where we're on a mission to break the cycle of generational fatherlessness and inspire fathers to become great dads. We'll be back here every Monday night at 6pm. We'll see you there.