

SHOWNOTES - Jerome Thomas (16/50)

📅 Thu, 7/21 3:36PM ⌚ 34:13

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

dad, day, jerome, love, memory, eagle rock, kids, problem, daughter, growing, mentored, point, step, night, taught, remember, church, truck, bayonet, lost

SPEAKERS

Scott Hilton (Host)

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Scott Hilton (Host) 00:13

Welcome to another episode of the investment dad Podcast. I'm here today with Jerome Thomas. Drum is a very special friend, to me have been, we were talking since 1993. We think back in the days when Eagle Rock Boys Ranch was just getting open. And Deanna and I had been married six months when the ranch opened. And it was tough man, I'm telling you, those are some tough days. And we had we had one guy helping us. And then he was with us for about two and a half years, I think to get started. And then Deanna took over full time and we lived in the house with the kids 24 hours a day, seven days a week and both of us had a job. So there was no way to get away. Yeah. And Jerome, you and your wife, Kathy, who's in here in the studio with us today. Were so kind and, and just will always hold a special place in mine Indiana's heart because you stepped down and said, Look, you guys go out to eat or a couple of times we went spent the night in a hotel just to get away and man you, you saved us, our men, our mental health was saved because you guys so you'll always carry a special place in my heart. So it was a joy then to raise our kids together. And and they eventually ended up getting to go to high school together. And we went to church together. But you also served at Eagle Rock and a lot of capacities you mentored kids for us. And you were on our board of directors. And then you became chairman of the board of directors for several years. And since I've retired, they've asked you to come back and bail on the board. So excited to be there. I always always love to tell the story about you, Jerome. You know what I'm gonna tell there was a guy. There was a guy broke into a store close to his house, as in the middle of the night. Well, yeah, yeah. And you heard the guy and you go out there and four guys trying to steal food or whatever from this little quick shop. And you You did a citizen's arrest down in. The story is that you had to get pinned up against the wall with the bayonet. Yeah, and you're calling the police waiting on them to come and get in. I can just imagine the poor guy most of it



02:42

was it was an experience. I have a fire to round off in the air it is a warning shot because he took off running. Cathy heard the shot and sheriff's department and somehow know that they made it there and record breaking time because we live in the middle of nowhere. And the meantime the guy was trying to get around me and and I didn't know if he had helped because

there was his van parked there. And so I just pulled pop the bayonet out on the rifle there and just kind of charged him against the gas pump. He was one of these guys it was going he had to had to hold his trousers up, you know. And, of course, he put his hands up and he he was full command. It's kind of funny when the deputy rolled up he was here screaming at him with a rifle and he's standing there like this and a language problem barrier there.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 03:41

So it almost



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I just draw a rifle on my shoulder and step back

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Scott Hilton (Host) 03:47

so I think we made a joke because you can't you didn't tell anybody we found out somehow and I think we all started calling you Mr. Citizens were asked like Marty five citizens Yes, but unfortunately true drums. Drums an interesting guy cuz he's a tough, tough cookie. You grew up in a sort of a tough part of town. And I want to tell this because you know we got guys that I'm hoping are listening and watching or looking initially and I'll look at these two old white guys but I'll tell you what, this white guy here is one more tough cookie. There was one night a bunch of guys jumped to you at the at the football stadium. I remember and yes, and you broke out on look kung fu theater on him.



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Yeah, that was kind of a situation where I honestly felt like I might actually would kill somebody that scared them scared them and scare them off basically. And then I guess the adrenaline rush took over the end and all scared myself because I realized how close I got to really losing it because you know growing up without a bother. I had a lot of rage issues. And it was just the rage was just right under the surface. And I remember as a kid, it didn't take much for me to, for that to break out. That was that was a problem for me for a while. Yeah. But you know, God delivered me from that and pretty chill now.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 05:21

Yeah, you had a sort of a sad childhood in some ways. I don't think you would classify it as that but people looking from, from my perspective. Tell me about that experience from, um,



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I am oldest in my family. I have two younger siblings to two sisters. Our father died when I was six. And they were two years each one of them younger than they and then I've got some step

brother and sisters, but I didn't grow up with him. I didn't really have any experience with him relaxed ever. I was an adult. But my mom is crippled, she's handicapped. And that's back in the days when you didn't have to hire the handicapped. So she may do as best she could try and raise three kids. cleaning houses doing seamstress, seamstress work, and it was tough. I mean, it's we were poor. I didn't really realize at the time how poor we were, but we were and but we were a family unit. And we were pretty taught I think when when my father passed that flip, flip the script on me. I went from a very comfortable, safe environment to one that I was just, I was mad I was angry maybe angry at God, you know, and, and it just, it affected me in a lot of weird ways. I mean, I started sleepwalking when waking up and various parts of the house and whatnot. I think you lay friends down the street and yeah, knocking on doors in the middle of the night trying to find my dad you know, it was just a traumatic thing and it took a while to get past that but I did.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 07:13

You told me you didn't you don't think you really dealt with it as a little kid you just you deal with it, but you don't deal with it. That makes sense.



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It was always bubbling at the surface even as a teenager you know, it would it would act out in fits of rage sometimes and never struck my mother or my sisters or anything but I you know, I would be I knew I had a problem with anger. I knew it and it's it was a problem.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 07:45

Take me back, take the listeners back to the process of actually losing your dad. You didn't know that that was gonna happen. No,



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we didn't. It happened sadly. My dad was my hero. He was I mean if I could share a little with that he he was in the navy war veteran. He came home injured I saw it purple heart, you know he had earned and, and he was also like an early member of the headwall county rescue squad. I remember that orange jumpsuit that helmet and Deputy Sheriff and you know, to me, he was my hero, you know that. But he, he got ill. And he had cancer. He smoked when he was in the military and, and he developed lung cancer and was kind of a guinea pig back in the early 60s for the treatments they were doing for for cancer back in those days. And he I remember the night he got ill. And the night they took him by ambulance away and then he was gone for like a month and then I don't know how but my mother and my aunt took me to see him at the VA hospital. I don't know if they knew he was dying. I thought he was recovering because I they took me in his room and it's such a clear memory to me. You know, I'm sick. This was what 56 years ago, you know, and so set me up on the bed. He talked to me. He showed me this neat new zipper they just put into the front of his chest, you know, and and we talked a few minutes and then I told him goodbye. And so last I saw him, you know, growing up, man and my mom

she is I can't say enough about her. You know, she she would say I don't call her enough nowadays that she's still living independently, you know she's got a multitude of medical problems and She's a survivor. She's She she's done. Wonderful.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 10:04

So so as a six year old, you kind of had to start finding your own way. Yeah, you almost had to step up and be the man of the house, I think, yeah,

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you know, as much as a six year old can. And but it was tough. It was growing. It was tough. It was thinking about tonight, I was like, I wrote down actually, every, every memory I have of him, and it's only like, 12. They're very clear.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 10:31

Yeah, it's been 56 years. Let's hear some of that. I'm interested in that.

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Some of the memories I have that are very clear, usually involve me getting in trouble. So my dad had a small trucking concern. He had like three trucks he was running and, and I remember he would take me on some of his trips locally. And I would be in the sleeper box looking over his shoulder and we had to go somewhere. And now I'm six, but I can this is clear as a bell to me. We pulled up to this stop. And he specifically told me to sit still, of course, I'm not. And he, he gets out of the truck. And he starts to walk around, I immediately went out and grab all the steering wheel and play with the steering wheel. And I look up and I see this string going up through here and I grab it and pull on it. And those air horns guy. He is right dead in front of the truck. He throws both hands up and jobs and spins around looks at me. And I'm like

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Scott Hilton (Host) 11:39

that's a great memory that made it you lets you remember things like that. But man, I can only imagine the look on his face. Oh, like

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and I knew I was cooked. Fortunately, he barely mentioned it when he got back. Another time in a vehicle. We he was a he was a deputy sheriff. So he had a little rotating red light, he would put on top of the car and had a little siren in the floor. And I was just intrigued by all that. So he pulled up and stop and again, sit still. And again, of course I didn't. And I ran over there and I was actually sitting inside his steering wheel just swinging back and forth. I can remember this. And I saw this. Didn't know it was a handbrake and I just kind of grabbed it. I thought I was just

gonna pull it in, it popped forward on and I'm rolling backwards. Well, I don't know what to do. I woulda known it, I can't move it. And I remember looking at it and my dad's in a full stride, running trying to catch this car that's pretty soon gonna go over a cliff. You know, that was pretty high. And he but he made it he drove through the winds to the window, grabbed it, locked it up. And then he got the car stopped. And then I heard that very familiar sound of a belt coming through, oh, no loops and have a very clear memory of the wall back.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 13:11

And they didn't want that to happen again. Did you ever do that? Again? No. See, you still think about that every time you see one of those brakes. Flashing flashbacks. Yeah, I do. Over and over in a podcast. When I ask us about memories that have been to that it's just everyday stuff that happens. You know, it's just mundane. It's just the everyday just being there going through life together. That's what what being a parent is all about. You didn't you're five years, six years old. It's hard to understand. Yeah. At what point did you kind of comprehend Hey, this is

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when he passed back in those days, they would lie and stayed at your house. So when dad passed, they brought him back to our house, move the couch out, put the casket there and spent the night there. You know, one night and it was just I think I just sort of disconnected. And I never cried. Even at the funeral. I never cried. I remember seeing him there. I have a very clear memory of the day that that day. When they lowered his casket into that hole. It was raining. We were under a canopy obviously, but rain water running into that grave. And I'll Zlatan put my dad in there as like I couldn't understand why. You know, that picture to this day is very clear, you know, and I just never cried. It never seemed like it bothered me. Then of course, I went sleepwalking. And I think that whole episode lasted two or three months. Yeah. And then I think I just crashed one day just volunteers finally

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Scott Hilton (Host) 14:57

hits you. I think you told me At one time, there was a point in your life where you came to a point where you said you made a conscious decision. Do you know what I'm talking about? Where you, you kind of said, Hey, I'm going to, I'm going to be the dad that I need to be for my kids. Yeah.

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That was probably when I was 24. I'd gotten married early, too early. I mean, some of my youthful mistakes. From that marriage, I had two small children, two daughters. And I love him dearly, obviously. But as, as the birth of my first daughter was coming on, I was running from guide. Mom was my very first Sunday school teacher. She brought me to church every Sunday. And so I knew right from wrong, and I knew who God was in. And so as the birth of my first daughter was coming, I asked Xander conviction about it. I was like, no, he's railed. I'm just avoiding him. And I just clearly remember being in church. What springs Baptist Church, matter of fact, and I don't even remember what Lewis Haney was preaching that day. But I was

strongly convicted with God speaking to me saying, what are you going to do with me? That was clear in my mind, you know, what are you going to do with me? And I just lost it right there. I just I went to the front, I grabbed a good friend, Marvin Greer. And I said, we pray with me, you know, I got to know. I've got to know. And he did. And he, he became very instrumental in my life later. And yeah, he mentored me.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 17:04

There was a group of men there at the church that kind of took you in?



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Absolutely. I saw something in these men that I didn't have, you know, and well, I can name the men right now, you know. And they had a strong big impact on my life. And, and, and then Marvin, stepping in that gap and mentoring me and putting material in my hand and seeing that I was in church. Yeah, that was, that was the turning rail. And I had made a decision and I'm falling crossed. That's the see that and that became a conflict with my wife. At that point. We weren't equally yoked at that point. And I'm sold out. And that created a problem. And I wasn't turning back. And so I guess, eventually, she left in a was divorced by myself divorced and these sharing custody, these two little girls. So that was that was a very difficult, very difficult time.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 18:18

I want to ask you to speak to the young man who's lost his dad. You know, we have Colin is one of our producers lost his dad, five years ago. There's a lot of young men who've lost their dad, I spoke at a church just recently, and a guy came up and said he had lost his dad as a child off. I've never experienced that. But can you just speak to that and maybe share some of your experience and insight as to how do you deal with it? How did you overcome that anger that you had? How did you work through that confusion? It wasn't quick, I know. But if you would just speak to that to that young man that may be wondering, wow, you know, I'm you know, my I'm eight years old, and I don't have a daddy,



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I don't look very different from six year olds perspective of losing their dad versus someone that's 20 years older when they lose their dad, obviously, as a child, everything's confusing. And and you don't know how to let that out. So that's how I reacted I had anger. And it took it took me growing up maturing, to be able to overcome that. If you are older, I sometimes always thought it would probably be harder to lose your dad when you're older. Just from experience of watching people around me that's lost their fathers when it's older. They the only hope I can offer you there is Christ. That's the only hope. I mean, there's a lot of how tos and 10 ways of making this work out for you but I think Christ is the only answer when it comes to those types of questions when those big questions come along. That's just one of many things that we have to deal with as adults. Maybe divorce is maybe one of them, maybe the loss of a

child, which I couldn't comprehend the loss of a father. Those things God is just as there then as he is, is any other problem you might experience. But that's the only solution that I see that resting in Him and just letting your fears lie with him. And take a step back. Breathe.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 20:44

So tell us about your wife,

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my wife, Kathy, and I've been married for 31 years now. 31. He's

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Scott Hilton (Host) 20:55

in the studio with us, by the way, she's not on the microphone.

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21:00

Yeah, she is awesome. She is She is She is my rock, as I said before, takes a lot of courage for a young lady that's never been married to marry someone that already had had two children, and becoming an immediate step mother. And but she's been there through thick and thin. And she's never faltered in her faith, her devotion. She, she loves my kids as much as she does. Our kids. We have two daughters, I have four daughters. And she has never faltered in her in her ability to see the problem clearer than I can. And she knows how to speak to me. And yeah, I don't know how I could make it without her.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 21:56

I know we've been committed to each other. That's so important. What do you think it takes to be a great dad

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to be a great dad? I think primarily, I would think, love your spouse, love your spouse, and be unified with your spouse when it comes to faith and discipline for your children. Be that model role model in the family and your your wife and you are locked together and discipline and then faith and this is how it's going. And it doesn't have to be like rules and regulations around the house. It's actually a home of full of love and care. And it's like God wanted it to be

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Scott Hilton (Host) 22:42

a gives your kids a sense of security. It doesn't they're always wondering, well, what you know, are they gonna stay together? Am I gonna be what's gonna happen to me if that absence

doesn't work out? It gives the kids a sense of insecurity. Absolutely. I want to give you an opportunity to do something we always do. I obviously your dad is gone. And you had some people step. And so I want to give you an opportunity to, to say thank you to your dad or, or some other people along the way, too. If you're looking into that camera right there. Don't look at me. And I just want you to, I'd like for you to just take a minute to pour your heart out here. Okay.



23:29

Well, Dad, that we didn't have much time together. And I know you probably know this by now. But you played a huge part of my life. Your example, your role model. So Dad, thank you. You've shaped me to whatever man I am today. All growing up. I never forgot you. And and I know you're a believer, and I know you're in heaven. And I know when they all get to see.



Scott Hilton (Host) 24:01

That's awesome. Really the reason we do that is because I want these young men to see that. You don't know how much time you've got what your kids so you don't mean any of us could be wiped out tomorrow. Yeah. And so if you're a young father, and you heard what Jerome said, his dad didn't know he only had six, six years with him. Yeah. And I want you to know that those six years might be all you have. But it's an opportunity to invest in your son or your daughter. And that's something that they will never forget. So don't waste another day. Don't think I've got 18 years. You know, you might not have that long. So invest all you've got while you can. So you've you've had some little snippets of time and you've had some impact on your daughter's and we were able to capture a little bit of that we want to we want to share that with you as we close.



24:58

So what is the best ain't about my dad, everything, everything. My dad is the most awesome father ever. He's always been there for us. He's got four daughters, he's always been there for all of us. He's trying to guide us the best way he can. He has instilled God in us to a level is just amazing. He's taught us how to love how to care how to be consistent. He's always been there. He's doesn't matter what I go through, or what I put him through. If I call him he's always there. And he's always giving me the best advice. I remember, one time when we were when I was younger, we went to the beach. And I remember me and my dad, just going to this little restaurant, just him and I. And we got a little bowl of clam chowder. And we share this little bowl of clam chowder, while we just sat there and talked, it was a a nice memory for me. And I enjoyed that moment. And there's so many more stories that I can tell. You know, my dad is so adventurous. He is just this amazing, fun, man who just brings joy and light to everybody. Anybody who knows my dad, everyone who's ever met, my dad knows why that is awesome. Dad, I thank you, I just thank you for being there. I just thank you for showing me that you care that you love me, you're the best and the entire world, I could never ask for it better that I love you. And thank you for just being that amazing.



26:36

Alright, so the things that I love best about my dad are one of the things that I love about my dad. And he is the definition of a man's man. He knows how to take anything apart and put it back together probably better than it was before he could survive. If you dropped him off in the middle of the ocean somewhere. You know, it's all of the things and how to survive. And he probably knows 40,000 different ways to start a fire. But more importantly, he is such a great example of what a godly man should be. He has countlessly pointed me to the gospel. He's a man of integrity. He says what He means he means what he says. And if you said he's going to do something, you can absolutely count on it happening. My favorite story that my dad Gosh, I don't know if that I could just pick one. And in general, my dad is a great storyteller. He can make anything sound so interesting. I learned so much when I'm around him. And I love listening to his stories or even just listening to him explain something. So my favorite stories are when he talks about the memories he has with his dad, he passed away when he was six, just growing up and learning how to do things on his own. And, like buying his first truck Fingerhut figuring out how to drive a manual as he's driving off the lot. Being in a being a drummer for a rock'n'roll band back in high school, what I would give to be able to listen to Magnum back in the day, that would be awesome. See, some of my favorite memories that I have with him are probably some some of them are centered around our what we call red truck conversations. Growing up, he drove an old red pickup truck. And anytime I rode with him, we were bound to have a heart to heart. Dad, I want to thank you for being a good listener. always pointing me and reminding me of the truth. Taking your time giving me your time to teach me things are explained things to me. And just being available anytime I call or want to talk or need to talk. I'm just being there. So thank you so much. And I love you so much.





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I think my favorite thing about that is well, he's kind of unique in that he didn't have an example to follow as far as being a dad goes with his dad having died pretty young. And I think he always wanted someone to just teach him a lot of things, particularly like Guy things. And I feel kind of like the sun he never had with being the one to go hunting with him and fishing or things like that, that we enjoyed. But I appreciate that he wanted to teach us things that he didn't he wasn't necessarily taught but he learned and yeah, to give us what he didn't have. So that's one thing that I really like about Dad, a favorite memory of my dad would be. I know that my sister already used red truck conversations as a example. But one in particular that I always remember and think is really funny is we used to ask dad ridiculous questions that he would give a silly scientific explanation of. And so one of those that happened in a red truck conversation was we asked him, Why do leaves fall off trees? And he has, like, you don't know why leaves fall off of trees? And he was like, well, obviously, it's because ants need to make it down to the ground quickly sometimes. And so they will hold on to a leaf and sort of parachute down and land safely and quickly. And so that's just a really funny memory of dad just kind of being goofy with us growing up, and he's still goofy for sure. But then, on a serious note, Dad, thanks for I think you whether knowingly or unknowingly, taught us a lot about how we can relate to and bring things to our Heavenly Father. Yeah, I think your demeanor, and I think just a calmness about you and understanding sort of nature that you have. I've always known that I could bring anything to you whether it was like good things are or bad things. I could share things with you. And you've received to me really well. And patiently and graciously. Yeah, I know that no matter what I could ever do, that you would still love me. Not that you would approve of all of some things that I've done before. But I know that I can bring them to you. And I think that that mirrors how we can relate to our Heavenly Father that it's never too late to repent. It's never too late to, you know, bring bring things to the Lord. And we can bring all

kinds of things to the Lord, we can bring good things and hard things and confess our sins to the Lord to so you are never a person that I couldn't come to. So I'm, I'm really thankful for that. And that's just honestly a really impactful thing. I think. So. Yeah. Thank you, dad. I love you.

 Scott Hilton (Host) 32:53
So drum,

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Scott,

 Scott Hilton (Host) 32:57
you've worked hard drum offs. It's been my pleasure to be your friend for this, this journey. But you deserve every minute of the praise that your kids gave you didn't deny it. And so is this thrilling to me. You know, I kind of said it here too, because I was there. And I've seen you. I've seen you poured your heart out and give to the kids deserve every minute of that. So hopefully you've inspired somebody. Thank you for coming in. Our pleasure joining us and thank thank you for your friendship and all that you've done for the kids of Eagle Rock and a lot of other kids that aren't in Eagle Rock. So appreciate you, sir. I hope we've inspired somebody that'll conclude this episode of that's my dad, where we're trying to inspire young fathers to become great dads and trying to break cycles of generational fatherlessness. So, until next week, we'll see you then.