

Vista Mcduffie_Audio_V1

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SPEAKERS

Scott Hilton (Host)

 Scott Hilton (Host) 00:15

Welcome again to another episode of Ask my dad. I'm Scott Hilton, the reverse MacDuffie VISTA is an old friend of mine from Wow, tell us how far back we go Vista.

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Ford as 14 years old, so I'm not very good at math 8819 88. And


 Scott Hilton (Host) 00:33

so just could give kinda a little background. I was a youth pastor at my dad's church, forest Avenue Baptist Church, in Alabama city, Alabama. People from other parts of the world think that's the capital of our state. But it's not it's just a little town. We always thought it was the capital, but Alabama city, I was a youth pastor. And you were just a kid that lived down on Chestnut Street. I see it and the church kind of was reaching out to that community. And that was sort of how I got initiated into what would eventually be my life calling because if you remember Vista, we had a youth group. About half the kids were on probation with juvenile probation. Yeah, there were quite a few I was it was quite an interesting group. But I loved and loved you guys. And you kind of came in at the end. And, you know, we didn't really get to know each other that well, because I went back and finished up my graduate degree and you were still there. But just a few weeks ago, I had a speaking engagement. I saw you, and we can get reacquainted. And to be honest, we I never knew your whole story. And so I called you just to be nice, you know, just to chat and see how you were doing. And we began, I began asking your story. And I had no idea what you were going through as a kid. No idea. So let's, let's move into that. And then I want to move into where you are now. Because it's it's a really fascinating, incredible script flipper story. You were 14 years old, basically living on your own. But let's hand it over to you.


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Okay, Ma, I live with my mother and my stepdad. And my stepdad was a raging drug addict. And my mother fell right in there with him. So they were taking off at times, staying going for months at a time. And they were actually going out and robbing jewelry stores. And so you're at home by yourself and they're out robbing stores, me and my younger brother. And at times my older brother, we were there. And it got to a point, at times, there was a grocery store just right down the road from our house that she would stay going so long at times that I was going to the local grocery store and still in hot pockets. They there was times that the power would get cut off because she just wasn't there. And they were more interested and spending their money on drugs and things like that going out party in and the power gets shut off. So I would actually run an extension cord to our neighbors to run our microwave. And that's how I would actually heat up the hot pockets. I loved Hot Pockets them, but I hate them.

 Scott Hilton (Host) 03:35

I mean, how buckets Do you think you had to steal from the grocery store?

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I know they had to know I was doing it because there was times I would go in there. And would it be almost daily, sometimes twice a day, I'd go in there and I'd steal hot pockets. And I was a stupid thief. So I would walk into the grocery store, walk directly to the hot pocket, put the hot pocket under my shirt and then turn around and walk out doing this day after day after day. They had to know what I think the manager knew what I was doing just didn't care or something. Because all I was dealing was the hot pockets. But my biological dad was not in the picture. I've seen my biological dad for about four, maybe five times in my life. There was times when I was really young. My father is a murderer. He killed seven people. And so from the time that I was a young child, he was in prison. And there were the man he had a genius man but he just used it for all the wrong reasons. And he would escape out of prison escaped multiple times. And so there Well, there were some times when he would escape, he would come to where my mother was living at the time. And we would go on the lam together ruler. So here we are. I love my mother. But boy, she's made some really good bad decisions in her life, I made some really bad decisions in running off with somebody that is just escaped prison. That's one of those boneheaded decisions. Just it's just not a wise thing. But I remember just a couple of the those answered dance when he would escape and we would go out. Just wherever, with him riding around doing whatever. My mother at one point, she tried to put her life back together. And when she tried to put her this was when I was probably 1211 12, somewhere rotten there, she decided that she wanted to go see my biological dad, his name's Billy Wayne, by the way, she decided she wanted to go see Billy Wayne in prison. And so we would go, and like said only went just a couple of times. And when I was 14 years old, this is when I realized this man cared nothing for me. He calls me and he tells me, because I told him, I was going to come visiting. And he asked me, he said, Well, I need you to do me a favor. And I'm like, What's that? And I thought he was gonna tell me, Hey, bring me some quarters, or whatever, because that's what he always wanted was a roll of quarters. Well, this time, he asked me to get a joint, roll it up and get a belt that has a hollow center, cut it, put the joint inside the belt, and sneak the join in. And at 14 years old, I may have been 13. At the time, I had enough wisdom to tell the man Billy, when you care, absolutely nothing for me. If you're willing to allow me and encourage me to do something that's going to land me in the same

place you are. You don't care anything about me. And it was at that point that I said, I wanted absolutely nothing else to do with this man. And I told him, I said, Billy Wayne, I just prefer if you didn't call me anymore. I never called him dad. He was never my dad to me. I had grandparents that took care of me and my older brother, and my younger brother x had live with our great grandmother, when my mother was just when she just wasn't capable of taking care of us. So I had a little bit of a firm foundation they are. But my grandfather died when I was really young. And it forced my mother to take back over custody of me and my two brothers. And when this happened, we we would go from house to house to house we lived in the projects over in East Gadsden at times. I've seen everything that you can imagine Scott, I have seen people breaking into our home in the middle of the night. Coming in to, to what we think was this this one guy was about to rate my mother. I have seen my stepdad the the one that was around when I was entering my teenage years. SCOTT I wouldn't he would shoot up and he didn't really care that anybody else was around. He would shoot up between his fingers, he would shoot up in his private areas, and just completely did not care. So I saw all this as I was growing up. That because it was it just seemed to be a common theme for my mom, she she loved the bad guy. I guess she she wanted the the she wanted the guy that didn't fit into what we consider normal, a normal life. So she made all of these decisions. And I don't think she ever thought about the effect that it would have on me and my two brothers. My younger brother unfortunately, he fell victim to this, his surroundings and he turned into Do a drug addict and has spent more of his life in prison than he has out of prison. My older brother and myself, we just we just decided that we were not going to fall into to that statistic. I just, I despise drugs, I always have a hated it. Because of what I saw it due to my mother, it took my mother away from me. And Scott, I wanted that relationship with my mom. And I never had the relationship with my dad. So I didn't really know what I was missing there. So my mom had to be mom and dad. And she was just not good at it, Scott. So there was times that I, you might as well say that I raised myself after my grandmother said, Hey, we just we can't take care of the boys anymore. And I get it. I don't hold that against my grandmother. She she had to do what was best for for her in my PayPal. And I get that so I don't hold any hard feelings towards my grandmother. Because of that. But wow, the situation that we got through into was just, it was just something else it

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Scott Hilton (Host) 11:19

so you're 1314 years old and you're living over on Chestnut Street? Correct. Basically raising yourself stay at Hot Pockets. At what point in your life did you realize I'm going to do something different? Or did you destroy off into that lifestyle for a



11:40

whole idea at Scott I wish I could say that I didn't. But when the day off did not stop with just hot pockets I fell in with the wrong crowd. And the Hot Pockets turned in to start car stereos then it turned into breaking into people's house and stealing VCRs and DVD players and stereos and stuff like that. So I did. There was a time when I strayed. I wish that I could say that I didn't. But I did. And I met my wife when I was 18 years old. And my wife she just wasn't she just she just didn't care nothing about that particular type lifestyle. And so there was a not that me and I use this term very loosely my my buddies decided we were going to go out and steal some car stereos with Scott that night ended up stealing two cars. And it happened in Bo way as we were in Boaz and went to a car lot the car lot had some vehicles parked around back. So we decided

that we were going to go in the fence, steal some car stereos well realize that there was keys in the cars. And so my buddy, there was two of them. My buddies decided that they were going to steal the actual cars. So we take off and we start going down a back road, and Boaz. And we just happened to go by a cop that was sitting in a church parking lot. And going down this back road in the middle of the night, three cars in a row. This cop realizes, hey, this, something's not right about this. So he comes after us. And we get to a split in the road. And the two guys they go right, I go left hoping that the cop would follow me. Well, he didn't. And he decided he would turn right and follow the two that had actually stole the cars. Well, I turned around thinking I'm on they're gonna ditch the cars and I'm gonna have to pick them up. And the cop saw me come back by and when I went back by the cop said, Something's not right about that. So he pulled me over. And I spent that night in jail or not actually in jail but being questioned. And by the grace of God is all I can I can think of by the grace of God nothing. We were not charged that not because the owner got the cars back with no damage to him. So he didn't press charges. But the following morning. My it was Marcia, my wife. It was my girlfriend at the time we were supposed to go to North Carolina. And so I get to where she was living and I said I've just got to rest I've been up on I act You tell her what oh had to happen? And she's like, No, we're going to North Carolina. And I'm like, No, we're not. So needless to say, we went to North Carolina. But she decided then that, hey, if this is this lifestyle, you're gonna live, I just, I don't really care nothing about being with you. And she sent me packing for just a little bit. And I decided then because I left something at her house, and I decided that I was going to go back to her house to get a leather jacket that I had left there. And when I got back, she was in a corner, and she was crying. She was in a fetal position, and she was crying in a corner. And Scott, it broke my heart. And that's actually when I fell in love with my wife. And then I realized the right thing and that I had to do something different. Something had to change drastically. If not, I was going to end up in prison myself. So I joined the Air Force. And that was the best decision I ever made when you retired and retired after 24 years, eight months and 14 days,

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Scott Hilton (Host) 16:10

and then you made a 25 year career, what did you do there? Therefore,



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I was a C 130 loadmaster. I was in the Big Four prop aircraft. And my responsibility was to maintain the weight and balance of the aircraft.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 16:27

And then you had a kind of got established, then the Air Force helped you get established, but there were some other things going on in your personal life too. And your, your spiritual development, we'll call it. Tell us about that. Absolutely.



16:39

I was on what's called a TDY temporary duty. And I was talking to my aunt. And my daughter was born at the time. And she was really young. She was probably three, four years old at the time. And my aunt she asked me a question that completely changed my life. I mean

time. And my aunt, she asked me a question that completely changed my life. I mean, completely changed my life. She asked me, she said, Victor, when are you gonna get back in church? I said, Kelly, I'm not getting back in church. I said, I refuse to go to church on Sundays and Wednesdays and live like heaven, and then the rest of the week live like kale. I said, I'm not gonna do it. And I said, besides that, it doesn't matter. I'm, I'm a Christian. If I die, I know I'm going to heaven. And she said, Well, what about Marsha? And I said, Marsha says she's, she's a Christian. So she's secure. They are to the next question. changed me from from the unknown. She said, Well, you know where you're ago and Marcia knows where she's going. But how is Meghan going to know where she's going? If she dies tomorrow? And at the time, it just, it didn't even register at that moment. I was like, she's so young Kelly. It doesn't matter. She if she died, she's going to heaven. Are you going to your daughter, Megan's my daughter, I said, she's going to heaven. That night, I get off the phone. And Scott, I get in a cold toilet. And I start getting nervous of Wow. She's, she's okay right now. But two, three years down the road. Yes, she she's got to know who Jesus is. And if I'm not showing her, she's not getting that. And I made a commitment that night in my bed that when I got home from this temporary duty, we were going to get in church. And when I got home, we started going to Fairview Baptist church up on the mountain. After you left. We had Darryl farmer come in, and he was there for a short time. But the one that came in after that Keith Armstrong, Keith Armstrong was instrumental and helping get me out of a situation because Keith Armstrong worked at the 13th place

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Scott Hilton (Host) 19:13

youth shelter. Yeah, runaway shelter.



19:16

And my stepdad decided that he was going to wit me one time. And I told him, I was not having no part of that. And I actually told my mother I said, if he ever touches me, I'm leaving. Well, Scott, he decided that he would, and I had on shorts at the time and he took off a belt and he gave me a weapon and I had blood running down the back of my legs, had blood coming out of my back. And I called Keith Armstrong and Keith Armstrong took me to the 13th place and got me out of that situation. Listen. And that was when things started changing for me, because I didn't have to be there in that situation all the time. And we had neighbors Scott. And this is why I think it's important to go back to them. We had neighbors, Wayne and Barney Spiegel. Wayne Spiegel, that is my dad. No ifs, ands, butts about it. Wayne Spiegel is my dad. He's not my father. But he is my dad. And he was a neighbor. He was a neighbor. And he did not, neither one of them had to put in the time that they did with me, but they put in that time. So when I ran away, after I ran away, I eventually came back. My mother convinced me to come back. But at that time, instead of being in that home, Wayne and Bonnie Spiegel gave me a key to their years. And when the power was off, at our house, I knew I had somewhere to lay my head, I knew I was going to have power, I knew I was gonna have food. And they just, they pretty much gave me the keys and said, when you need to come over here, you come over here. And they were not always there. But anytime that I ever needed either one of them, they were there. So I think it's really important that I will go back and establish that particular timeline.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 21:34

Tell us you've retired, tell us where you are now.



21:38

Right now. I just, I kind of lived the retired life man, I but I look for things to do. For me, I just tried to stay busy doing different things. I love doing things at my church. I love being able to just at a moment's notice for me and my wife to load up and our RV and take off and just go out west and spend two months roaming



Scott Hilton (Host) 22:09

nice RV by the way bigger than the house you grew up in?



22:12

Yeah. So we would just roam around outwest just being able to do things like that. It's it's a true blessing.



Scott Hilton (Host) 22:21

Or give you a chance to say thanks to some people. Absolutely, yeah, no, you're gonna miss somebody. There's just no way that you won't. But there are a lot of people reached out to you. And I'm just thinking off the top of my head. There was any Nichols and Chris Walker and Mike Breton, and you were in Mr. Spiegel, my dad, Keith Armstrong, there a former I mean, there's been a slew of people who have reached out to you. I'm gonna give you a chance to say thanks.



22:51

Yeah. Scott just named every one of you. And wow, there are gonna be those that I may us. But this is that smart dad podcast. And I have to say to my dad, Wayne Spiegel, thank you, thank you, thank you. I would never ever, ever be able to repay you for everything that you've done for me. That it is because of you that I am the man that I am today. I can tribute. The direction and the path that I took, I can tribute that to you and your guidance in my life when you did not have to take on the responsibility. They are God and and I cannot tell you how much I appreciate you for doing that for being the dad that you did not have to be. And I really truly appreciate that. Dad, I love you. I know that we're we are not the ones that are affectionate. But I want you to know from the bottom of my heart. I love you.



Scott Hilton (Host) 24:16

So, as we wrap up, I just kind of want to summarize this thing. Here's a kid whose dad is in prison for multiple murders. His mom's on drugs. stepdads on drugs. Living in a house with an extension cord no power. abused, lived in a homeless shelter. Lost his granddad at an early age. stealing cars stealing equipment ends up 25 years serving our country in the Air Force


retires and what's most important to me is a faithful Your husband, a faithful daddy, not just to your biological daughter, but you also took in another daughter as she seeks she calls you. That's a real script flipper have a story. So as we close, I wanted to kind of summarize that because there's a young man out there watching that says I am now who visited like Daffy used to be. And I want you to see from this video we're about to show you what can happen. So we got a little video clip from your daughter, and a young lady who considers you to be her second dad. And this is kind of sums it up this is kind of shows us this. This is what the grace of God, and a gob and a little hard work and a lot of people pitching in. This is what can happen.

 25:57

Hey, I'm Megan, this is my dad. The thing I like most about my dad is that I can always count on him. And he's always there when I need him to be no matter what it is, or no matter what I do. And I have done my fair share of crazy things like bringing home to unapproved for family members home, but he eventually accepted them as his grandchildren, and even let us all stay rent free. He really is the best dad, I think it's probably because he had the best daughter possible to raise but either way, he's the best Thanks for always being great, Dad, I love you.

 26:30

My name is Bailey. But if you ask Vista, um, Sr. Been around for about 10 years or so me and Meg have been best friends since high school. So I have a ton of memories with this stuff. family vacations, holidays, all kinds of stuff. But my very favorite memory with him is my wedding day, my husband and I asked vissa to marry us. And I know that he wouldn't do it for very many people. But he did it for us. And I'm so thankful that he did because it was so special, and I will cherish it for the rest of my life. Something I really love about this is that he's passionate. It's just such a passionate person. If you know him, you know. He doesn't just like something, he loves it. He doesn't just think something he truly believes in it. And he's always up for challenge. And I love that about him. I've never been lacking a father figure I have a great dad. But this chooses to be one for me and I'm so thankful that he has I can confide in Vista trust his boss, and I'm just so so thankful that he's there for me. Now my husband and my daughter, I'm just so thankful to have him in my life. And I can't imagine without it. So

 Scott Hilton (Host) 27:49
how's that make you feel just

 27:51

man it just, it first my daughter, my daughter, and we are such similar creatures, neither one of us have a filter. And we've we've gotten in trouble before Scott, because we are so similar. We have cracked up in church before. To the point that a lady comes off the stage and looks at me and her and says if you think it's easy, you ought to get up there and try. And I don't think my my daughter and I can do is laugh about this. My daughter is a character Natalie. Wow. Megan, you're an awesome daughter. Thank you for those kind words. And Sister. The day that she asked me to marry her, she gave me a card. And it took me completely by surprise. And I

remember exactly what the cards say. And it says, We can't say I do without you. And I broke down right there just because I was like Claude I thought I was about to get a birthday card because it was they gave it to me right around my birthday. And I thought I was about to get a birthday card and and I just wasn't expecting it. And I had a little breakdown right there just from the honor of doing that. And she's rad. I do not marry many people. It's I am Lawson's Minister so I can marry anybody I want to I just choose not to is except on special occasions. And wow, what an honor. It was for sister to say, hey, we want you to to perform this ceremony for us. Her dad Doug is a wonderful man. He's I love Doug today. He's a great guy. And I am so thankful that he is willing to share his daughter just for those small times with me. Just as I have my daughter with him.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 29:53

She wanted to do that. We don't we don't ask for that. Yeah, she wanted to pay tribute. Man, you're, you're a real scrub flipper. And I appreciate that. But more than that, I appreciate the fact that you've inspired somebody. There's gonna be some young man today that's going to look at this and say, if that guy can do it, I can do it too. And if we can accomplish that one thing, then this is all been worth. Yeah. I conclude this episode of asthma dad podcast with Mr. McDuffie. Quite a script flipper. guy that's going to inspire somebody we're, you know, this podcast is about inspiring fathers to become great dads Vista, you become a great dad. Thank you. You become the data that you never had. Thank you. And breaking cycles of generational fatherlessness? You know, you really had a guy stuffed into your life. But your birth father was never there, but you become a great father to your child, until and to others. So that's what this is all about. Thanks for joining us and we'll be back next week with another great interview.