

SHOWNOTES - James Anderson (28/50)

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SPEAKERS

James Anderson (Guest), Scott Hilton (Host)

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Scott Hilton (Host) 00:15

Welcome again to the that's my dad podcast. I'm Scott Hilton, your host. We're here trying to inspire young fathers to become great dads. We're trying to break cycles of generational fatherlessness. And part of the way we do that is we bring guys in who are what I call script flippers, guys who made a decision that they were going to do things right. Regardless of how their life may have been. They decided, hey, you know what, I can change this. And today we have an old friend of mine, who I think is a script flipper. James Anderson, welcome to the podcast, James. Thanks for having me. So I want to roll right in to your story. Because I don't want to waste any time getting to that it's a powerful story. Tell us about your, your childhood and your family growing up.

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James Anderson (Guest) 01:03

Growing up. You know, I was raised primarily by my mom. She did what she could. Growing up, she tried her best to do what she could for us. Make sure we had the best of things at times. And so it you know, it obviously worked out I'm here. So, so there was that and then you know, her dad, they divorced when I was probably about I think it was I was 10. And when they got a divorce, it just kind of it was just like one of those things like, Huh, okay, now what? You know, it hurt, but it was just it was just like, I remember. That's that that was the only feeling I got from

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Scott Hilton (Host) 01:49

it. Sort of just a numb feeling. Yeah, I wasn't it

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was it was odd, you know, and it was just like this. This is not, it's not making any sense. It didn't make sense to me then. So fast forward, you know, few years after that, you know, now

granted, mom and dad both were still in the picture wasn't like I was absentee from any one of them. Me and mom getting a big fight. When I was 15. And I wanted to pat him to leave.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 02:17

They made you leave home. Well, mom, okay, we live 45

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minutes from dad. And so she said, You're gonna have to go live with your dad. I was like, okay. So I went and moved in with my dad. And ever since then he was just he was trying his best to do what he could. But there was a lot left on the table that shouldn't have been left on the table. You know, I got into a lot of trouble. A whole whole mess of trouble. I was not, not at all a good kid.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 02:54

I'm gonna say you get into trouble. Kind of it was good

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globalizing sexual immorality, if you will. Just trouble fighting, smoking, drugs, all of it?

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Scott Hilton (Host) 03:10

No. Oh, you were you were in some fairly serious trouble as a teenager. Yeah. Take me back to growing up and you spent the first five years with your parents together. He spent the next maybe 10 years?

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Well, actually, it's you know, from, from the time I was born on up to about 10. You know, I had mom and dad in the picture.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 03:36

Okay. Was that a good situation for you? Do you have good memories of that those first part,

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oddly enough? Not? Not really. But let me rephrase that. I don't want to say that they were terrible. They weren't bad. They could have been better as anything could be better. But it was

just it overall, I could say that it wasn't horrible.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 04:04

Okay, so how did that so then at 10 years old, they divorced. Yeah.

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And that's when they finalized it because they were separated there actually, for quite a while before that.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 04:14

Okay. And you live with your mom? Yeah. Initially, and then you went when you were 15. You went to live with your dad? What was your relationship with your dad like, and was it healthy? Was it just you got bought? Or was it what would you change about it? What was good about it?

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I'll put it like this. Anytime I had problems. I could call him and he would come.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 04:37

Okay. So so he was there for you?

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Yes and no. Yes. In the regards of that, you know, anytime I could call him he was there. I guess no would be in the regards of him not being And then when he should have been,

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Scott Hilton (Host) 05:01

somehow along the way, you figured out how to be a better dad to your kids than then what you felt like your dad was to you. And that came home largely in terms of being attentive to them, and not just being there for him, but pursuing them and, and being an active father in their life. So what was it that you think, kind of changed your attitude and change the way? Did you find mentors? Or was there a point in time where you said, I am going to be a better dad or I'm going to change the way this is going? Or how did that? How did that whole thing evolve?

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I was coming home from sparring class because again I got back into martial arts trying to get

I was coming home from spinning class because again, I got back into martial arts trying to get in shape. Took a left hand turn on us 29 Going into Lilburn, Georgia. I had heavy foot man. By time I was 18. I had nine speeding tickets and one one improper backing to no proofs of insurance. And you only have your license for two years, you know, and I'm 18 and I have all this cop pulls me over and had a knife in my hand when he when he came up, but it wasn't for what you think it was for the knife. I did pull it down out of my visor where my insurance papers were my registration was I pulled it down, took my insurance papers and all that switched hands with it. But I still kept the knife in my hand when the cop came up to the window when he paid attention to it. Next, you know my windows rolled down. Dropped the knife. Put your hands out the window. Yeah, I was sitting here looking down the barrel, the nine millimeter. I was like, Oh, crap. Of course. I didn't say that. But throw it over to the side hands went out the window. So that caught me an aggravated assault on the GOP charge.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 06:52

Which is which is a permanent on your record.

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Yeah, we know about that. Now it's it's it stays with you no matter how long it's been

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Scott Hilton (Host) 07:00

unless it gets expunged. And then you say you went to jail, went to jail that

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night. I was sitting there before court. I'm sitting here looking at 55 consecutive years in prison. I'm 1855 years Yeah, consecutive. If they run them all consecutive chances are first I was a first time offender legally. And it it just it started way out on me heavy. You know, I'm sitting here, may 18 years old. I could be locked away for three to five years. And it's just that's when stuff started changing like quick.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 07:38

So that's when you started thinking. I gotta make some changes. Yes, sir. There's some different Yeah. What happened with that situation?

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I wound up getting what they call a five D one. Basically, it's it's you're sentenced to five years but I'm only required to serve one year and I do the rest on paper. Do rest on probation. Yeah. So you had to do a year in jail. You wind up having to do a year in jail. Not I didn't have to go

down the road as it's called. Because I was at that time when I got sentenced I think I had five months left in my sentence because all my time up into that point of sentencing. I'd already done seven months.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 08:17

So you're you're sitting in jail for seven months waiting to go to wait and waiting

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to figure out what's gonna happen what's gonna happen. Yeah. And during the meantime, when I got arrested that night going home from sparring classes on my way home, same of my girlfriend, my wife now and that was the end of that chapter of my life.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 08:36

So you So you finally you're in jail, you make a decision. I when I get out of here, things are gonna be different. What did you have to do to implement that decision? What kind of steps let's take me forward to getting you got out.

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making different decisions is like, Okay. I can't do anything illegal anymore, because I actually get in trouble for that.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 08:58

So you had something hanging over your head? Oh, yeah. Now that there's

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that. Yeah, but I'm talking about going forward. It's like, okay, I can't keep doing what got me put in jail. I can't keep running like that. If I do, I'm going to wind up dead.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 09:18

Yep. So you Well, where are you when your first son was born?

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21 Yeah. 21.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 09:27

Okay. Did you kind of hold things together from that point forward or no, there?



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Actually no. Sadly, it got worse. Really? Yeah. For me. Well in for my wife to that wasn't faithful. And it eventually wound up leading to our divorce. Okay. She was pregnant, my wife was pregnant. And we had our oldest son there. And we wind up being separated for too long but that's why I say take divorce off the table,

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Scott Hilton (Host) 10:25

take divorce off the table



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and you don't wind up like that

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Scott Hilton (Host) 10:34

tell me about that. Tell me about that process you went Do you what did you go through a divorce?



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Yeah, we had later we actually wound up going through divorce and the woman, quote unquote, that I left my wife for. wound up not working out. So I was miserable again. And it took a lot for us to wind up getting back together. We eventually did, but we actually went through divorce. It's you know, it's in court records. But after afterwards, we decided to make a go of it. You know, this is 99 I guess we're trying to wait make things work.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 11:20

At what point in your life did you start to stay clean from substances?



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That was a that's kind of a weird one. I just I quit smoking weed just because I knew where it went to. That make sense. I know what it leads to. I didn't quit it because I didn't like it. I just knew where it led to. is pointless. That's with the with the marijuana with with the beer and the

alcohol. I bought a six pack of you know, beer one time you should like to cook with. Okay. And I also used to love to drink it. I used to just that was a teetotaller, though. That's where you drink basically into oblivion. That six pack of beer actually lasted six months. And it's just one of those things to where I was just like, I cooked with it and drank the rest of that one beer. And the rest of it was at five of them left was still in the bottle in the fridge them away.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 12:25

So you just had to make a decision. Now, I'm going to turn things around. What What part did you want to get to your your testimony as we call it in churches, but what part did that plague us roll into that for just a little bit.

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So if you go out if you run off, I 59 down to 20 and Birmingham, you're on 20 West, all the way out. Stay on 22 You don't get it until you get into Texas you get off at 146 exit 146 That's also highway 146. There's a truckstop there. All right, I get out. I'm going in and um, at that time, I'm think I'm 47 ish miles from my destination. So I got plenty good time. I go out, and I checked my phone. At the time. It was a flip phone ahead. But I was sitting there looking at the phone and didn't have any service and I stepped back out for a second. I write in to a friend of mine. That's here and Gadsden

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Scott Hilton (Host) 13:22

from your hometown. Yeah. You're 500 miles from the new 1000 1000 miles from home. You run into somebody from your hometown.

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I asked him in his name's Randall. I asked him some random man what's going on? He says, Jesus, let's go and grab a cup of coffee. Let me tell you about him. Like, Oh, okay.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 13:43

Oh, no, here we go.

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Yeah, actually. So it's gotten more along the lines. But I went in there. And you know, and he, he told me a little bit about Jesus and stuff. And then we just, you know, got caught up, but it was right did I didn't decide to give my life over to Christ. It was more of a gradual.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 14:00

 **SCOTT HILTON (Host)** 14:00

What year was that? 2002. So you committed to follow Christ. 20 years ago? Yeah. And you've been faithful to for 20 years.

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For the most part. Yeah. Yeah.

 **Scott Hilton (Host)** 14:12

You know, that's not an unusual response. It's not like there's something we need to tell those guys. You're gonna mess up sometime. Yeah. You know, it's not like James Anderson's lived a perfect life. It's not like he started going to church and everything's, you know, everything's great. No, there's still some struggles weren't there, though there is then you still have to everyday make a decision.

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Yes. It's, it is a conscious effort. You do make a conscious effort as to whatever you're going to do. I mean, to do wrong as easy.

 **Scott Hilton (Host)** 14:42

So let's move on to you being a parent. Oh, boy. Okay, bring it. Tell me about your boys.

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What do you want to start, man?

 **Scott Hilton (Host)** 14:49

I mean, just wherever you want to start. I know you proud of them. Tell me Yeah, brag on them a little bit. Okay.

 14:57

Start with the oldest one. He was a brat. Growing up, I go live boy, you know it. But I'm glad glad he's in my life. I wish it would have been easier growing up, but it wasn't I was just him. It was just our relationship. So

 **Scott Hilton (Host)** 15:14

he went through some of the early struggles. Yeah. Okay.



15:21

Number two, Bryce, he was, he was a lot easier. I don't know why. He just, he, of all, um, he was already using one. You know, at least for me anyway. You know? I don't get it all on this, it's just the way he is. You know. Last one, Eric, he's combination of the first two. And it was just he could he could aggravate the snot out of me. But man, the amount of love I have for that boy is is you know. But like I said, we we had a lot of struggles growing up, but I, you know, I hope that we did, right, to where they know how to do right? With their kids. So

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Scott Hilton (Host) 16:10

James, I want to give you a chance to address your dad. Okay, tell him anything you want to tell him. Look into that camera right there. This is your shot.



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Dad. I know our relationship hasn't always been great. But for the good times, we had Thank you. I know life was hard on you. But I thank you for the opportunities you gave me. One of the things that my dad did teach me was carpentry. To a degree. He taught me how to work construction. And so guess what I do now, when I'm not driving a truck construction. It's a backup to provide for my family. And just overall, I need anytime now I can still call you dad. And we can talk about whatever. Thank you. I love you.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 17:09

We want to share something with you. One of your boys wrote a letter for you. And I'm going to try to read it to you says My father didn't tell me how to live. He lived. And let me watch him do it. Clarence Kelland. And here's what your son said, it makes me feel good to know that even when we don't talk as much as I'd like to, I can get answers I want about anything. By looking at the way you live your life. I don't have to have a full story. But I remember multiple times where you helped other people, homeless, broken down on the side of the road, or just needing a hug. And I'm glad to say I've tried to do the same when it comes to helping people. There was one time when I was getting gas and I noticed the guy asked him for change. So he could put enough gas in his car to get to work. After thinking about how you would handle it. I did the only obvious thing to do I filled the gas gas tank. I love your dad, your youngest son. We also have a video we'd like to share with



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you. I am dad's oldest son, Michael. And the thing I like best about my dad is how hard hard work and he is how loving he is for his family, his willingness to provide and do whatever it takes to put a roof over our head fetus closes, make sure we have everything we need. He's always led by example. And he's every bit of the man I wish to be when I have a family of my

own. To speak more on that my favorite story about Dad is uh, we didn't always have the best vehicle situation growing up. And he would let mom take the car to work. And this man would walk to work a few miles is few miles to work and his truck driver. So sometimes before the sun was up real early in the morning, my dad would be walking to work to get there and provide for us. And he's been a big inspiration to me. And I'm sure both my brothers my middle brother Bryce, my youngest brother Eric, growing up he's He's raised us to be great man. Dan, I want to thank you for being the man you are today. For how you've raised, me and my brothers, how you've taught us, right, wrong. You've always done your best to provide for us. I love you, Dad. Thank you for all you do.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 20:29

And then finally, Julie, your wife wrote this about you. James always wanted better for his children. We had so many obstacles to overcome. Especially once we were so young, we had our kids. I'm proud of James, he's always worked very hard to provide for us. I love that He has a special connection to each one of our kids, but all in a different way. Whether it's riding motorcycles, cooking, or making something, he'll go all out. I want to thank you, James. Thanks, James. For all he does now, and did before for our kids and me. I love him more now. Especially after 32 years. Thanks for the opportunity to show how special he is. There's more sure. You know, James, you've mentored a lot of kids. Yeah, you've reached reached out to kids who you weren't their biological father. And turns out that one of those has sent sent a little letter here for you. It's your, your favorite. Nice. Thank you for stepping up and becoming my dad. You've taught me so much growing up. In my early teen years, I'll forever be thankful for the way my life turned out to be. If I had ever never gotten the chance to grow up with you, Julian, the boys, my life would be completely different now. You're strong, brave, courageous, and outgoing person. You and I have always had that funny sense of humor with each other. And if we didn't, then you'd know something wasn't right. You're the best dad uncle I've ever had. Now forever cherish you. Thank you for being you. Your favorite Nice. family. My dad was one of my first introductions to music. I remember him teaching me some beginning chords on the guitar when he was when I was young. Even before I got into playing solo. We learned a few basic songs on guitar and continued learning new things on and off throughout the years. Now music is extremely prominent part of my life. I have my dad to thank for that. He helped foster a spark that I had for music in the very early stages. And I'm not sure what I'd be doing in my life right now hadn't had not chosen to stick with music. Another thing I want to thank my dad for is the example of hard work. There are many times when we were younger, the dad wasn't home as much because he was out on the road. We missed him there in those times. But we all knew he was out there that had been going on the road meant he was working to provide us with a life to enjoy. We knew he sacrificed time at home so that my brothers and I could do the activities we wanted to do so we could pay the bills and afford the groceries for three girls and boys. He also showed us some examples of hard work at home. There was always a project to get done at the house. And that would make us do a lot of work on some of those projects. Maybe not so much as we thought. We may not have enjoyed doing the work at the time sweating big in the building, by now see the benefit of doing those poem projects. That taught me a lot of what I know about basic woodworking, making things with my hands, fixing things around the house instead of having to pay someone doing work on those projects growing up was always a pain to me. I couldn't really see the point. But I see the point now. I can do work on my own home and feel proud of all that I'm accomplishing. These are just a couple of things I'm thankful for. I'm thankful For my dad, and he example he set for us boys that I love you. So James, how does

it feel to have came out of a situation you came out of? And to know that you made a choice at some point? Yeah. And to hear the respect and love you have from, from your three boys, your wife and from your niece? What's that like to you?



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Yeah, it's good. It's really good. Is it worth it? Yeah. That's, that's, that that is something that manners, Scott, we could go on and on about the life lessons we've learned, right?



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That is, it is worth it. In the end. staying married is worth it. In the end. My relationship with my wife is the example that is going to hopefully lead my kids to do the same thing. Get married, stay married. Be a loving husband to your wife. Be a good dad, if you can at all possible.



Scott Hilton (Host) 26:17

You know, be a provider, a provider, be a hard worker out there get after it guys set the example. Well, you're what we call a flip a script flipper. And congratulations on where you've come. You see, oh, James truck drive with a beard. And he's a great guy. Great guy. Thanks for coming in and sharing your story. And I hope and I think it's gonna inspire a lot of young guys. Thanks. That'll conclude this episode of the basketball dad podcast where we're inspiring fathers to be great dads, breaking cycles of generational fatherlessness. We'll see you next week with another great story.