

Jeff Wall_Audio_V1

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SPEAKERS

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 got my buddy Jeff wall. In the studio with me this is wow, this is interesting because we set out Jeff to do 50 interviews 50 podcast, you're number 49. And it's fitting, we've been friends since ninth grade, you've got quite a story in the head of purpose. And, you know, I didn't bring on all my friends. I know, some people think I only had three or four. And I brought them all but I didn't bring on all my friends, but I brought on the guests, I felt like really had a unique story. And you've got a really unique story, and it's something I think, will help a lot of people. And the 50th interview is going to be a little different. So we're gonna kind of be a recap. So this is the last actual interview, and it's fitting that I'll bring him somebody that I'm really close to. So Jeff, you had quite an interesting story. You're one of eight kids. Number six. We met when we were in the ninth grade. And I did not realize what's you had just gone through when we we met so let me just just take us back to your childhood and walk me through that process.

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01:29

Okay, well, apparently, when I was young, I always I would take my mom out of the bed and, and sleep with him. So I mean, man, but Dad was pretty close. I felt like me and him had a special relationship. When he started driving a truck. He would like go to Chattanooga, Mississippi, different place, like get delivering parts. And Saturdays, a lot of Saturdays or during the summer. I'd ride with him. Me I felt pretty special.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 02:03

And you guys have a pretty normal family. You played little league ball. There's an interesting story to want us to tell about the about Little League. But we'll get to that in a minute. But you had a you had a pretty normal life your dad worked at your mom took care, y'all, you had a close family. And then things kind of fell apart in the ninth grade. Tell us what happened?



02:25

Well, when my dad started having chest pains, and he had a massive heart attack, and he was unable to work. So then we had to move from where we're living at moved over to him science and projects. And he is conditions just steadily started getting worse. And then he had a massive heart attack, went back into the hospital, stayed in there for a while, then had a blood clot. And then he passed. I was at the hospital when he passed. And that that's one of the issues that I've had hard for a long time because my mother when my mother was last year to see him, and we went in there. And you know, I was 16 years old and you know, told him bought everything you know, we had to leave. He said I loved you. Well, normally I tell him I love him back but I didn't this time. And as last time I saw him



Scott Hilton (Host) 03:31

then you you weren't expecting him to



03:33

know now. We're gonna have a strong that was a mule. You know, he was no I didn't. He just survived massive heart attacks. You know, I thought he's indestructible.



Scott Hilton (Host) 03:43

Yeah. So you thought this does come back? Come back next time. Yeah. And then I believe you. Remember you telling me that at the funeral home it took Oh, tell us about the experience.



03:55

Well, as with my uncle Rudolph, he was he was walking down the hall. And I was like, Yeah, I got this. I got this, you know, 16 year old and I rounded the corner. I saw the flag draped in the casket. And I broke down. I couldn't I couldn't go up there took me three hours conference, even the casket.



Scott Hilton (Host) 04:18

Yeah, he was in the Navy. military funeral.



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And I had a dream the night before that he had a pulse in his wrist. So by the time I went to Paris, I checked in and just to see, well,




Scott Hilton (Host) 04:27

 **SCOTT HILTON (Host)** 04:37

what can you describe what that's like for a 16 year old kid? Oh, it's hard to have to go through.

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I mean, it's it's hard. I mean, I but you know, Loksatta had eight, seven siblings, siblings, so they you know, we bonded you know, stuck together but it was That was, that was one of the hardest things I've ever had to do.

 **Scott Hilton (Host)** 05:05

Have you ever wondered what your life would have been like if he had he lived? What would have been different?

 05:11

I don't know that it would have been different. I mean, Dad was. Dad was hard growing up. You know, he was a he was the perfect man. He was somewhat of provider, but he was. He was hard.

 **Scott Hilton (Host)** 05:25

Yeah. So when the perfect home. Then y'all when we met you were living in the housing project. Yeah. public housing projects. I guess I'd forgotten until we did the podcast how much time I spent in the projects, because I remember being over there. What was it like in those coming? Three or four years to have to? Well, first of all, you didn't tell anybody?

 05:50

No, no, no, no, I actually asked angles that got in trouble. But Miss Watkins pulled me off the sound like come back to school and told me that I should have told somebody but I didn't know what the protocol was. Yeah.

 **Scott Hilton (Host)** 06:03

So so he you were at the hospital, he died. You went back to school and nobody knew.

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I went back. I stayed out about four or five days. Then I went back still. Yeah. Yeah. And they wanted to know why I was out of school. Total. Yeah.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 06:17

And you didn't even tell your friends. I didn't even know that to be honest. We didn't I never ever met your dad. Yeah. Because he was sick the whole time. And when he died, you didn't even tell me? What was up with that? What was going on?



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I didn't, I didn't know what protocol was on situation like that. Because he was actually the he was the first family member. I had the dad. I mean, my grandmother's. They were all living. He was the first person that I knew that.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 06:49

Yeah. But your dad protocol was your dad. I want to get back to that story when you played little league. He he was a defender. Yeah, have you tell us that story of what happened there and the little



07:04

one, a little league, you know, you have to sign those contracts. And apparently those contracts are legit. And I was having a with had a practice game for the season started. And I had a terrible practice. I mean, I couldn't catch anything author. I couldn't hit anything. And one of the assistant coaches got mad at me. And he said, y'all just go play for which brothers take me off. And it's another team. Yeah, another team. Me and Greg. I thought, I don't know, Daddy, what he said. And next day Daddy took us up there to watch brothers and told Mr. Bailey said, Hey, I don't want to play over there. He can he play here? Mr. Bailey said heck yeah. So I started practice with them a couple of days. And there's a big stack of Little League. They had a meeting had the president of the league a burden different coaches that come up there and I was discussing the situation about you know, well, he signed a contract this contract and he's supposed to play with this team and, and Dad said something about the coach about, he didn't think he ought to be coaching the Little League and he got up. He got up to, I guess, defend himself, but he attacked my dad, and that dug him out.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 08:32

Remember? So your dad kind of stood up for you. It's what he was doing. That's my whole point is why I wanted you to tell the story. Your dad was a defender of his kids. You told me something. I remember that he would take you on those truck rides and y'all would stop him buy a loaf of bread loaf of bread ham and cheese, ham and cheese. And the funny the things you remember. So, so simple. With eight kids. It wasn't like y'all had a whole lot of money. Right? So I don't think y'all went to Disney World.



09:01

I had never first time I went to Panama City. My sister Sharon took me is at graduation.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 09:08

Yeah. High school graduation. But y'all are pretty happy family.

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09:11

Yeah. Yeah. I mean, they know we had issues, you know, that. You know, he I would say he's an alcoholic, you know. And you say it was the perfect world, you know, but he was a provider, you know?

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Scott Hilton (Host) 09:32

And he did take time with you. Yeah, yeah.

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I mean, he worked a lot you know, yeah. So what he went to all our games and stuff like that, and you know, other than that he went dollar games. So

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Scott Hilton (Host) 09:43

they were supportive. He had his issues and I think that's a message because there's a lot of fame was out to the like that, you know, they'll have their they'll have their act completely together. We've had a lot of guys on the podcast have just been like the perfect little family. But the point that I I'm getting to is you came up in a situation where your dad wasn't an alcoholic, but he he cared about you and he loved you and you weren't weren't abused. He spent some time with you. Yeah. But all that being said, You turned out to be a great dad, for your two kids. And your dad is still that. Yeah. And you told you that. That's something I've always noticed about you. You also made a comment that I heard one time we're gonna talk about your kids in a minute. But you said the difference between people who make good dads, and the ones that don't make good dads is one thing. Selfishness. Yeah. What tell us about that. If you're selfish,

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it's a May. You know, if you're selfish, you feel like you have to make sacrifices to do things.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 10:49

So you have to very well adjusted responsible adult children now. Thanks, and who really think highly of you? And I think the reason I wanted to have you on the podcast is because you did

have a rough time coming up. You did, you know, there were some issues at home, and then your dad did die, and you had to live without a dad. And then you y'all didn't have a whole lot materially. But somewhere along the line, you figured out how to be a great dad for your kids. So was there a point in time that you think that happened? Or did what did you just evolve? Or did you roll into the?



11:30

Well, I think it just evolved. I mean, once again, it's choices. If, if, if you was raised in a bad situation, had abusive parents, and you and once you have your kids or your thinking on having kids, if you thought the situation he was in was bad, then you should know how to avoid it. You know,



Scott Hilton (Host) 11:58

so, tell us about your kids. First of all,



12:02

well, savannas. 3130. She's a nurse. I think she's outstanding nurse, she's she works with hospice. She has a caring heart. So I think as a Colin, she she's very well at it. Scott's he's already went through his second year with a jaql. State with a marching southerners, very musically inclined, very. They were both different reason. I had a lot of Crow, raised in Savannah, with some friends of ours. They had two boys, Bob and Tammy. They had two boys and, and Savannah, I snap my finger and get her in line. And they'd be, you know, more difficult. And I said, they said, well, the boys are different. I said, No, they just raised me. It's got it blah, blah, blah. You know, you just got to do this. You got to do that. And they said, No, boys are different. That's it. No, they ain't. Well, then Scott was born. Any damn word?



Scott Hilton (Host) 13:07

Yeah. To find out. Yeah, that's our diff different approach. Yeah. Scott is a he's a musician, singer. And was a drum major in high school. Southside. Yeah. At the local high school. And you never missed a game I don't believe



13:23

no, no, no. Because I was able to retire early from Honda. His St. his junior year. I didn't miss none of his senior year. I had to miss a few his junior year. That's because, you know, work and whatever. But the senior year, I got to see as all of his senior year.



Scott Hilton (Host) 13:42

Yeah. And you had to give up something to be able to do that. I think Honda offered you some kind of deal if you would stay on and use and then not going to miss any kids ball game. Yeah, he

kind of deal if you would stay on and use and I'm not going to miss my kids ball gas. Yeah, he was the drum major. Yeah. And so you gave up a pretty big financial package to be able to do that is and that goes back to the thing you said about you can't be selfish. Yeah. And raising your kids. So for that young young guy who's just lost his dad, you would say it's gonna be tough.



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It's gonna be down. It's gonna be tough. You just give it time. You'll hurt you'll cry. But then, then, then you'll you'll start remembering things, then you'll have the good memories and all the bad a lot of the bad things will go away. Then you'll be able to talk about them.



Scott Hilton (Host) 14:40

Yeah, so time does help time. Yeah, time heals. But you're you're you're still the pain doesn't go away.



14:49

I miss him. I think about my mother and dad every day. That own doctor said The only regret that I have is when he told me he loved me and I didn't tell him I loved him back. Wow. That in I think he was probably the first one. I've told that to you.



Scott Hilton (Host) 15:02

Yeah, I remember that. So what do you think you and Sealy been married? 30 years?



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32? Basically 3333 years?



Scott Hilton (Host) 15:11

To the same woman? Yes. That's unusual. That's good. What do you think you have done right to raise the kids that have turned out like your kids have turned?



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Oh, we've disciplined, you know, but I have learned you don't discipline when you're angry. Explain to them the reason your discipline, then then you have to fulfill your discipline, you had to do the discipline. She's she's, she was very good at making sure they did their schoolwork. You know, she's worthy. She's the reason that where they are now on their schoolwork.

Because if, if it would have been up to me how long? You've had a project that you should have done it? She was she was all about the project. You got to get this done. You got to get this done.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 16:04

Yeah, so he's so is it really complicated? To be a good dad?



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I don't, I don't think so. If you if you assume I'm good dad. I mean,

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Scott Hilton (Host) 16:20

I think you're I've watched Yeah,



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I just you can't like I said, you can't be selfish,

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Scott Hilton (Host) 16:28

I wouldn't have invited you to build my podcast, I didn't think you're good.



16:31

I mean, if you're if you're a selfish person, if you're a me person, then it's gonna be tough for you.

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Scott Hilton (Host) 16:38

So it's really just as simple as that.



16:42

That's the way I've always looked at it. I mean, you got to provide for your family. I mean, I mean, that's a big step to be a mom or be a dad. And you have to be a provider protector. Educator, you know. I don't know that I've taught them anything special. I've just tell them laugh. Tell them laugh. You know?





Scott Hilton (Host) 17:10

Have you talked to them much about your upbringing and things you went through? Not a lot. No. I'm just just curious. Yeah. So is there anything that's that they're gonna learn from from this interview that they didn't know you say? That happens sometimes? Yeah,



17:25

maybe? Yeah, there might be they might get some questions I asked. So they might not know what went through. I mean, I mean, but I'll tell them you know, yeah.



Scott Hilton (Host) 17:33

What would you want your kids to say about you? When your girl



17:40

that I was a provider? That I was I wasn't hard on them. But I was a disciplinarian. That I loved them that they knew I loved them.



Scott Hilton (Host) 17:58

What is the best way to show your kids you love them?



18:01

Tell them? I mean, I get off the phone. I don't care if I've talked to him. 10 times a day. Love you. Yeah, my uncle do that again.



Scott Hilton (Host) 18:13

Yeah, wow. Here's a guy. And you're, you're kind of what we call a flip script flipper. A guy who? Whose dad had alcohol issues. Although I'm gonna say it sounds like he managed a little better than a lot of them do. Yeah. large family. You're poor. I know. You've never said you were poor. And you were you don't want me to say you're poor. But you didn't. You've never made that an issue.



18:46

Now. I mean, I was I'm able to eat.



Scott Hilton (Host) 18:52

But I mean, yeah, there's a lot of mouths to feed when you grew up in public housing. And yet, you figured out a way to turn things around, you've got a daughter, that's a nurse, you got a son, that's gonna be a band director one day. And both very successful. And when I say successful, not just career wise, but in the way they handle themselves. The people, they are the way they treat people. Yeah, Jeff, you've always treated people kindly. I know, anytime we've gone out to eat. People always come over to talk to you. And you've always treated people with respect. I think that's important. That's you've modeled that for your kids. And they've, they've taken and done that themselves. So I think I think your story is something that there's a there's a kid out there that needs to see you and they need to see that. It can be turned around. Yeah, you know, you can turn it around and you can have a good life and just do just can't be selfish. It's choices. It's all about choices to make. While we've got a little bit audio from your, from your kids. Sir This way you as we close



20:07

to make me cry Dad,



20:08

we just want to make this video to tell you how much we are blessed to have you as our dad. One thing that I'm grateful for is how much you have sacrificed for the both of us even for whether that'd be taking off work or even having to miss some stuff because we were low on money or that we you needed to really work. And we love you. And one of my one of my favorite memories that we've had was when we were at Panama City, and we took the banana boat ride, and how you had fell off the sea. And you were just you were struggling to stay on a stay on the soundboard. And I was trying to flag down the jet skier. And we, they just said just stay down there. We got Levi, and Mama was just laughing back on shore. And we were we were waddling. Getting back to our canopy. That might have been a horrible day for you. It was a horrible day for you. But it was it was it was a pretty funny looking back on it.



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I'm thankful for all the times that you were just there in my life. All the things that you anytime I look back on, I'll just you're there. Whether you had to take off work, I remember you'd always get our band schedules and look and see what day and what shift you're on. So that if you had to work take off work, you could put in PTO time. And that always means a lot to me. I'm just thankful for everything that you do now and that you're always there for us even today when I'm married and have my own family. And I just want to thank you for all that you've done in my life. I love you. Love you.



Scott Hilton (Host) 22:17

So, so coming out of the situation you came out of you've never made a big deal out, I'm probably making a bigger deal of a tenant than you would like to. But how does it feel to know that you've you've came out of a situation that could have been, it would have messed a lot of

people up. And you've done things right? Not been selfish and to have these kids now as adults to look at you and say, Dad, we love you. Appreciate you. We've recognized everything you've done. Is it worth it has been worth it to you?



22:47

Oh, yeah. I mean, I'm very proud of my kids. I mean, I think she was done. I mean, they're very successful. I'm just extremely proud of them.



Scott Hilton (Host) 22:57

Yeah. And that's why I wanted to have you on because it just shows that parenting. I think this would summarize the whole thing. Being a dad is not complicated. And regardless of where you came from what you've been through, if you're just not selfish, you're just willing to, to make some sacrifices for your kids and just love them. I think it's one of the greatest things your dad taught you is you're not any better than anybody else. But nobody else is better than you either. By that I've



23:27

instilled that into my children. One last



Scott Hilton (Host) 23:29

thing. What would you what would you say to your dad?



23:33

Oh, love you. The first thing I tell him? They didn't get to tell him that for the past.



Scott Hilton (Host) 23:42

Wow. Well, thanks



23:44

for being on. No problem, brother.



Scott Hilton (Host) 23:46

It's gonna inspire somebody. Well, it's time to end the the final interview of the season. Yes, that's next next week, we've got a special thing coming up. But you know, one of the things

that I was thinking about in preparation for next week, is one of the things we're going to talk about is the impressions that I've gotten from interviewing 50 People now. Yeah. And I think one of the things that I got, that I got from you tonight that I've gotten from everybody is being a dad is not hard. It's not complicated. It's something that anybody can do. And just like you said, it's a matter of choice. So I think if we can say anything to the young guys out there, make a choice. Be like Jeff, just make a choice. And you can do it. It's not complicated over and over and over. The guys have told me this is not a complicated thing. To be a great dad. It's not complicated. So I think that's a that's a good summary of of your life. And I appreciate what you've done. Thanks for coming on. That'll conclude this episode of that's my dad, where we're inspiring fathers to be great dads and we're breaking cycles of generational fatherlessness See you next week