

The Influence

by Tim Grissom

Tim Grissom reflects on the profound influence of his late wife, Niece, emphasizing the importance of daily devotion and the impact of living a life of faith.

Scripture: Joshua 1:8, Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 31:30, James 1:22, 1 Peter 3:1

Topics: "Daily Devotion", "Faith Inspiration"

Description

Tim Grissom shares a heartfelt tribute to his late wife, Janiece, who lived a life of grace, courage, and peace, leaving a lasting impact on her family and friends. He reflects on her unwavering commitment to daily quiet time with God through Bible reading and prayer, which shaped her into a godly woman. Grissom acknowledges his own struggles with rebellion but finds inspiration in his wife's simple faith and devotion to Christ, leading him to embrace regular intake of God's Word as a transformative practice in his life.

Transcript

For eighteen years, three months, and one day, I was married to one of the godliest people I have ever known. My wife was beautiful, kind, hospitable, and fun. My heart still sags with the loss of her. She left us on December 13, 1999, after an eleven-month bout with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), and now lives in the presence of God.

You may be wondering if I am exaggerating my wife's character in my memory. I am well aware of the tendency to make things sound either better or worse when we speak of them in past tense. But the essence of what you are about to read about Janiece (Niece), I first wrote seven months before we knew she was sick. And now, what a wonderful opportunity this husband has to "praise" his wife for the imprint of virtue that she left on her family and friends.

But this is not an article about death and dying, or about grief. It is an article about living--living in such a way that we may face joy, sorrow, victory, trial, and even mundaneness with grace, courage, and peace. That is how my wife died; that is also how she lived.

A friend sometimes teases me that I married "way over my head." I have to agree, and I admit to often wondering why God would bless me with such a wonderful soul-mate. Niece's life radiates joy and contentment. Her spirit is settled, and her heart uncluttered. Above all, she walks intimately with God. But hers is not a heavenly stupor that keeps her detached from the needs and concerns of this life, or of the

people around her. I only mean that Niece walks in simple obedience to God. She listens to what He says, and then she does it.

I don't mean to imply that she never struggles. In fact, she readily admits to having a fearful disposition. But when she does battle fear, or some temptation, she doesn't blame her circumstances or become moody. She asks God to search her heart and she waits for His answer. Even in her battles I see no rage.

I, on the other hand, often resist God. I'm well acquainted with stubbornness. But I have learned something through my years of observing Niece's life, and I'm beginning to feel some release from the grip of rebellion. I've picked up one of Niece's habits, and that, I think, is the primary reason that my soul is on the mend. You see, in the 20+ years that I have known her, Niece has never missed a single day of "quiet time." Not one! Spending time alone with God in Bible reading and prayer is as much a part of her day as getting out of bed; it is simply something she does.

Niece's quiet time habit began when she was in junior high. During a week of summer camp, the speaker encouraged the students to commit to read their Bible every day for one year. Niece made that commitment . . . and she kept it. One year led to another, and another, and another

I'm not saying these things to put my wife on a pedestal. My point is that faithfully taking a few minutes out of each and every day to meet alone with God in His Word and prayer has formed her into a godly woman. And . . . her life has "won" me (1 Pet. 3:1). If she had nagged me about certain things, or manipulated, or ridiculed, she would only have succeeded in driving me away from wanting to grow in Christ. Instead, she has lived a very real life of simple faith and devotion to Christ. And it has made me thirsty for what she has.

We now have four children. By God's grace they are growing up with an understanding that having personal devotions is a normal part of the daily routine. The older ones have already begun to have their own quiet time. We haven't required this of our children. They've simply seen Mommy and Daddy reading their Bibles and praying, and they want to do the same.

I've come to believe that of all the things we can teach our children, nothing could be more profitable in equipping them for life--whatever or wherever it sends them--than a commitment to meditate daily on God's Word.

I know that many people have gripping stories about a time when they experienced personal revival, and they can tell of dramatic circumstances and events involved in the process. It hasn't been like that for me. God got my attention over a period of time, but it has been just as real and life changing. In addition to using the example of my wife, God has also brought others across my path who have challenged and helped me. The key element, however, has been the regular intake of His Word, especially in my own personal devotions.

God's Word has been like a medicine to reduce my anger, worry, and impatience. It has acted as a map in helping our family make decisions or reroute our ill-advised plans. It has provided light to reveal snares that were sometimes hiding in the shadows. God's Word has become for us something we simply cannot do without.

I thank God for a youth speaker who encouraged a group of junior-high campers to read their Bibles. I thank God for a young lady who made that commitment and kept it (and who said "yes" when I asked her

to marry me!). I thank God for His Word every day as I sit to read it and to listen to what He has to tell me about Himself. I thank God that He uses those daily appointments to draw me nearer to Him.

And now, looking back over our journey of these past months as we have grieved the death of this precious, virtuous woman who was my wife, I thank God that her legacy remains. Though my days often end with tears, those tears generally fall on the pages of an open Bible. And the darkness lifts a little.

Thank you, Niece.

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