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PathPointe Magazine
PO Box 1895
Goldsboro, NC 27533-1895

PathPointe Magazine

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POSTMASTER: Please send address corrections to: Pathway Ministries Group, PO Box 1895, Goldsboro, NC 27533-1895.

PathPointe Magazine is written for the Faith Partners, Business Underwriters, and friends of Pathway Ministries Group.

Subscriptions: PathPointe is provided free of charge to interested parties within the USA, as our Lord provides. All other subscriptions are \$25.00 per year.

Address Changes: Please either send us a photocopy of your mailing label with your partner number or use the provided insert to carefully print your name, new address, and partner number and send it to: Pathway Ministries Group, Subscription Services, PO Box 1895, Goldsboro, NC 27533-1895. Please allow 6-8 weeks for address change information to be activated.

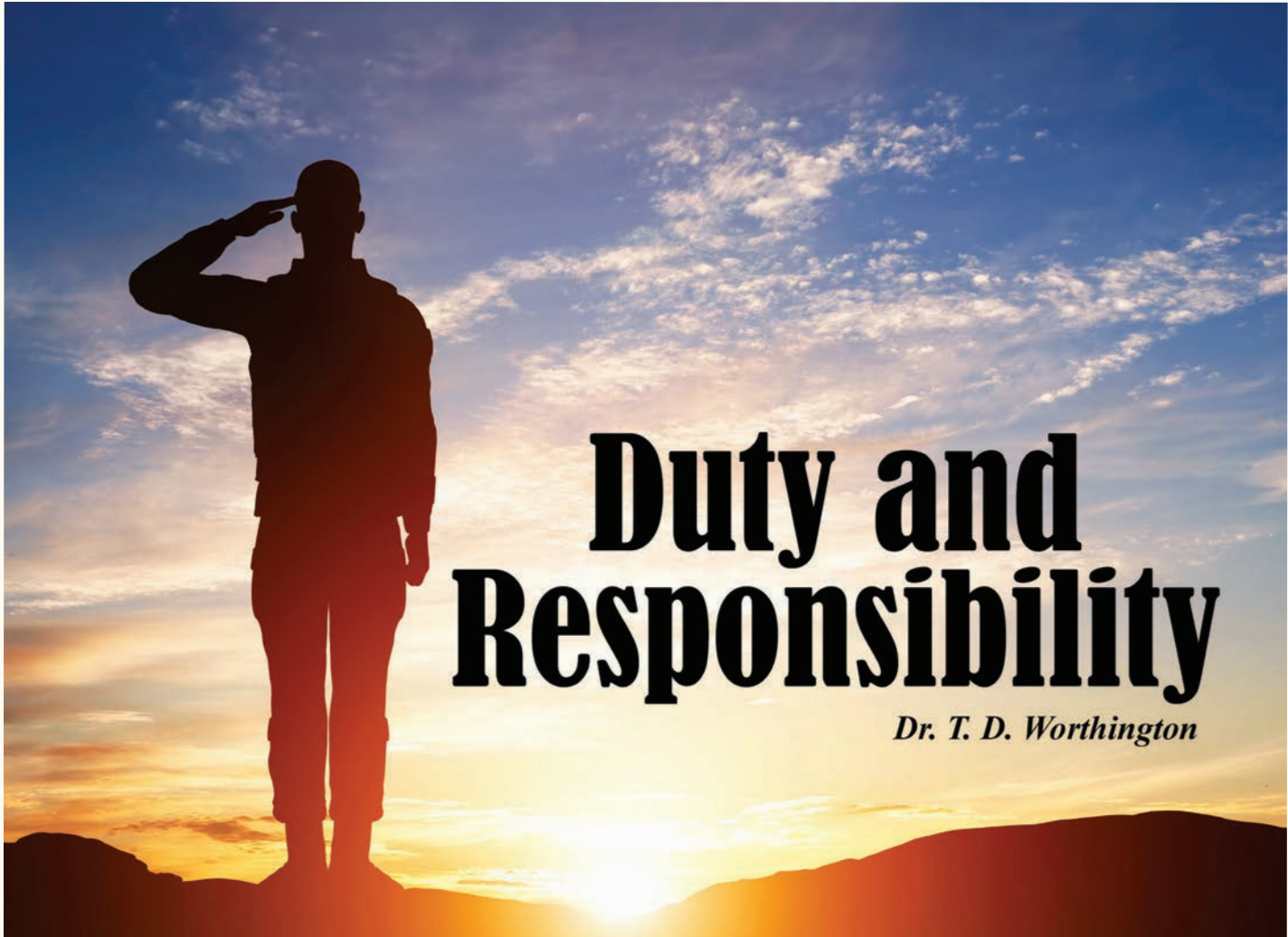
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Duty and Responsibility

Dr. T. D. Worthington

“Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.”

Isaiah 43:7

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

Revelation 4:11

God created us for His glory and pleasure. Therefore, we have a duty to live for His glory and pleasure on this earth. Our duty comes from His design. What does it mean? It means that we love Him (*Matthew 22:37*), trust Him (*Romans 4:20*), are thankful to Him (*Psalms 50:23*), and we obey Him (*Matthew 5:16*). These

are some of the broad headings, with many sub-headings of our duty towards God. That’s why I say getting saved is a duty. Going to church is a duty. Praying is a duty. However, sometimes we seem to be confused on the difference in *duty and responsibility*.

Why is it that a man will work very hard on the job, but is lazy, irresponsible, and sloppy at home? Often, he excuses his laziness by saying; *“I’ve worked hard all week, so I deserve a break today.”* How is it that a woman can work hard to do a good job at work, go the extra mile to make sure she looks attractive, and is on her best behavior; then at home, she becomes a lazy and irritable slob? How can this be? I suppose there may be many reasons people give to

excuse their behavior, but I would like to focus on one specific reason. They have confused the meaning of the words *duty and responsibility*.

First, let’s consider responsibility:

Responsibility is often misused. It is not interchangeable with the word duty. Responsibility originates from the Latin word *“respondere”*, meaning to vouch; or respond to something. We get the word *“response”* from it, which means **“to react to stimuli.”** We also get the word *“respond”* from the same word, which means **“to answer.”**

So, responsibility is what you do in response to or in answer to stimuli. The stimuli may be a positive or a negative. Your response to getting \$10.00 an hour might be to do a



good job. Your response to a threat of being fired might also be doing a good job. Responsibility can come in two parts: it can be given to you, but you also have to take responsibility by accepting the role or task assigned to you. We usually look at a responsibility as a job we do for some form of gain. Responsibility is something that can end when we sign off the time clock, or when the specific job is completed.

Next, let's consider duty: The word duty comes from the Latin word “*debere*”, meaning obligation; a call to do something based on a debt you owe. The Bible gives us this example: “*We love Him, because He first loved us.*”

Duty is what you do in response to a debt that is owed. We might owe a debt to our country for the gift of citizenship. That is the basis of duty in the military or as taxpayers. We may owe a debt to society based on our own values. How could you pay someone enough money to risk his life by running into a burning building to rescue people who are trapped? *Answer--you can't!* Yet, firemen do it all the time because of duty. A life threatening act like that would not be done by mere responsibility. We owe a debt to our parents for taking care of us when we could not take care of ourselves. So, caring for them is not a responsibility, it is a duty.

So then, duty refers to moral commitment. It denotes an active feeling for doing something. Once a person engages himself with some duty, or if he has been entrusted with a duty, then that person fully commits himself to it. In the case of duty, the person will be involved in activity

without any self-interest. That's what makes a soldier volunteer for a suicide mission or a police officer place himself in harm's way. Duty is getting your eyes off what you want to do, off what is best for you, off what is the easiest route to take, and putting your eyes on what is best for those you owe. That would include: Your God, your spouse, your children, your ministry, your country, and your job. Honest people *look for ways to repay the debts they owe.*

I have often thought that if people would receive this understanding—*and most people won't*—then it would be good to pay people in advance for their work. That way, they could look at it as a duty rather than a responsibility. That way, employees would naturally do a better job because of a debt they owe. They would work more efficiently because they owe those who have already paid their salary. Of course, we all know such a system would not work in the real world.

You see, most people get it all mixed up. Although any legitimate

responsibility can be turned into a duty, we still often miss the point and we use responsibilities as an excuse to neglect our real duties. For example, adults and teenagers may get a job and work hard outside the home, but won't complete their chores at home. That's mixed up. Your duty is at home, *usually* work is a responsibility. You work on the job to get paid; you work at home because you owe a debt.

If you pay your own way to college, then you have a responsibility. However, if your parents are paying your way through college then doing a good job at school is a duty. *That's not hard to understand.*

So many folks have fallen into the trap. We assume duties and responsibilities are the same thing so we direct our attention to the wrong stuff. We divert our energy toward what gives us gain, rather than toward what we should give to those we owe. We are like the irresponsible man who gets in more debt to buy a new car, rather than paying down the debts he already owes. How do





we break the cycle? You can start by looking at your most important obligations (*God, family, ministry, country, etc.*) as duties rather than responsibilities. Duty is different from responsibility, particularly in its effect on the way you approach things. Responsibility comes from the outside. It's transactional. Your boss says, ***"I'm going to give you a paycheck and maybe even a promotion if you do a good job, so you have an obligation to me."*** It's almost like being an indentured servant. It often makes a long eight hours.

Shift gears and imagine instead a standard of duty. Duty comes from the inside. It's not transactional—***it's moral.*** Duty derives from a clear understanding of the principles by which you intend to live your life. It's not bound by the time clock. And God is the only judge that really matters when it comes to measuring yourself against a standard of duty.

Living up to the call of duty protects you from diverting interest and energy away from what really makes a difference. And a clear sense of duty gives you the backbone to stand up to anyone who may challenge what you know is best.

Summary:

Responsibility says, I'll work so you'll owe me. Duty says, I'll work because I owe you (*God, spouse, country, employer, etc.*).

Responsibility says, I will work for gain. Duty says, I will work for the privilege to serve.

Responsibility says, I sometimes work out of fear. Duty says, I will always work willingly.

Responsibility says, I work hard because of who you are (*has some power over you, writes your check, etc.*). Duty says I will work hard because of who I am.

Responsibility says, usually work is nothing but work. Duty says, for me work is a privilege.

Responsibility says, I work for self-interest. Duty says, I work whether it serves my interest or not.

Responsibility says, my work stops at 5PM. Duty says, I am fully committed to do what needs to be done, regardless of the clock.

Responsibility says, I may do the job, but I will need supervision, reminders, encouragement, and ever increasing motivation to see it through. Duty says, I have a moral commitment to something or someone, to get the job done. Although I am willing to follow instruction, I can usually supervise myself to successfully complete the assigned task. I have applied the principles of self-government, so I will seldom require encouragement or micro-management.

So duty, and not responsibility, is your greatest source of motivation and power. Don't stop until you get there. Because once you get it right, it never leaves you. Once you've got a statement of duty that resonates, it will serve you continually as a moral compass that lets you discern responsibilities you'll accept, because they align with your unswerving sense of duty.

Over the years in the ministry I have worked with employees and I have worked with ministers. Employees have a job. Ministers have assumed a duty.



Dr. Worthington has been in the ministry over forty years and serves as President of Pathway Ministries.

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A Mother's Love

Being a mother has never been easy, but in today's culture it may even be harder than ever. Many mothers try juggling a career, with keeping a spotless house, being a great cook, and raising perfect kids all while keeping an hourglass figure.

There is no doubt love is the motivation for what most mothers do. Of all human expressions, the love of a mother for her child seems to transcend all others. Except for the tragedy of a few mothers who lack *"natural affection"* and abort their babies, a child's welfare is a mother's foremost concern. Her own needs always take a back seat.

From a child's first beginning, mothers have great hopes and dreams for them. They will provide all the nurture and will muster all

their strength in the hope that these may be attained. These thoughts go through her mind every time she is with her child; when he is fed, bathed, and changed. Love is put into all her actions. These are not menial chores for her, but opportunities to hope and dream good things for her child. From the food that she feeds her child to the clothes that he wears and who he is with - all must pass a *"mother's test"* of goodness. She is very observant about everything that relates to her child and notes carefully when her child first sits, rolls over, stands, and begins to walk. These are important milestones that she will remember the rest of her life.

The love which she has invested in her child has not been in vain. Having been well loved, the child will never forget the love of his mother which allowed him to thrive. He has counted on her love throughout these years and knows he can always depend upon his mother no matter what happens. She has loved and cared for him for many years, and now it is his great hope that he has pleased her and made her proud.

Charles Spurgeon paid this tribute to his beloved mother:

"I cannot tell how much I owe to the solemn words and prayers of my Christian mother. It was a custom while we were children to sit around the table and read the Scripture verse by verse while Mother explained it to us. After that was done, then came the time of pleading with God.

Some of the words of our Mother's prayers we shall never forget, even when our heads are gray. I remember her once praying thus: 'Now, Lord, if my children go on in sin, it will not be from ignorance that they perish, and my soul must bear a swift witness against them at the day of judgment if they lay not hold of Jesus Christ.'"



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Artist Spotlight - Cedron's Bridge

In 2013, a girl set a goal to record an album containing several original songs before she turned 30 years old. Little did she know when that goal was reached it would result in the official formation of the gospel group, ***Cedron's Bridge***. The family group from Lumberton, North Carolina, currently consists of sisters, Rebekah Kriston and Kayla McLean, and their cousin Joshua West. They come from a musically talented family with strong roots in singing ministry and are active leaders within their home churches.

"Ministry is something each of us has been called to do", said Rebekah, manager for the group. *"It's a true calling, not just something we want to do. We take the calling very seriously and are honored that God chose us to do this work for Him."*

"Our main purpose is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ to everyone that we can in every opportunity that we are given", says Joshua, who answered the call to preach last year.

On March 29 of this year, the group released their third album, *He Loved Me Anyway*, which contains six original songs written by Rebekah. *"These songs are kind of like my personal journal; just a glimpse into my personal walk and talks with Christ",* said Rebekah. She believes that the people listening to these songs will be able to relate to them, and she hopes people will find comfort in knowing they are not alone in life's everyday struggles.

For more information on how to purchase their music or how to schedule ***Cedron's Bridge*** for an event, visit their website at www.cedronsbridge.com or call **910-225-0732**. You can also follow ***Cedron's Bridge*** on Facebook.

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A Priceless Gift

Mrs. Sherry Worthington

What makes a woman a mother? According to Webster, *the word mother is defined as a female parent as well as to give birth to or to care for or protect like a mother.* This definition sounds so simple, but I submit that being a mother is very complicated. How old does someone have to be to be a mother? Do you ever stop being a mother?

One of the privileges I have at our church is to serve in the nursery. I enjoy watching the children play, but I have noticed one thing. The little girls go for the dolls. They want me to wrap the dolls up in a blanket and they rock them. The youngest toddler is one year old. I guess they don't have the

mothering thing down pat yet, because when I bring out the crackers, they throw the baby doll down and grab a bowl. I think they are off to a good start, though. We just have to teach them the gentle part.

These little ones have never birthed a child, yet they have the desire to mother their baby dolls. Many teens babysit and do a great job. My oldest granddaughter is eighteen and works at a day care. She loves working with the children. My mom still mothers me, and I am fifty-nine. So I guess we can safely say that most women have a mothering instinct instilled from their birth, and it never goes away. I must admit, some exhibit it more than

others, but it is there. A woman doesn't have to have children to be a mother. Mother Teresa is a good example of someone who mothered others, but never had children of her own.

Just think! Moses' mother was counting on that fact. When the princess opened the little ark and saw Moses crying, her heart was filled with compassion. What if one of the soldiers had found the ark? It would have been a completely different outcome. This princess was not stupid. She must have known what was happening. But she didn't care that Moses' mom was disobeying the king. She saved Moses and disobeyed the king, too. Why would she do that?



Mothers have gone to great lengths for their children. They stay up in the night nursing a fever, they watch them when they have a fever themselves, they have sleepless nights worrying about them, and they stand by them when they are in trouble. The most loyal visitors for prisoners are their moms. A mother's love is priceless.

I also know that some women don't deserve the title. They abuse and neglect their children. The stories I read and the testimonies I hear break my heart. I cannot imagine life without my mom.

Ok Moms! How many of you are old enough that your children are mothering you now? I have reached that age. I am not sure when it started, but my children have been doing it for a long time. They have cared for me when I was sick, they worry about me when I look tired, and they are concerned when I am hurting. I am privileged to have children that care for me so much.

As a wife, I have to watch myself because I tend to mother my husband sometimes. A little bit of that goes a long way. Sweetheart, don't climb on the roof unless someone else is here please. Did you take your vitamins? You need to get some rest. After about the third time, he might give me a look. Don't get me wrong, he appreciates my concern, but I have to spread it out. He doesn't know it, but I can be subtle at looking out for him. I have spies all over the place.

My dad has cancer now, but he is a fighter. He is not going to sit back and let cancer take him. He has surprised the doctors several times already. Well, he gets a little frustrated with us sometimes. He has my mom

looking over him. Now she is his wife, so she has a tightrope to walk. She is taking very good care of him, and yes, she mothers him, too. She can always tell when she has taken it too far. But my dad has a double whammy. He has a daughter and granddaughters mothering him as well. I know he is thankful for his sons and grandsons. They tend to give him more independence and not fret as openly anyway. That is why God gave us mothers and fathers.



Don't get me wrong. Mothers need to be tough, too. How can they possibly teach their children to be tough if they aren't tough themselves? Moses' mother was tough. How could she possibly have put her son in a river infested with crocodiles if she wasn't tough? Jesus' mother was tough. How could she have possibly been the mother of Jesus without being tough? Can you imagine what she went through at His birth, but even more so at His crucifixion? What about Hannah? She gave Samuel to Eli as a young boy. How tough could that have been?

So many of our current heroes of the faith credit their mothers with their

success. Yes, I am sure their mothers were tender, but they praise them for their prayers and the lessons about life and the Scriptural principles they taught them. Susanna Wesley raised a house full of children by herself. She had 19 children and two of them became preachers. Jack Hyles and Billy Graham give credit to their moms for the huge role they played in their service to the Lord, and there are countless others.

Moms are loving and kind, but they need to be tough, too. We need to teach our children that when life gets tough, we keep going. We need to teach them that we don't always get what we want, and sometimes we get hurt. We need to teach them to forgive others and put others' needs before their own. We need to teach them that love is doing what is best for the individual, not what is easiest.

Most of all, we need to teach them of God's love. How do we teach them about God's love? We let God love our children through us. The only way we can do that is if we follow the precepts in **Matthew 22:37-39**. We must love the Lord our God with all our hearts, and with all our soul, and with all our minds. And we must love others more than ourselves, even those that are unlovable.

May our words and our actions manifest God's love to our children, our spouses, our neighbors, and a lost and dying world. This is a priceless gift. Our children's futures depend up on it!



Mrs. Worthington has five children and eleven grandchildren. She serves as Principal of Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.



During The Tough Times

Dr. Randy Spaugh

We have all had those particularly difficult moments, or weeks, or even months. During those times, we wish we could feel God a little closer. It wouldn't be particularly difficult to equate those with the desert or wilderness times mentioned in the Biblical text. We all run from those difficult moments, just as hard as we can. But the Bible may teach us something really different.

For example, God will make the following statement to the nation of Israel:

“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.”

Hosea 2:14

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God will actually lead her into the desert or wilderness. Does God actually lead us into difficult times? We find this again in the life of Jesus.

“And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil.”

Luke 4:1-2a

We find there are other people who are trained in the wilderness. John the Baptist, for instance, comes from the wilderness and seems to know more about God's actions than the leaders of that particular day. While there are several people that fall into this category, we take special



notation of Moses and Paul who seemed to have been trained for the task given to them by God in the wilderness.

I have always said that there were things God can teach us in those difficult moments of life. I have changed my mind. I think there are things that God can only teach us in the difficult moments of life. In other words, there is nowhere else that they can be adequately taught. Let's look at two of these.

The first one is "listening." We often hear people speak of God "talking" to them. This is certainly not impossible and is made certain by the Biblical text. But do you know that God can speak to you without using words. This is made clear to us in **Psalm 19**.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

Psalm 19:1-4b

It was only after a serious illness that I began to pay attention to those communications by God that are without words. I began to find that God spoke to me through my grandchildren, through mountain or coastal scenery, and through some of the ordinary blessings that He bestowed upon me. Before that "desert time," there were too many things that I ought to do and should do, and too many committee meetings I had to attend. I was ignoring some of the really important things of life to do what I was supposed to do. I could only listen to God after a pretty serious desert experience.

The second example that I will give you is that of "worship." Let me begin by using a sentence that we often use in our congregation. *"If someone has to do it for you, it isn't worship."*

If you don't get anything else out of this article, I want you to remember this sentence. We often



speak of Sunday School at 10, and worship at 11. Your church can create an atmosphere in which worship can happen, but they can't create worship unless you are willing to worship. Let me put it another way – no one can worship for you.

This can likewise, be discovered only in the desert times. Only when we get on our knees and beg our Jesus, or praise Him, or vehemently ask for His wisdom, do we learn to worship. So I would suggest that during these hard times it is the only time we can learn to worship. Now we can go to church and really worship in a time that has been created for it.

So, let me end with a summary. There are many things that God can only teach you during the difficult moments of life. In this article I have touched upon two. The difficult moments seem to be God's training ground for His saints.



Dr. Randy Spaugh is the Pastor of Faith Fellowship Church in Kinston, N.C. More information is available at www.faithkinston.org

And Finally...



My Mother...

My mother...my mom...my corrector...my friend...my confidant...my encourager. I do not have the words to tell what my mom means to me. She has taught me how to be loving, kind, forgiving, humble, gracious, and strong, all rolled up into a lady. But perhaps the greatest lesson my mom has taught me is the meaning of living a life for others. She gives herself selflessly to my dad, our family, our church, and her ministry of pointing kids and others to The Cross. She willingly does menial tasks which need to be done, yet by others are seldom viewed as service to our King. She puts herself last, and that comes at a great cost sometimes, yet she continues to do so. When I watch my mom, I see Christ washing the feet of others. If I could be anyone in this world, it would be my mom.

A. S.

My mother was diagnosed with tuberculosis at the age of 14. After begging and getting sicker, my grandmother finally consented to allowing my mother to attend a tent healing revival down the dirt road from where she lived. My mother told us about her future father-in-law preaching about a loving God who wants our bodies to be whole again so we may fulfill His purpose in our lives. Mother said that when the preacher asked for all to come and receive healing, she ran to the alter and received total healing. The faith it took to run to God was a faith she lived by daily. The mustard seed faith within all of us can truly move mountains. For over 70 years now, I have run to God for healing in my life situations where He has truly been there waiting to meet my needs.

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I thank God for a faith-filled mother to “live” the example.

A. D.

First and foremost, my mother loved her Heavenly Father. She was filled with lots and love and kindness. Mama married young and never knew much about parties, laughter and girl talk, or other fun kids get into. When you're young, you don't always see things the way you eventually do when you are older. Looking back, I can see how my mother had a little girl that lived inside of her that would occasionally slip out of the shadows. I do have occasional memories of her humming to an old tune and swaying back and forth to the music in her head with a beautiful smile across her face. I love you and miss you Mama.

J. A.

“My Favorite Old Movie”

We'd like your help for an upcoming edition of “And Finally...”

Write to us in 150 words or less and tell us about your favorite old movie or television show and why you like it. The deadline for submission is May 31, 2019.

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