

How Halloween Changed My Life

Through my hazy memories I still recall the cobwebs of sleep shaken from my eyelids as my father burst into my room that Friday morning.

Something was off. And not just because it was Halloween, which up until that morning, had been my favorite holiday after Fourth of July.

Nothing—save for maybe an early-morning trail run with the promise of coffee—would cause him to bombard me before the sun was up.

“Your Grandma Racheal died,” he said. “Come on.”

I peeled the covers back, going into auto pilot, reality gnawing on the back of my brain as I managed to shuffle on the necessary apparel for the trek to the hospital and then my grandfather’s house.

Gone were the thoughts of our church festival or wearing a Scooby Doo suit to my office that day. Instead, I found myself crouched on the edge of a recliner, slicing up Egg McMuffins for my grandfather to gum down.

We were all in shock. Truthfully, we did expect a death—but not hers ... his.

They were both disabled, home-bound with dogs so round they waddled instead of ran. They never left, save for doctors’ appointments. Medicine bottles were scattered across their floors, and lone pills were stuffed between the couch cushions, while newspapers and knick-knacks overflowed from furniture pockets.

They knew death was imminent.

My grandparents talked about what to do when he died, but no

one knew how to proceed after her death.

My father, ever the hero and God-gifted pastor, packed up his father, wheelchair, recliner and big-screen TV and moved him into our home.

When my grandfather joined our household, he altered our dynamic in unexpected, pleasant ways, forcing me to grow up and get over the desires of my flesh to serve the man who has since captured my heart and shown me what it means to be God's child.

Until that Halloween, I'd been stuck in a pit of self-wallowing and misery. I was afraid I didn't matter to God, that He was content to leave me in despair, grasping desperately for a connection to Him and the church.

Through service to my grandfather and the kindness of the community, He rewarded my patience with goodness. He fulfilled the desires of my heart in succession after my grandmother's death.

One week, I was sitting in a recliner next to my grandfather watching television and between fixing him meals. Two weeks after that, God brought me to a place where I felt His abundance of grace daily.

My grandmother's death forced me to let God take over and drive me into His will. While many people rant and rave against the evil that can sneak in during Halloween when we let our guard down, I'm reminded of the Light.

Now, Halloween is a celebration in my life, a reminder of God's provision and control over my destiny. The holiday is indeed a holy day as I reflect on the Savior who cares even for the sparrow. {eoa}

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