

# Memoirs of a Grateful 'PK'

by Danyelle Wilson

**H**ave you ever played the game “seafood”? I have, and I once played it in a Chinese restaurant with a nationally known minister who had preached for my dad! As we were all eating, he turned to my youngest brother and asked him, “Do you like seafood?” He then opened his mouth full of half-chewed Chinese food to show my brother his version of “see-food”!

That was part of my life growing up — playing, joking, and having fun with guest ministers who came through our church. We’d jump on the trampoline together, take goofy pictures of ourselves, and talk about the things of God and about what I wanted to be when I grew up.

As I was growing up, my idols weren’t movie stars or singers — they were pastors. I saw their hard work and the sacrifices they made because they loved God

and wanted to serve Him. I saw the pastors who led congregations and still worked another full-time job to feed their families and pay the bills. I knew pastors who had pastored for 30 years without ever seeing their congregations break 100. I watched as some had to close the doors of their churches.

For those of us who are the children of pastors, we have the opportunity to see the side of ministry few people ever see or ever choose to see. We see the *man* and *woman* who bear the title of “pastor.” We see their struggles and joys, their ups and downs. We see how hard they study and how they clean the toilets and vacuum the church floors when no one else is there to do it. We see all the phone calls and all the home and hospital visits that are made through the years.

For me, seeing this example lived before me by my parents and by so many other men and women of God was the key factor that kept me from rebelling as a teenager. I always thought, *If my parents and those other ministers can endure so much and still love God — if they still want to serve Him and still love people after going through so many difficulties — then serving God really must be something that’s worth living my life for.*

There were nights I cried myself to sleep because I was so angry at certain people in my church. There were times when the smile I wore at church was fake because I personally would have rather punched those people than looked at them! But my parents didn’t pity me or let me do whatever I wanted. They taught me to love people unconditionally and to forgive those who had hurt me.

The fact that I’d never heard my parents say a negative word about anyone in our church was a big help to me. Even when people left our church angry, I still never heard a negative word spoken about them by my parents.

**D****anyelle Wilson** will soon be a third-generation Bible school graduate. She was born in a pastor’s home and has been intimately involved in the ministry her entire life. Danyelle works in the technical website area of our ministry, and she has been a tremendous blessing to our staff. The most notable quality about Danyelle is her maturity beyond her years and her amazing servant’s heart. She is what the apostle Paul instructed young Timothy to be: “an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12 *NKJV*). It is indeed a pleasure to introduce Danyelle to our IMPART audience. The call and anointing upon her young life will be immediately evident to you as she shares how her spiritual heritage has helped her embrace God’s call to fulfill His will in her generation.



Danyelle Wilson

— Rick Renner

All I saw from my mom and dad was their love for people. I also didn't know the financial burdens my parents faced while raising four children and pastoring a church, and I never knew who the biggest givers were or who never gave at all. My parents' discretion freed me to love the people in my church without struggling with all their faults and shortcomings.

My parents raised me to see that being a "PK" (preacher's kid) is a blessing and not something to be pitied. When I was young, my mom would wake us up singing, "It's Sunday morning, and we *get* to go to church!" Church was part of life, and we did it because we loved God and loved people.

My parents didn't pity me, but they also didn't ignore the times of hurt either. When I was about 15 years old, a family I had been very close to left the church, and I remember how much I cried. I told my mom, "I just don't understand why people don't care. Don't people know that we're just people too?"

My mom just held me, loved me, and cried with me. She wasn't feeling sorry for me; she was just being a mother, crying because her daughter was hurting. Afterward, she looked at me and told me that we had to forgive. It took me awhile to learn what true forgiveness is, but I'm glad I learned to forgive and love people instead of wallowing in self-pity.

In reality, God is the best friend any PK can ever have. He's the one Person who's never going to leave the church. He's never going to write a mean letter or call your daddy an ugly name. When you have no friends at church, God is there. When you cry yourself to sleep, God is there. When you get mad and want to run from the ministry, God is there. No matter what's going on in life, God is there, and He can make up for difficult things that happen better than any parent could ever do. God is your Source, and He's faithful to take care of you all the time.

As a pastor's daughter, I never wanted to see people hurt my parents, but I had to learn to give my parents to God and let Him heal their hurts. And my parents were no different; they had to give me and my brothers to God and let Him heal *our* hurts. But through all we experienced, we learned that God is faithful, and He will heal every hurt — every time.

Growing up in a minister's home is a wonderful privilege from God. I wouldn't trade for the world the way I was raised or the experiences I had as a result of being a PK.

As pastors' children, we really owe a lot to our parents. Their generation did a wonderful job upholding the integrity of the ministry and getting the message of the Gospel out to a lost and dying world. Now it's our turn. It's time for my generation to follow our parents' leadership and example and to make a difference in the world. As we begin to go out and pursue the purpose each of us was born to fulfill, we owe a lot of gratitude to our godly heritage and to the men and women who have run their race before us.

To all ministers and pastors, I say *thank you*. Thank you for your example and for your determination to follow after God. I ask you for your prayers as those in my generation step up to take the baton and run the race. May we finish our race with as much integrity and love as you have shown us who are following in your footsteps. **I**

God is not looking for brilliant men, is not depending upon eloquent men, is not shut up to the use of talented men in sending His Gospel out in the world. God is looking for broken men, for men who have judged themselves in the light of the Cross of Christ. When He wants anything done, He takes up men who have come to an end of themselves, and whose trust and confidence is not in themselves but in God.

— H. A. Ironside