

Scholar, teacher, friend, lawyer, judge....these are just a few of the names We've heard this week to describe Talmadge Littlejohn, but I want to share with you a few things you may or may not know about who we call our husband, daddy, and granddaddy.

- His favorite songs were "Shall We Gather at the River," "Sweet, Sweet Spirit," and "I Could Sing About Heaven," thus our song selections for today
- He really always wanted to be in the choir, but he couldn't hit a note in the treble or bass clefs, but he's on perfect pitch today
- He loved candy, evidenced by his stashes around the house, his office, even his car; and let's not forget his love for ice cream, especially the new an improved flavors
- Nobody went hungry at his house. He loved to eat and feed others, even the animals...squirrels, the stray cats, and of course, the dogs
- He believed in getting eight hours of sleep every night and he walked two miles every morning at 4:30
- He loved English bulldogs, just not the MS State brand. I'm sure that's mostly because bulldogs are known for their tenacity so their personalities got along well
- You never referred to children as kids in his presence. Kids are baby goats, not children
- His traveling adventures included the eight counties of his district in which he served and Gatlinburg, TN
- He loved going to the post office and Walmart
- Believe it or not, on Saturdays or Sunday afternoons, you might catch him wearing his favorite pair of worn out coveralls
- His public speaking started on a tree stump at New Harmony, and he held a presidential election at age 10 in the community forcing his younger sister and cousins to cast their ballots
- If he picked on you, he liked you; if he didn't pick on you, he probably didn't, sorry
- He loved his Ole Miss Rebels and the Colonel Reb, but not the cross-eyed black bear
- You never had to wonder what was on his mind
- He was a perfectionist, but he was not perfect. If a job is worth doing, it's worth doing right

- He loved birthdays, but most of all Christmas and Christmas decorations. He always wanted one of those ugly inflatables to put by his manger scene, but we wouldn't let him
- My daddy and I loved cards and exchanging cards, you know, the real ones....

Little did I know when I gave him his birthday card, the nice one, two weeks ago this Sunday, I had no idea I would be using it today at his funeral, but the front of it read, "Your Wisdom and Love Are My Rock." His wisdom of the law and the Bible was amazing. We've always laughed that he had no hobbies, but I guess it would be reading newspapers and books and studying the law and the Bible. He was our counselor and advisor on all subjects. We've always said, "Well, let's just go ask daddy."

His love extended in several areas of his life. Number one was his love for Christ. Every text and email I've gotten this week expressed what a Godly Christian example he had been to them. I would sometimes get irritated the past few years when I would ask him to go to Ole Miss on Saturdays with me for a football game, and he would always say, "Christy, I need to stay here and finish studying my Sunday School lesson." I knew he had studied all week and knew it backwards and forwards, but see, his love for teaching the word of Christ to his Sunday School class came before everything.

Second was his love for my mother, his children, grandchildren, and sister. He talked to his sister every morning on his drive to court. I'm sure they solved all the world's problems. He was our provider, supporter, and most importantly, our prayer warrior. We never had to question his love for us because he not only showed it, but he told us daily. He taught us how to love Jesus and each other.

Everybody knows this, but his next love was his work. I've never known anybody that liked to work as much as him, but over the years I figured out it wasn't work to him. It was his love for the people and helping others, especially the children that needed help the most in the crazy world in which we live. It was his mission field. He loved every lawyer, clerk, deputy clerk, bailiffs that he worked with, and I've heard many a story about many of y'all after a day at court, all with a big smile grin on his face.

We really thought this last month of a little taste of retirement undeservingly given to him by the Supreme Court would be hard for him, and it probably was, but he made the most of it. It was all in God's perfect timing. He and my mother went to Gatlinburg. He finished a book he had been writing for a while entitled, "Trees of Righteous." He played and visited all of his grandchildren; and best of all, we celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, which he referred to as his best ever. We had a surprise party for him on Friday night. He went to church Sunday, his actual birthday, and his church family sang Happy Birthday to him; and he attended his last Paid In Full concert in West Point on Sunday night. He would have wanted nothing more.

He went back to work this past Monday for one last day. I've received calls from many telling me he was back doing what he loved and stronger and better than ever and were so glad they got to see him that day. You see, my dad was happy and at peace.

I had been asking him for the past year or so when I was going to get to have his retirement party. I love parties and had already started to plan one for him because I wanted it to be the best ever. Well, Monday night, October 26<sup>th</sup>, God gave him the best retirement party that far outweighed anything I could have ever done for him on this earth. I just wish I could see the smile on his face.

The inside of the card reads, "Even now, nothing reassures me more than your voice.... Still calm, still comforting. Still just what I need to hear. Happy Birthday to my amazing dad....and he was that, amazing. Oh, how we wish we could hear his voice again, but I've heard it this week like I have in times past, "It's going to be alright, Christy. Trust in God and he will see you through."

His favorite wall hanging in our house, besides, of course, Christmas decorations, says, "Your faithfulness continues through generations." And it does and it will. Our family will continue to live his legacy of faith and love, and I hope and pray we make him as proud of us as we are of him.

My dad would be humbled and appalled at the outpouring of love and support for his family this week, and especially yesterday and today, but there is one thing he would want me to say....

To God be the glory, great things He has done  
So loved he the world that He gave us His Son  
Who yielded His life, an atonement for sin  
And opened the life gate that all may go in.  
Praise the Lord; Praise the Lord  
Let the earth hear His voice;  
Praise the Lord; Praise the Lord  
Let the people rejoice.  
Oh, come to the Father, through Jesus, the Son  
And give Him the glory, great things He has done.