

Grandma Parks

Ready:

“And may the Master pour on the love so it fills your lives and splashes over on everyone around you, just as it does from us to you. May you be infused with strength and purity, filled with confidence in the presence of God our Father when our Master Jesus arrives with all his followers.”

-1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 (MSG)

Set

When you think of undying, unwavering commitment, who comes to your mind? I have always been inspired by athletes and coaches who have that type of “over-the-top” commitment. It gets my competitive juices flowing. When I see players with tenacity, it makes me ready to strap on the pads and lace up the shoes!

Competitors who are willing to hang in over the long haul have always motivated me. For me, the one person who comes to my mind when I think of radical commitment is a 4-foot, 9 inch, 61-year-old grandma named Grandma Parks. I know what you are thinking: “That is not the image of commitment that came to my mind.” It wasn't mine, either, until I met her in South Korea this past summer. Su-Ja Parks (I just called her Grandma Parks) is a 61-year-old youth pastor in Seoul, South Korea, who has been ministering to young people for 37 years.

FCA had its first-ever South Korea Sports Camp with 175 Korean athletes in August. We took a team of 21 FCA staff and coaches to put on a soccer, swimming and basketball camp. While we were coaching and training the athletes, Grandma Parks caught my eye by the way she was “jumping” into the icebreakers and sports competition. She had enthusiasm that was contagious. All day long, she loved on the girls in her Huddle group. At the soccer clinic, she played and participated in every drill. She said that she never had played soccer before, but said with a smile beaming across her face, “I am younger today for playing.” Each night, I watched her worship God with incredible passion. She prayed over the kids nonstop, laying hands on the kids and interceding on their behalf. One night she was on her knees on the wood floor for over an hour. She had to be helped up by two people! It took her several minutes before she could stand on her own.

God used Grandma Parks in my life. She marked my life. She changed my life. What gripped me was her commitment to the kids and to the Lord. Year after year, she served the youth in her church. I thought she was just an old lady who volunteered for the camp. Little did I know that she was a spiritual giant, standing at 4'9”. She was anointed by the Holy Spirit to bring life change!

When I think about Grandma Parks I am:
Amazed by her faithfulness.
Humbled by her impact.
Humiliated for judging her as just a grandma.
Honored to meet her.
Blessed when she prayed over me.
Changed because I met her.
Motivated by her service.
Challenged by her commitment.
Convicted by her passion.

I desire to be found faithful like Grandma Parks. I am sure that the Lord says to her at the end of every day, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" She is my new hero. Lord, thank You for bringing her into my life. She taught me what undying, unwavering commitment is all about.

Go

1. Do you know someone who reminds you of Grandma Parks? Someone who has been faithful over the years?
2. What characteristics about this person amaze you? What makes them this way? What are some disciplines that shape them?
3. What eternal impact do you want to have?
4. How would others describe you when it comes to your spiritual commitment? Write down a few sentences that would describe what you would want others to say about your Christian life.
5. In 1 Thessalonians 3:12, Paul shares how our love needs to overflow. What are several ways that God can use you to splash Christ's love onto others?

Workout

1 Timothy 1:5
1 Timothy 6:11

Overtime

"Lord Jesus, I want to be found faithful like Grandma Parks. Teach me what it means to have undying, unwavering commitment for You alone, Lord. So many times I waver in my faith. I have so many fears and doubts. During these times of second-guessing, strengthen my faith and encourage my heart. May my love for You overflow into other lives. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

Bible Reference:

1 Timothy 6



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