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# The Apron Strings!

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Almost as soon as I could understand anything, I was told I had been given to the Lord. I've never been quite able to get away from that. My mother worked on me just like the quilts



by **Dave Anderson**

she made—day by day, one stitch at a time—giving herself, her skill, her energy, her love. She did this with the idea in mind that I

wasn't really hers.

You'd understand that better if you knew about the apron strings. Mom always wore an apron, the old fashioned kind that tied behind the back and was homemade, probably out of a flour sack.

On my 21st birthday, I received a little white envelope from my mother. Inside was one apron string. Being the intelli-

gent person I was, I wanted to know where the other apron string was. Surely I was free!

Obviously not, for inside was this little handwritten note:

*Dear Son, I've kept you tied to my apron strings for 20 years. I can't untie you all at once so here is only one of them. I will keep you tied to the other one.*

I was informed that at the appropriate time in my life, I'd receive the other one. Well, another year rolled around, but on my 22nd birthday, no apron string. I was worried. What was she waiting for?

Upon graduating from college, I fully expected on that special day to be the proud owner of the second apron string, but no string appeared.

And then I got married, and there, in a tiny envelope was the perfect match to the other apron string that was now three years old. Inside was another note:

*Dear Son, this is the other apron string. So now you have them both. I'll love you still and Janet too, so I gladly give these strings to you. Mom.*

And with the giving of the symbol went the reality of the event. She really did let go. All the work, all the pain, all the love, just like her quilts, she gave it away.

It's hard to get away from stuff like that—those living object lessons shout out to you for the rest of your life what Christian living is all about. The skills, the talents, the love we've been given, seems to impact others most when they are given away. Most things I own aren't worth much. But I own a pair of apron strings that no one in this world could buy. ♡

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His apron-stringed mother was named Gladys Adree Anderson, but everyone knew her as "Tiny". Dave was sixteen before it dawned on him her name was something other than "Tiny." Even his dad called her that. All her dishes at church pot luck dinners were labeled, "Tiny." She was just about 5 feet tall.

When Dave's sister called the funeral home to arrange for his mother's funeral and told them Gladys Anderson had died, he didn't recognize the name until she mentioned they would want the funeral announcement to read "Tiny" Anderson. Suddenly the funeral director, who had known her all his life, reacted with surprise that it was "Tiny" they were talking about. He had never heard her real name. Tiny was born in a log house in Stoneboro, Pennsylvania in 1910 and passed away in 1993.

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