

LAYING DOWN THE LIFE I HAD PLANNED

When I was six or seven years old, I knew I wanted to be an oceanographer. I focused on my goal, worked hard, and got into a good college. I took several courses in zoology and loved it. But as I got further into my studies, I became fascinated with the human body, particularly on the cellular level. I decided to become a pathologist.

I soon met my future husband, and we decided to get married. Having a family was always part of my plan, but while I knew I could be a great doctor and a great mother, I felt that I couldn't be great at both at the same time. Because family is essential to the Lord's plan of salvation, I decided to become a mother first. I figured that once my kids got into school, I could go back to school myself.

When my youngest child entered kindergarten, I began the application process for a PhD program in nutritional studies at the University of Texas in Austin. Just before submitting my application, I found out I was unexpectedly pregnant with my seventh child. I was in my 40s, and by the time this child entered school, I would be nearly 50.

"A little late to start a new career that takes extensive schooling," I thought.



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All at once I saw my life's career dreams crumble around me. As I began to despair, a scripture came to my mind and my heart: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). I had always considered this scripture to mean one person dying for another, but now it means so much more.

I realized that the greatest love

I could show was to lay down the life I had planned for myself and give my time and energy to raising my children. I felt that for me, this was what the Lord would have me do. Yes, I could have helped a lot of people as a doctor, but I also know that the greatest eternal impact I can have is in the lives of my own children. ■

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