

Hey Jesus! What you doing?

Since last October, Lisa and I have had our daughter Ashley and her two sons (Bryant--22 months and Bradyn--3 months) living with us. During this time, I have remembered so much that I had long forgotten since our children were young.

Things like: how and why do you get all of this stuff in one car—just to drive to the store? How can we start getting dressed and ready for Sunday School two hours early and still be late? How many questions can one child ask in a day? Why is the yard and house so full of toys when children always want to play with your stuff? Where does all that energy come from? How can something that little cry so loud and make that big of a mess?

I could go on and on with this list of remembrances. However; there are some experiences that have reminded me of some very important lessons that I needed to remember, not only as a father or as a grandfather, and as a son of THE Father!

Perhaps the most important remembrance is the importance of spending time with the Father, not only by studying and applying His Word to my life, but also just by spending time with Him in prayer, fellowship, and relationship.

If you know me, you know how much I love my children and my grandchildren. Though I am gone from home a lot, because I love them, I desire to be with them and to talk with them every day, even if it be by phone.

Because my children are all grown, married and have their own families, I do not call them everyday, but I want to. I do not get to see them everyday, but I long to.

Because I love them so much, I want to know how their day went, what they are doing, that they are okay, and just hear their voice. Though there are times when the subject and depth of conversation are paramount, most of the time these things are irrelevant—I just want to hear from them, spend time with them, share life with them, and love them.

How much more do you think your Heavenly Father who loves you with a perfect love, desires to spend time with you one on one—even if it is just casual conversation and fellowship?

Keep in mind that this is a Father who loves you so much that the depth of His love compelled Him to give the life of His one and only Son so that He could adopt you and me as His children! That is a love that I cannot comprehend, but that I am so overwhelmed and grateful for. He sent Jesus

to give His life so that you and I could have life and have it abundantly and eternally!

You cannot convince me that a Father who loves us with that kind of love does not treasure and long for the time we choose to spend with Him. I know His desire is to be with us all of the time and that He is indeed ever present in our lives: "The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never **leave** you nor **forsake** you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged." (Deut. 31:8).

I also know that His greatest desire, second only to our knowing Him and helping others to know Him, is that we spend time with Him. If you have been married for any amount of time, you know that it is sometimes easy to be in the same house, the same room and even the same bed with your spouse, and still not really spend time together. One of you shows up, but the other neglects or takes for granted the other's presence.

So it is with the Lord, He always desires to be with us and He always shows up. He always desires to have fellowship and relationship with us. He desires to talk with us and just spend time with us, but whether or not that fellowship and relationship takes place is totally up to us. He is always with us, but we choose everyday whether we will ignore Him or enjoy His presence, fellowship and guidance.

This point was really driven home for me a couple of weeks ago when my grandson Bryant and I were lying in bed saying our prayers. At 22 months, Bryant is eager to pray with his hands together at his mouth and his eyes closed. Up to this point, his prayers and blessings had consisted of assuming his preferred position of prayer and when the prayer was completed, he would join in the "AMEN".

On this night however, the Lord had a special blessing prepared for me. After Bryant repeated my prayer one or two words at a time and we said the hearty 'amen', Bryant indicated by his prayer position and his facial expressions that he wanted to pray some more. So, I asked: "Bryant do you want to talk with Jesus some more by yourself?" With his hands still at his mouth, he nodded yes. I said okay, you just talk with Jesus and granddaddy will listen. To my surprise, after a short pause, out came these words: "Hey Jesus,. What you doing?"

Now while I almost busted trying not to laugh out loud, I just know that all of Heaven rejoiced and Jesus smiled,--no He was so pleased and grateful that He bellowed out in laughter with the pride of a Father when His beloved son Bryant, talked with Him on a 'personal' basis for the first time.

Bryant has not yet been affected or influenced by memorized prayers or religious jargon. Instead, He just talked with Jesus the only way He knew how at his age and it was good enough for God. He reverently and intentionally talked with Jesus whom he recognized as a friend and companion

I think about Bryant's prayer and I compare it with mine and with that of others I hear. There were some stark differences!

Bryant talked with Jesus, not at Him. So many times we come to God only when we need something or to ask Him to bless us and/or something we care about. We come to Him with a grocery list or a set of orders that we need filled.

Jesus was the sole audience, even though Bryant knew I was listening. He did not try to impress me with words or with what he knew, instead he talked with Jesus as if they were the only two in the conversation—and that conversation was personal.

Bryant did not mention himself. Instead he was interested in the person and welfare of Jesus and what was going on in His life.

MT 21:16: “And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the **mouth of babes** and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?”

What kind of praise and worship do you think God really longs for: a “packaged, orchestrated performance” or a personal, intimate relationship with His children?

“Hey Jesus. What you doing?”