

Little Boy Blue and the Man in the Moon

Little boy blue and the man on the moon is a line from a song by Harry Chapin entitled, "Cat's in the Cradle" It is a beautifully written, yet sad song about a father and son's relationship. It follows their lives from the son's birth all the way through to when the son has children of his own. The song reveals that despite wanting to spend more time together, life always seemed to get in the way. Work, friends, distance, and family are some of the things that prevented them from having a closer relationship.

I love the song, but as a father, I am concerned that I see my own relationship with my children lived out in this song. I have met very few fathers that feel they spent enough time with their children and I include myself in that group. As my children have gotten older and there are fewer opportunities to share time together, we try to enjoy the time that we do have together as a family.

My oldest son Jarrod, has blessed his mother and me with two grandchildren, Mackenzie and James. I see in him, similar struggles with balancing his time and attention with his family. He is a great father that loves his wife, Katie and their children very much. I am very proud of him and in talking with him, I am reminded of some of the challenges that I faced when he and his brother and sister were younger.

James just recently turned six months old. Mackenzie is two. James has gone from that cute little baby that was content to sit in his swing or lie on a blanket on the floor, to needing more attention and at times needs his full attention. On one of those days when James needed his full attention, Jarrod called me, exasperated, and said, "Dad, I love James with all my heart but he is driving me crazy." Been there, done that! He added, "He won't stop crying. I have tried his toys, a bottle, he doesn't need a diaper change, he just will not stop crying." Feeling his pain, but unable to help, I told Jarrod that it doesn't seem fair that he can let you know all the things that he doesn't want but can't tell you the one thing that he does want. At one point, Jarrod picked James up and put his face close to his own and said, "What do you want from me?"

Eventually, Jarrod did find what James needed to feel better. Because of the deep love that he has for James, it had exhausted him that he

could not make it better. When you love someone, you never hurt so much as when they are hurting and you can't make it better. You might even have the thing they need but, due to their own pain and frustration, it might keep them from realizing that you can help them.

I wonder how often God feels like picking us up and holding our face close to his own and saying, "What do you want from me? I have given you: truth John 5:24 , living water John 7:38, endurance and encouragement Romans 15:5, every good and perfect gift James 1:17, I have given you..... my son John 3:16 . What do you want from me?"

The song Cat's in the Cradle closes with the chorus:

*And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon
Little boy blue and the man in the moon
When you comin' home son?
I don't know when, but we'll get together then, dad
We're gonna have a good time, then.*

We hope to see Jarrod, Katie, and grandkids for Christmas but I don't know if that will happen or if life will get in the way. We talk almost every day and that keeps us close. But when we get together and "I don't know when, We are gonna to have a good time, then."

Likewise, none of us know when we are going to our heavenly home. We need to talk to God every day and that will keep us close. "But when we get together and I don't know when, we're gonna have a good time, then. We're all gonna have a good time, then."

Jeff