

When God Blessed Me with a Son

Editor's Note: I wrote this a couple of months after Ezekiel was born – 6 years ago now! As God has now blessed me with another son (and I haven't had a chance to write about it), I thought you wouldn't mind reminiscing with me.

On September 26, 2015 at the rather auspicious time of 3:33PM, the lives of my wife and I changed forever as our son, Ezekiel Martin Swayne, was born. I had gone to the hospital that day with a lot of ideas about what the day would be like and what I would be like. Just about all of that went out the window when I returned to the hospital after being sent on an errand to get our breakfast only to find that she had begun active labor (that breakfast ended up sitting there uneaten for a long time!). At 3:33PM on that day, what I gained far surpassed my expectations.

When God blessed me with a son, I found myself even more amazed at how well God knows His creation. Having lived on my own as a bachelor for six years after, I discovered the truth that “it is not good that the man should be alone” (Genesis 2:18). Having been married now for just over six years, I have long since discovered the equal and opposite truth that “whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of [from – ESV] the Lord” (Proverbs 18:22). However, when my son was born I finally understood why God's first instruction to man was, “Be fruitful, and multiply” (Genesis 1:28). It wasn't just to give him something to do. There is so much to be gained just by going through labor with your wife, let alone the sheer “joy that a man [human being – ESV] is born into the world” (John 16:21). I know that some people are medically unable to have a child, but I can only say to those who have chosen not to have a child, please give the matter more prayerful thought.

When God blessed me with a son, I felt as though I better understood God Himself. How could God create man knowing the pain mankind would bring through countless sins and knowing the cost that would have to be paid at Calvary? Academically, I had an answer. However, I learned more just after 3:33PM when I had my first bout of “paternal instinct.” Chantelle's labor was not exactly ideal and our little fella was born under some duress. As a consequence, they had to take him away from us to check his oxygen and heartbeat as soon as he was born. The machine they used to do this is possibly the loudest, most annoying machine that medical science has ever invented, with alarms going off the very second a sensor slips off (which happens fairly often with a newborn). As the machine beeped and bonged and my newborn son screamed his head off, I found myself full of anger and, in a barely restrained voice saying, “Can you just give us our son?!” I would have done anything to protect my son from the pain I imagined that machine was inflicting upon him. Love caused Chantelle and me to have a child even though we knew he would likely disappoint us through sin, and that same love would cause us to sacrifice anything to protect our child if possible. I believe in my heart of hearts that God is the same.

When God blessed me with a son, I felt as though I had been given a wonderful opportunity. While I'm sure some would call it naivety, I have never been afraid about the responsibility of being a father. Well, to be honest I have had some fears along the way about the physical side of parenting (keeping such a tiny, frail human being alive!), but I have always looked forward with excitement towards the opportunity to help my son grow mentally and morally (Luke 2:52). Sure, parenting can be done wrong and no doubt I will make mistakes. However, the Bible describes children as arrows (Psalm 127:4). So, in keeping with the illustration, at least to some degree, children go where they're shot – i.e., they can be guided. I've seen too much parenting gone right to believe successful parenting can't be done. Therefore my son represents a soul that I can guide to Christ and a soul through whom I can make this world a better place.

I thank God for the beautiful son he has given me and the opportunity he has given me to grow because of him. I hope all parents and parents to be will reflect on the wonderful blessing that is a child and will use that blessing to create a stronger faith, a stronger marriage, and a better world.