

## **A Daddy's Perspective**

During the first two years of my son, Sean's, life I was blessed to be able to be a "stay-at-home" dad. This meant that I was able to be there to see his first smile, his first laugh, his first steps, and to hear his first words. This also meant that I was the one who brought him to the doctor's office to get his check-ups and vaccinations. I was the one who held him down and looked into his tear filled eyes as the doctor injected the life-saving vaccine into his plump little legs. I had to hear his cries and hold him when the procedure was through and tell him that this was for his own good. Any of you who have children know how hard this is to do.

I could always bare his tears because I knew that the procedure would keep him healthy in the years to come. In my mind I could always justify his pain but this became close to impossible during his last check-up when he was 16 months old. Sometime between his previous vaccination and this one he had learned many basic words. When I held him down and the doctor came at him with the hypodermic needle he looked up at me and cried, "Daddy – No."

With those simple words all justification of his fear and pain went out the window. I cried with him, I felt his pain as he accused me of the suffering he was enduring.

Looking back on the episode, it reminds me of Jesus in the garden asking his Daddy if there was any way to avoid the suffering he was about to endure. From the perspective of a father, I can imagine God justifying his son's pain. I also think of Christ on the cross crying, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me," and I hear my own son's voice pleading, "Daddy – No." How God's heart must have dropped at his son's words. He did not have the ability to justify his son's pain by saying, "It is for your own good." His justification, the fact that made it possible to allow his son to suffer was that it was for OUR own good, yours and mine. We are his justification. How he must love us to be able to allow his own son to go through all of that pain. In spite of our sinfulness and our lack of appreciation, he suffered as a Daddy watching his son suffer so that we would not have to suffer.

From a Daddy's perspective I can fully understand what grace is. I can understand the lengths that God went to in order to redeem us and allow us to be his children. He is a better Daddy than I.