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I almost killed my nephew--a baby

Written by Bill Perkins

Before the birth of our first son I feared I wouldn't like him. My concern was rooted in a childhood experience I had when I was seven. My oldest sister had a baby and when she brought him home she asked if I wanted to hold him. I told her I did.

Two Warnings

As she held him out, she issued a warning, "His neck muscles aren't strong and so you have to support his head with your hand or his head will fall to the side. His neck could break, killing or paralyzing him."

I swallowed hard and reached for the infant. But my sister gave another warning. "The bones on the crown of his head haven't grown together and if you jab your thumb into the soft spot on top of his head it could go into his brain, killing or paralyzing him. Do you still want to hold him?"

By then I feared I might injure or kill my newborn nephew. But I felt an obligation to hold him and so I nodded my head.

The Soft Spot

Like a child contortionist I twisted my wrist, hand and arm so I could cradle his head while supporting it. Curious about the "no touch zone" on his head, I gently pushed my index finger into the soft spot. Sure enough, it was as soft as a wet sponge. While my gentle touch didn't kill or paralyze him, the little tyke erupted from the mouth with a geyser of cottage cheese-like milk and from the other end a flow of chocolate milk. With my brown and white tie dye T-shirt I handed the screaming infant to my sister.

A Bundle of Love

It's funny how that experience seared my brain with an apprehension about children that wasn't overcome until my first son entered the world. After his birth I quickly learned children make messes but they're a bundle of love and laughter.

I enjoy children and feel compassion for those who suffer. But there have been occasions when I've rushed past needy children with no more than a wave. Sometimes when I'm in a hurry I view them as an intrusion. I'm sure Jesus never did. He always took time for people—especially children—and he blessed them.

Personal Update

I was unable to publish my blog for the last few weeks because I changed host companies and had some issues with the space needed to download pictures. That's now fixed. And then I got sick while in Florida and this laid me up for a couple weeks. Anyway, I'm back in Oregon and feeling better.

We sold our home in West Linn, OR where we've lived for 18.5 years and are now in an apartment in Wilsonville while our new home is being built a few blocks away. It's the first time in almost 37 years (we lived for 18 years in Lake Oswego, OR) that we haven't lived on a hill.

We loved the views but it's nice to be able to go for a walk without hiking up and down steep inclines. Downsizing was quite a chore. We filled four trash dumpsters, had an estate sale followed by a company with a huge trailer and truck that hauled off everything else. The home will be finished in June.

Ministry Update

I'm in Oakland, CA with Cindy this week ministering freedom at the Bay Area Chinese Bible Church. Over the last couple years we've spent four or so weeks there and it's exciting to see the Lord work.

I'll be speaking on Sunday mornings at Grace Baptist Church in St. Helen's, OR. If you're in the area I hope you'll visit. If you do, please introduce yourself.