

# Trusting God When No One Steps Into Help Your Child

I'm sitting outside on my back porch with my laptop, my Bible, and 3000 MOSQUITOES!!!!

It is so beautiful out here—cool breeze, sunny, and quiet! I love it.

But I HATE these mosquitoes! They have even bitten my hands! It is very difficult to scratch my fingers and type.

My 14-year-old son (see boogie boarding pic) is trying to set Axe cologne on fire. I believe his plan is to make some kind of flame thrower. ... I know. I know. ... I should probably stop him, but he is careful and so far it isn't working. The only result is that Axe cologne is all that I can smell ... and it is masking all the bug spray I just put on.

He is so funny. ... I love boys. He does the craziest, funniest things. Yesterday he sent me a video of himself doing a flip off a slide at the playground. It was actually a great flip. He is always asking if he can do a flip off of the weirdest things. 99% of the time I must say an emphatic, "NO!" simply because I value his life ... a lot!

I'm trying to let him be a boy in a house full of girls. His only male companion is our old lab, Titus, whose only activity is non-activity.

Peter lives for the weekends when his older brother comes home from college. They lock themselves in their man cave and play games, listen to music, and whatever else boys do ... I shudder to think. LOL!

Being a single mom to a boy is so, so hard. I get so much conflicting advice. Things that a father could do or should

do, according to some I shouldn't do. Things that a mother is inclined to do, I should avoid doing. Things that I see as reasonable responses are apparently too feminine and he needs more masculine responses modeled.

Unfortunately, I'm most definitely a female, feminine woman. I'm in no way naturally inclined to act like a man. In fact, I'm baffled by so much of it.

But I'm trying.

I'm trying to let him be a young man with an adventurous, slightly dangerous side. I'm trying to let him face his challenges without too much input from nurturing mama. I'm trying to let him grow up into a godly man.

Oh I am trying.

It's so difficult to act like a man ... to model man behavior.

Unfortunately, as much as I have prayed for someone to step into his life and be the father-figure he needs, God has not provided that. Men have taken him to movies, hunting and fishing, and sporting events—and those are GREAT things for which I'm very thankful, but they are not exactly what I'm talking about.

I've been praying for someone who will walk beside him ... someone who will answer the questions, talk through the difficulties, counsel, encourage, and disciple. Someone willing to challenge him to go against the natural tendencies and strive for holiness.

All the male bonding in the world cannot replace the bonding of a father and son ... especially the bonding of a godly father raising a young man in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

I have been praying for that. And that ... that is a lot to ask of a man. A lot to ask of man who is not a father—biological, adoptive, foster, or step.

Honestly, how can a man do that without daily interaction? How can a man do that without being committed to it as a God-given role and calling?

I can't imagine being someone else's mother-figure ... well, I guess I can. I have about 80 11-year olds I'm kinda a mother figure to but I am with them almost every day and I do know a fair amount about their world.

AND, I'm a girl. I'm a nature nurturer. ... I'm a natural relationship person. Bring on the conversation! Bring on the Bible study! Bring on the heart to heart! Bring it.

So what to do?

This single mama needs perspective and peace about her young man.

My oldest son was already a teenager when his dad left. He struggled and I prayed. I also prayed for someone to step into his world and help him with his struggles. I wanted and thought that looked like a father-figure, but God provided encouragement and accountability in a young man serving as a youth leader in our church and a young man who was a family friend. I almost missed it because I was looking so hard for an older man to step into his world.

Maybe I need to think outside of the box? Maybe I need to keep my eyes open and see what God provides! And maybe I need to keep praying and hoping.

What in the world am I saying maybe for? I need to do those things.

Pray.

Hope.

Keep my eyes open.

Think outside of the box.

Those aren't exactly what I was looking for, really.

I sort of just want to be able to write a thank you note to someone for stepping in and blessing my son.

God works more mysteriously than that. He has other plans that are bigger than mine, more far-reaching and more effective.

Even if I can't see the effectiveness ... and I'm quite certain my idea is the best.

Good gravy! How prideful and silly I can be!

God knows best.

God knows my son best.

God loves my son.

Shockingly more than I do ... which is not even fathomable.

He isn't going to let me or my son down on this.

He will provide in His way and His time.

( phrase is frustrating...)

I want it NOW. I need HELP!

Again, God is asking me to trust when I want to fix. To wait when I want to do. To pray when I want to pace.

Lord, we single parents need you to step in and be all that our children need. We feel so inadequate and tired and overwhelmed sometimes. It is hard to be both parents ... it's hard enough just being a parent. Lord, will you help us? Will you give us your peace and your strength and your wisdom and your discernment? Will you open our eyes to the ways that you are working in our children's lives so we can be encouraged? Will you help us as we trust you with our children? Thank you

Lord because I know that you will indeed answer our prayers perfectly ... in your way and your time ... and that is the best way and time. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

**Sue Birdseye** *is an author and single mom of five kids. Her book, When Happily Ever After Shatters (Tyndale House) is in bookstores. This is adapted from her blog, .*