

Simply One Page-A Toddler Grandpa

This piece was created from my own reflections and vision. I used ChatGPT as a tool to help shape the text from my original concepts and structure. The final form is the result of thoughtful revision motivated by my one page intent. Mike Haddorff 2618

I'm a toddler grandpa. I'm new to this. Still learning the rhythms, still discovering what it even means to be a grandfather. And like any toddler, I find myself full of wonder.

Our granddaughter is about 18 months old. Every time she's with us, something has changed. Something has grown. Something new has come alive. I find myself watching her with a kind of amazement I don't remember having when I was raising our own kids. I loved being a dad. I really did. But this feels different.

Yesterday I was kneeling beside her at the sandbox on our patio. The lid was off, the sand fresh and clean. She ran her fingers through it, slowly, carefully, watching it fall back into place. Again and again, again and again. Her eyes locked in. Fully present. Completely absorbed.

And I just sat there, watching her.

Her wonder became my wonder.

Her joy stirred something in me I didn't have language for. It wasn't analysis. It wasn't even about where she was headed or who she would become. It was simply delight.

This morning, over breakfast with a friend, we found ourselves talking about our grandchildren. And a thought surfaced quietly: What if this is a glimpse of how God sees us?

Jesus chose the language of Father to help us understand God. And I know every analogy has its limits. But I can't shake this sense that what I'm experiencing now, this steady, warm, attentive delight, might be pointing somewhere.

What if God's posture toward us is not constant assessment, but ongoing wonder?

What if, as we move through our lives, learning, stumbling, discovering, growing, God is not standing back with a clipboard, but kneeling close, watching with joy?

Not indifferent. Not distant. Not disappointed but rather, Engaged, Delighted, Present.

There's something about watching our small child discover the world that softens me. It pulls me out of evaluation and into participation. I no longer ask, "How are you doing?" but simply enjoying that you are.

Maybe that's closer than we think. Maybe the invitation is not to perform for God, but to live with God in this same field of wonder. I'm still new at this. Still learning.

Yes, I am a toddler grandpa, but I love the toddling.