

**Transcript
Voice Memo
Dec 10, 2020
9:45pm (approximately)
Dad & Charlie at bedtime**

[0:00] Is that how it feels?

How do you feel?

(Crying) I never really get to be around you very much.

Why does that make you cry?

Because I barely get to see you.

(Crying)

I'm with mom the whole weekend. I went with you for 2 days.

Is that how it feels?

(Silence. Dad moves closer to hug Charlie. Charlie rests head on Dads shoulders)

Remember our 3 things? Be Brave... Be Real.... Be Empathetic.... Man, I can empathize with what youre feeling. I know that feeling. And just know that I feel that feeling too, with you. Anytime im not with you, Im always *always* wanting to be with you. Because you're my son. And I'm your dad.

(Crying) Its really not fair.

What would be fair?

This is what would be fair. If I'm with you for like, A-B five.... With mom for one week and with you for one week and then with mom for - (crying) Its *already been* her weekend.

It felt like that probably, huh?

Last time I saw you before the dumplings was, like... I dont know. It was so before. Maybe the last time I was even here.

Mmhmm. It was Friday. So we have Wednesdays, Thursdays....

... and thats all.

And every other weekend.

Thats just so not fair.

I can empathize with that feeling, Char. I can empathize with that feeling. And, it makes me look forward to every time I have with you.

(Crying)

[3:41] Life is so bad for so many reasons.

Yeah? What are some of the big ones that you can think of?

This one.

This one? How does this one make life bad for you?

Because..... sometimes I only get to see Sometimes its just *ONE* day with you.

What do you mean?

Like, sometimes I only get to spend one day with you.

Like one day of the week? No, every week we get Wednesday from 4-7, and -

-and Thursday. That's not a lot.

You're right. It's not. I want you to know one thing. I want you to know Charlie, that that is NOT Charlies fault.

I hate the schedule.

[5:20] **I heard you say that you would - when I asked you, "What do you want? What would you want it to be?" You said "A-B" and "One week there, one week there." No? Is that right?**

AB Pattern.

Mmhmm

Im here one week and there -

Did you - have you heard of that? I've never heard of it. Did you hear that someplace, "AB Pattern" What is that?

AB. Like, AB Pattern.

Oh its just a pattern.

Yeah.

Gotcha. And one week -

It's an example of, like, one-two one-two. AB Pattern is basically like.... Look. So,

Red-yellow. Red-yellow. Red-yellow.

Yep.

[6:14] Why one week? Is that something you came up with? Or is that something your friends at school do, if their parents are divorced? Or..

What most of my friends do, which is so not fair, they stay with their mom and dad. And what they mostly do (which is not fair AT ALL), is - what they do is, they usually go to mom for the whole week and go to dad for the whole week, and then - same thing [inaudible] the weekend.

(Silence)

It's so not fair.

I know. It's not.... It's not "fair" to anybody. I doint think anybody "likes" it. I think people are trying to do the best that they can do. And, I'm proud of you for being real and brave to share your feelings. Im proud of you for that. And I want you to know that I hear your heart. I want you to know that I see it. I want you to know that I feel, I FEEL, your heart. I hear it and I feel it. And I also want you to know, that when I feel that, I think: "When's the next time I get to see my Char?!"

[8:03] And so, it's ok to feel that. It's ok to cry. It's right to feel that. And its also good to feel that at the same time, going, "When's the next time we get to be together?" K?

(Crying)

I also want you to know -

I really really want to change the plans. So it will be fair.

Ok. Well.. I also want you to know - its not gonna be this way forever, buddy. It wont. I know its hard right now. Life - you know, life can sometimes be *really* hard as a kid. And adults forget. *(Charlie sobbing)* They forget how hard it can be as a kid. Because a lot of times, kids don't have a choice on stuff...and they just kinda have to do it. And you're right: thats not easy.

(Sobbing)

(Dad rubbing his back)

It's not.

(Dad holding Charlie. He is sobbing)

I know it's not easy.

[9:24] One day, you'll be able to decide for yourself.

(Frustrated) You're probably gonna be like 50. *(Crying)* So that's in.... 8 years. *(Soft sobbing...)*

That's a long time, yes.

I haven't even been alive for that long so far.

(Sobbing)

(Crying)

(Dad consoling - rubbing back)

I love you.

[10:56] Do you know how much mom loves you? She loves you so much.

I feel like she only loves me a crumb.

Why's that?

Because she is one who thought of the schedule.

Who said that?

What I think -

Wait, hold on - What do you mean she's the one who came up with the schedule?

That thought of the schedule.

Why do you say that?

Because she told me. She [inaudible]

Gotcha. Ok.

Who thought it out.

She... so, she's told you -

[11:38] (Interrupting) I feel like she doesn't want me to be close to you.

Why?

(Crying)

You're doing so great. It's ok.

I feel like she only wants me to be close to her, and not *you*.

And that makes you feel What are some things that make you feel that way? (If you're being super brave and super real?)

Like she's the one who [inaudible]. She's the one - just - a lot of things.

(Charlie becomes angry. Begins to stomp/kick/punch the pillow.)

[12:23] Thank you for sharing your feelings with me, bud. Your feelings are always safe with your mom and with your dad. And as your dad, I just wanna tell ya, I could [inaudible]

I don't want you to *[inaudible]*

I do. [inaudible]

[13:11] Well. You know what, buddy?

What?

You know what I love about mom? What I love the most about mom is... Mom cares so much for you. She cares soooo much about you and you being safe and you being taken care of and having everything that she feels is good for your life. She really, really, really cares about you. And I think that's pretty awesome to have a mom like that.

It doesn't feel like it.

[14:05] She always thinks I'm arguing, but I'm not. Sometimes I even lose points, because I'm not. Sometimes she [inaudible] because she's selfish and wants me to get a present for her and not for you.

Do you feel that way about Kevin, too? That she doesn't want you to be around Kevin?

She wants me to be around Kevin. But not you.

[15:15] You know what's cool?

What?

The bond between a father and a son. The bond between a son and his mom is really cool too. They're different. And there's something real special about the

bond between a father and a son. And here's what's special about it: One of the cool things is - guess what?

What?

Nothing in the world can ever take away that bond. Guess what? My dad, is in heaven. he's not even here. I haven't given him a hug in 20 years. But guess what?

What?

I feel so close with my dad. We have a bond. We have a bond. We -

Nothing in the world?

Nothing. Not height nor depth nor angels nor demons nor rulers nor principalities can separate us from the love of God...." That's what the Bible says. Guess what? High... depth... angels... demons... NOTHING can separate my love for you. I could be across an ocean, I could be.... You could be in another country, or one of us could be in heaven.... NOTHING is EVER gonna break the bond between you and me. Ever. Because the bond is: Love. Unconditional love. You are loved, because you are my son. Period. And there's not one thing you could do in the world that would ever make me stop loving you. Not one. There's no distance between us that could ever be so big that could break our bond of unconditional love. Because that's the same bond God has with you. That's how I feel about you.

(Crying)

(Back rub - consoling)

[18:20] You know how much time in the week I get with my Dad?

What?

(Holds up hand) Zero. I don't get to see my dad. And I know that it's hard. I can't imagine how hard... BUT: you get to see your dad. That's a treat. A lot of people don't get to do that.

But most people - (begins to heavily sob)

Good. Let it out. Good. Most people what, baby?

(Crying)

Good job.

[19:08] I don't even know one single friend with a schedule like this. Every single one of my friends has their dad for a week. And then their mom for a week.

Sobbing

I don't have *one friend*.

And I don't have [many?] friends, too.

[19:42] Have you told Mom this?

(Charlie shakes his head)

No? Why not? Do you feel scared to? Its ok. Do you feel scared to?

(Charlie nods)

You're nodding. Why?

(Silence)

What's your fear with talking about your real feelings? Are you afraid that they'll be... what?

My fear is... I know mom, and I know you. If I told this to you, I wouldn't get in trouble. But If I told this to mom, I would get in trouble.

How? How would you get in trouble? Like it was wrong for you to say? That you're saying to wrong thing? Or that you shouldnt be saying it?

Its why I never tell mom.

Tell mom what?

That.

Your feelings?

(No answer)

So, Im hearing you say, You never tell mom your feelings, because ... why?

Because I just feel [inaudible]

You feel what?

I've only shown my feelings to her one time, and thats when I was two. And that was my first time. And she wasnt even proud of me like you. She was just so mad. She wasn't even proud of me like you.

She was mad about what?

She was mad about the thing. Whatever Im saying.

And you wanted her to feel proud of you, showing her you feelings?

Yeah. Because you're always so proud of me. She's basically never proud of me.

How do you know that I'm proud of you?

Because you let me hug you all time time, and you say that you're proud of me -

(Bawling/sobbing crying)

Good job..... Its ok..... You're ok. I'm so proud of you buddy.....

(Sobbing)

[23:24] **Hey. Question.**

When you and I are old, with beards, and when you have a beard and I have a beard, and when we are like, grown old people - we should go on, like, road trips and stuff. Like old man road trips. Wont that be fun?

Yeah but you probably wont be alive.

Aww. Why do you think that? I dont plan on being dead. God is control of my life but -

I dont either but you might. If that's thats true I [inaudible] I'm just saying - [inaudible] not very common.

[inaudible]

[24:45] Remember that? From Lion King? When Rafiki says, "Look down there." And Simba says, "Thats not my father. That's just my reflection." And rafiki says, "No. Look harder." And simba looks at his face and who does he see? He hears "Simba..." and the face looks like Mufasa. And rafiki says, "You see? Your father lives in you." And you know what? I know what thats like. Because [inaudible] best dad in the world. And he - its like hes with me almost. Like a metaphor.

But you never get to hug him and see him. (Sobs)

I dont. And that is really something I want to do everyday. And I know that I will. And it makes me look forward to seeing him so much. And thats like you and me. Yeah: its is hard sometimes. And that is ok to feel that way. And as we feel that way, we can use that to say, "You know what. Although I feel sad, I can also allow myself to feel hopeful about seeing him again." That's how I am about my dad. That's how I am about Jesus. That's how I am about you. 100 percent.

I would do anything to get your father back.

(Crying)

Aww. That shows your heart for me. Well you know what buddy, I haven't lost my father. Im just apart from him for a little while until I see him again?

Isn't that cool how God made it that way? [inaudible] And in a way, its kinda like how it is with you and me. [inaudible]

[28:42] And Look - You're already getting old. (Touching dads gray hair)

You're right. I am. But heres what I really believe. With all my heart. ALL my heart. I really believe, that..... its just like harry potter. Theres lots of books in it. We've finished the first one, started the second one... I really believe that the next chapter of life is gonna be incredible. I really belive that this is like the next book in the series. And it just gets better. I really do.

I think God is trustworthand true. And I think God make some promises. And I think he's gonna keep it.

I do too. I just want [inaudible]

Me too.

Like, instead of a long time, I want you too see him now.

I do too. That would be great. But you know what, if I saw my dad now, that means Charlie would never see me. Or James and Laura. Or Harland and Sammy. And AJ and Steve and Cash and Ellie. And everyone else. God put me on this planet to be a light to ev eryone around me. He made YOU the same way. To be a light -

[31:20] What I could do - what I could do is that I could kill myself. And....

And...

[inaudible] with you.

Kill yourself with me?

No, kill myself and then -

Why would you want to do that?

So I could see you.

But you wouldn't. I am alive. I am right here.

No, like, if you were dead.

Hmmmm. Well, you *could*....But.... Remember our three things?

Be real. Be brave. And be empathetic.

Yep. How would other people feel if Charlie were suddenly gone and [inaudible]. How would they feel?

[Inaudible]

(Charlie distracted)

Can I tell you something? One of the reasons people end up making that really really bad choice... and its an evil one, too... and I dont call a lot of things evil, but it kinda really is.... That thought and choice and feeling of “This thing called life should die....” Does that sound like God to you?

No.

No. Sounds evil, doesn't it?

Mhmmm.

Because God creates life and calls it.... ?

Good.

That's right. And if life is good, then death is?

Bad.

Absolutely. Death is awful. Death is evil. And thats why, one day, when Jesus comes back, guess what he is gonna do? Kick death in the bo-bo. For real. He's coming back, and no more death. No more pain. No more death. Because death is evil. Death isn't God's plan. Life is. Light is. Thats his plan.

And if you are alive, that means you're in gods plan. And he put you here for a purpose. And I can tell you one thing that purpose isnt: It's not to die. It's to live, buddy. It's to live and to shine your light. Because God wants to use you to bring life and light to your world.

[35:21] I'm so sad for all of the families and people who are up there.

Why?

Because they died. And.... Imagine if so many - imagine of so many Sammons before us. Imagine how - how many of our friends taht we would see that died. How many stuff like that.

Is that sad to think about them? Whys that.

Because they are crying saying “When are we gonna get our bodies.”

Oh I'm sorry - I didn't mean to explain it that way. They aren't crying. The word we use in the Bible is groaning. Like, "Ahh! Man! Come on! I really want taht body back! Come on Jesus, when are you going back? [inaudible]

People in heaven are like muggles. They are like wizards in the muggle world. Like harry potter right? There's wizards and magic and then normal people. And they don't know that all around them is a whole other world they can't see. But that world can see them, can't it? It's watching them. They are like, IN it.

That's what the Bible says heaven is kinda like. That everyone who is in heaven right now, somehow and somehow, they are like in football stands, cheering us on. My dad can watch and see you and your life. And I guarantee you he watches everyday.

[36:13] The bible says that you and I, literally, all around us we are surrounded by this massive group of people watching. witnessing. looking on. And they are cheering us on. So yeah, I think about all the Sammons who have died, and I think about how they are all in the stands right now, cheering us on. Because we are in the game. We are in the game. They played in the stands, and now they are in the stands. And one day you'll be in the stands too cheering on others.

But right now, they are cheering us on. And we are on the field. This is the time God put us here. This is it. He chose you specifically to put you on that field, because you have a role to play. You have a role to play, buddy. And guess what? I am here with you, throughout all of life, to help you learn what that is.

That's what my dad did for me.

(Crying)

You know that guitar you hear me playing all the time? My daddy bought me that. It's a really nice guitar. I had a really really not good guitar. Ha. And my dad would listen outside room when I was a boy. And he loved it. He would sneak - I didn't even know he was listening.. he'd [peek his head outside the door, with tears in his eyes like mine right now... my door listening to me play.

He said I want you to know that I support your life and your talents and the reasons God put you here on this planet. And I want to help you." And he gave me that guitar. And I STILL play that guitar. My dad is STILL supporting my life.

God put you here, Charlie, on that football field surrounded by all those people cheering you on - and he put you here for a purpose. My job, and mom's job, is to help you figure out what that is, and help you succeed. And I will *never* quit that.

Are you gonna pass the guitar over?

Yeah. If you wanna learn it. I would do that. That would be the coolest thing. Nothing cooler. I would love to teach you. If you want to learn it, I will teach you. Like most things (laughing)

Ok?

(Sniffles)

I just want to tell you how privileged I feel. you were so brave and real and empathetic. I am so proud of you. Not many people can do that. *Adults* have a hard time doing that.

(Conversation about Spotify)

(Calming techniques)

Ok. Lie back. I want you to get super comfortable, ok?

What's something in your life that when you think of it you're like "Ahhhh. That makes me feel very secure and steady and easy."

You.

Ha. Alright. That's mine too. It's you.

Ok so I want you to think about me, then. Whatever it is about me that makes you feel safe and secure and loved, I want you to think about that. And I want you to think about it as you listen to this song and fall asleep. Ok?

—END OF RECORDING—

