

The following letter was written by Glennon Doyle to her son Chase on August 28, 2011. It has been published and shared many times since as it is a great message for young and old alike.

Listen to God whispering in your ear, trust your heart-ache, show compassion, and be brave!

Hey Baby.

Tomorrow is a big day. *Third Grade – wow.*

Chase – When I was in third grade, there was a little boy in my class named Adam. Adam looked a little different and he wore funny clothes and sometimes he even smelled a little bit. Adam didn't smile. He hung his head low and he never looked at anyone at all. Adam never did his homework. I don't think his parents reminded him like yours do. The other kids teased Adam a lot. Whenever they did, his head hung lower and lower and lower. I never teased him, but I never told the other kids to stop, either.

And I never talked to Adam, not once. I never invited him to sit next to me at lunch, or to play with me at recess. Instead, he sat and played by himself. He must have been very lonely.

I still think about Adam every day. I wonder if Adam remembers me? Probably not. I bet if I'd asked him to play, just *once*, he'd still remember me.

I think that God puts people in our lives as gifts to us. The children in your class this year, they are some of God's gifts to you.

So please treat each one like a gift from God. Every single one.

Baby, if you see a child being left out, or hurt, or teased, a little part of your heart will hurt a little. Your daddy and I want you to trust that heart-ache. Your whole life, we want you to notice and trust your heart-ache. That heart ache is called *compassion*, and it is God's signal to you to *do something*. It is God saying, **Chase! Wake up! One of my babies is hurting! Do something to help!** Whenever you feel compassion – be

thrilled! It means God is speaking to you, and that is magic. It means He trusts you and needs you.

Sometimes the magic of compassion will make you step into the middle of a bad situation right away. Compassion might lead you to tell a teaser to *stop it* and then ask the teased kid to play. You might invite a left-out kid to sit next to you at lunch. You might choose a kid for your team first who usually gets chosen last. These things will be hard to do, but you can do hard things.

Sometimes you will feel compassion but you won't step in right away. That's okay, too. You might choose instead to tell your teacher and then tell us. We are on your team – we are on your whole class' team. Asking for help for someone who is hurting is *not* tattling, it is *doing the right thing*. If someone in your class needs help, please tell me, baby. We will make a plan to help together.

When God speaks to you by making your heart hurt for another, by giving you compassion, just do *something*. Please do not ignore God whispering to you. I so wish I had not ignored God when He spoke to me about Adam. I remember Him trying, I remember feeling compassion, but I chose fear over compassion. I wish I hadn't. Adam could have used a friend and I could have, too.

Chase – We do not care if you are the smartest or fastest or coolest or funniest. There will be lots of contests at school, and we don't care if you win a single one of them. We don't care if you get straight As. We don't care if the girls think you're cute or whether you're picked first or last for kickball at recess. We don't care if you are your teacher's favorite or not. We don't care if you have the best clothes or most Pokemon cards or coolest gadgets. We just don't care.

We don't send you to school to become the best at anything at all. We already love you as much as we possibly could. You do not have to earn our love or pride and you can't lose it. That's done.

We send you to school to practice being brave and kind.

Kind people are brave people. Because *brave* is not a feeling that you should wait for. It is a decision. It is a decision that compassion is more important than fear, than fitting in, than following the crowd.

Trust me, baby, it is. It *is more important*.

Don't try to be the best this year, honey.

Just be grateful and kind and brave. That's all you ever need to be.

Take care of those classmates of yours, and your teacher, too. You *Belong to Each Other*. You are one lucky boy . . . with all of these new gifts to unwrap this year.

I love you so much that my heart might explode.

Enjoy and cherish your gifts.

And thank you for being my favorite gift of all time.

Love, Mama

Here's another little nugget, Deb. Hopefully you can find a spot in the newsletter for it. A kid-like font might be nice.



Let us all strive for peace in our own hearts . . .
then watch it spread like sunrise over a newly
awakened world.

Michael, age

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From *A Million Visions of Peace Wisdom from the Friends of Old Turtle*

by Jennifer Garrison and Andrew Tubesing