ESSAY · OCTOBER 25, 2019

God Spared My Son

Written by Bill Perkins

After two hours of sleep Cindy, David--our middle son--and I caught an Alaska Airlines flight from Portland to Oakland. After landing we picked up a rental car and drove to Eden Medical Center in Castro Valley CA. Around noon Ryan's doctor explained that the bleeding in his brain had stopped--good news. But the blood had formed a syrupy pool under his brain--not good news as blood can inflame the brain leading to infection. But the pool was tiny--good news because if the bleeding didn't resume the brain would absorb the blood.

The Source of the Bleeding

Based on the brain scans neither the radiologist nor Dr. Peter Adamczyk, the neurointerventional surgeon (the doc who uses a catheter to diagnose and treat brain injuries), could identify the source of the bleeding. So Dr. Adamczyk said he would first do a procedure with dye and a catheter running through a blood vessel from his hip to his brain in search of the cause of the bleed.

If all looked good, he would finish and Ryan would remain in the hospital four or so days and then go home. If he saw a problem he would attempt to fix it right away. The second procedure carried risks and could last up to four hours. The doctor didn't soften the blow when he spoke of the dangers.

At noon a nurse rolled Ryan away on a gurney to the operating room.

As We Had Known Him

We sat in the waiting room hoping for the best but realizing we may have seen our son, as we had known him, for the last time. He could die or worse--live in a vegetative state. I recalled the boy I coached in soccer who grew into a collegiate midfielder. The young man who took a group of blind students on a hike where he fell off a forty foot cliff into a pool of water.

Fortunately, it was deep and a team of rappelers happened by and pulled him to safety with their ropes. I think of his many trips to India, Pakistan and Nepal. Countries and cultures he learned to love and languages he mastered. I remembered how I never once left his presence without a hug and a kiss on his cheek and a reminder of my love for him. And his quick kiss on my cheek followed by "I love you, Dad."

All of this ran though my mind as we waited. Time slows to a crawl when waiting to see if God will spare your son. Ryan went to Moody Bible Institute and then earned a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. Who does that? He has lectured at Harvard, Oxford, the University of Chicago and is currently the South Asian Librarian and teacher of Indian history at Stanford. The Stanford paper wrote two feature articles referring to him as Stanford's Indiana Jones as he rides a motorcycle and travels the world

Would he ever ride again? Lecture again? Kiss me again? Take his two kids to places like England, France, India, Pakistan, trekking in Nepal, South America and Africa?

The Doctor Entered

Finally, Dr. Adamczyk entered the waiting lounge. We stood. I held my breath.

"All went well," he said. "No further treatment is needed. He will rest for four or so days and then go home. I anticipate no further problems."

I choked back tears of joy. God spared my son.

An Outpouring of Love

Thank you for your prayers and expressions of love and support. I've been writing this blog for over fourteen years and never have I gotten such an outpouring of love from all over the United States and the world. And the expressions of love, prayer and support continue. So far, I've personally answered each one.

Tonight is better than this morning. God spared by dear son.

Thank you for your love and prayers.