

## CGGC eNews: Learning from a Broken Bone

July 15, 2016

I do intend to get back into the Recalibrating to a Kingdom Focus series – so stay tuned for more on that in the weeks to come. I just felt like the events of last week were significant enough that they warranted a response. I appreciate the feedback and interaction around the issues of race and violence. I plan to do more on that front in near future as it's my belief that the church has a vital role to play in helping to bring racial reconciliation and healing to our world.

Last week was a tumultuous week for me personally. On Tuesday afternoon, Brenda called me at about 3:30 in the afternoon to let me know that my son Carter had wrecked his bicycle and looked like he had a dislocated elbow. I won't bore you with all the details, but it ended up that Carter had a fairly severe break of his humerus bone (right above the elbow) and would require surgery, three pins and an overnight stay in the Toledo Children's Hospital. He's in a cast for a few weeks and will have to take it slow for a few weeks after that, but he's doing very well and on the road to a full recovery.



The older I get, the more reflective I've become. Over the past week I've been processing Carter's injury and the upheaval it caused in our own family's life and routine (and understanding that our upheaval was rather minor compared to what some of facing today). This was our first experience in dealing with broken bones and surgery for one of our kids. One of my prayers in the midst of Carter's injury was that God would use this situation to reveal Himself to us and draw us into a deeper sense of trust of and reliance on our heavenly Father. I knew that beyond safety and healing, God would use this to draw us into a deeper fellowship with Him and I didn't want to miss that in the midst of the hustle and bustle and drama of caring for an injured child.

So I offer just a few of my reflections or learnings from our experience over the past week

1. **A renewed understanding of James 4:13-17.** I don't know what tomorrow will bring. This is not what I had planned to do last Tuesday and Wednesday. We had different plans for those days that were ultimately altered because of the events of Tuesday afternoon. I'm a planner and a calendar guy, but I need to hold those plans loosely knowing that each day brings new challenges and opportunities that I could not have anticipated.
2. **An appreciation for God's gracious provision in the midst of a less-than-ideal situation.** I hate to see my kids in pain or experience suffering, but in the midst of this situation I was overwhelmed with God's gracious provision for us in our time of need. We live a few blocks from our urgent care center. The doctor at urgent care assessed the situation and quickly sent us to Toledo for further care. My in-laws were home and able to watch our younger two children. We made it to Toledo in less than an hour during rush hour (which is no small feat currently as I-75 has major construction all the way between Findlay and Toledo and experiences shutdowns on a near daily basis). Carter was processed and in surgery before 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday evening, greatly reducing the risk for long-term nerve damage or other problems. I was in town and able to be with Brenda and Carter through the whole ordeal. While some might see it as coincidence or good luck, I know that God was graciously providing for us in ways that we might not even recognize at the time.
3. **An appreciation for vocation.** I could tell by looking at Carter that something was seriously wrong with his arm. I could even read the x-ray and determine that it was a fairly serious break that required attention. I could identify the problem, but I couldn't fix it as I had absolutely no skill or ability to address the problem. I'm so grateful for the doctors and nurses who have spent years in training to acquire the skills necessary to do more than just identify the problem. I'm grateful

that God gifts people with different skills and callings and for the men and women who served my son by putting their skills and training to work to repair his broken body.

4. **An appreciation for the body of Christ.** This is one time where I confess that social media may be a benefit to our society. Somewhere in the course of the events of the evening, I put out a simple post on my Facebook page explaining our situation and asking my friends who were the praying type to lift up Carter (and mom and dad too). I was overwhelmed with my brothers and sisters in Christ who began to comfort us and strengthen us with their prayers as well as their kind and compassionate words. I struggle to find the words to express the peace that we experienced knowing that so many brothers and sisters across the church were praying on our behalf. I was reminded of how beautiful the Bride of Christ can be and how fortunate I am to be a part of it.

I'm sure there will be other learnings and reflections over the weeks to come, but I wanted to share a little bit of what God was speaking into my spirit during the past week through the somewhat exciting times of the Finley family.

How has God revealed Himself or spoken into your life through times of trial or less-than-ideal circumstances? If you find yourself in one of those times right now, I'd encourage you to ask God to not just deliver you, but to teach you, to shape you, and to deepen your trust in Him. Don't miss out on one what God may want to reveal to you through an unforeseen trial.

Christ's Peace,

**Lance**