

Excerpt from Dalton Beck - Tulsa, OK



I first got the text message from Mike stating that Bill was in ER.

Immediately following that text I was on my way to St. John's thinking, "Anybody but Bill". When I got there Bill was lucid, struggling but we were able to carry on a conversation. He was aware of what was going on. I stayed with Bill until they transferred him to ICU. I followed the gurney up and then found a spot in the waiting area while they got him prepped. Joe along with a few others was there as well so I went home for the evening.

The next day was Sunday. My wife and I went over and discovered that Bill had taken a bad turn for the worse. He had been sitting up trying to eat and just crashed, hard. We were all very concerned. Bill was much worse and he was even more serious than any of us had imagined. The thought, "Anybody but Bill!" hit my mind. Bill is a rock. He is always there and someone I have been able to count on through the years. But this really put him down. They kept us out of his room that afternoon. It was around 9:00pm before Joe was able to see Bill and we got an update a short time later.

The following day Bill was changed to a larger room. We soon found out why. The big dialysis machine that does massive amounts at one time and even continuous treatment was hooked up. When I first saw Bill in his new larger room he was on a rotating bed that flexed allowing his lungs ability to function better. He had I.V.'s in every place you could stick, a breathing tube, and a respirator and with him being so swollen, it was scary. I mean it was scary. In fact, it was so bad that my wife Bobbie could not stay.



She would go to the hospital with me but could not stand to go into Bill's room. It was that scary. He looked like a man from Mars with all the tubes and stuff! With Joe's work schedule he and I alternated so that someone was with Bill as much as was possible. That was important to me.

There were times that I thought, "I don't know if he's gonna make it or not" but then I remembered that I was in a similar condition at one time in my life. God is the same! My doctor had told my wife that I would not live long. Well, that was 8 years ago...But God! He is faithful so I just kept holding on and believing that Bill would come out of it.

I would go each day and sit on the couch in Bill's room...praying, singing. It was hard to watch him suffer but I felt like it was something I needed to do. The singing was more for me than it was him. Different songs, various lines like, "His grace is sufficient for me"..."He's a Healer" would come to mind but still, it was hard. My own health prevented me from staying extended periods of time but I would stay as long

as I could. I did that consistently through the first 15 days in ICU. I knew Mike was coming back the next day and I told him over the phone, "You are gonna have to take over now buddy, I've had it".

There was one time in particular that I could not tell Mike what I wanted to say by text. Being more of an optimist than a pessimist it was hard but I needed to tell him that Bill was not good. He was really in bad shape. We went into the next 24 hours not knowing for sure if Bill would make it or not. We went from one 24 hour period to another of waiting for better news. We finally got some good news. The nurse said that he was "holding his own". That was more than we had before and that was really good news.

A funny thing: Once we knew that Bill was out of the woods and to the point of making progress, Joe told me that he'd never seen anyone so glad to be able to hold his own pee cup. I knew then that Bill was getting better.

I was glad when they moved him to a regular room. It was terrific! I sang "Happy Birthday" to him. Even though he still had the Trach, he was able to talk. It was good.

I had good physicians during my event over 8 years ago. Bill had good ones too but we both had The Pro! It's not often in this life that you can meet someone that you can really call "friend". Bill is one that you can have confidence in, who is honest and upright and a caring guy as you can find...and Bill's my friend.

Dalton Beck