



November 29, 2005

Dear Family & Friends,

I praise the Lord for each of you! Over these last two months, I have been greatly humbled and thrilled to see how the Lord has called people from all over the world – brothers and sisters in Christ – to pray (and encourage others to pray!), write heart-felt notes, send gifts/flowers, cook meals, give of themselves and help financially. The list goes on... I thank the Lord for your great love and encouragement for me and my family, especially during my recent illness.

I have been out of the hospital and recovering at Craig's parents' home here in St. Louis for over a month now. Even though I had excellent round-the-clock care in the hospital, nothing beats a real bed, home-cooked food and my family. ☺ It was sooo good to be able to see and hug Karis and Aimee! They have been troopers through all of this. The Lord has given them flexible spirits and 4 grandparents to love on!! ☺ On a funny note: after I got home, Karis (our 3 yr. old) went around telling people that she had muscles in her neck, a blood clot in her arm, and would not let anyone touch her arm except for her fingers. When asked the other day about her "blood clot", she said that she was all better. What a riot!

My recovery has been going great! First of all, Dr. Thompson (my doctor & surgeon) said that I am way ahead of a normal recovery schedule. Also, I have had no pain and have had to take very little pain medication – even while I was in the hospital! The doctors and nurses have been surprised, as this type of surgery is normally very painful. This is due to the Lord working through the power for prayer (thank you!) and for a body that normally heals quickly (I thank Him!).

Right now, physical therapy is twice a week along with doing daily exercises at home. Improvements in flexibility and strength can be seen everyday, which is encouraging. For example, last Thursday I was able to raise my right arm straight up over my head – hours earlier I was barely able to raise my arm level with my shoulder. Even before surgery, I've never been able to lift my right arm correctly straight above my head! Needless to say, my physical therapists, Dr. Thompson, Craig and I were VERY surprised and excited at this improvement! This is the type of healing I have had...it's a God thing! ☺ I got great news as well, I am now allowed to pick up and hold my chubby Aimee! I have greatly missed this aspect of mothering over the last 2 months. Its so wonderful to be able to play with my babies! Karis is thrilled to have Mommy back to normal... well, almost normal. ☺

The Lord also has provided a unique avenue of ministry for me. I was asked if I would speak to a gal who was having the same surgery. I agreed, and a week ago, J.G. called me. She had many questions about the surgery, recovery both in and out of the hospital, my feelings about it all, etc. We talked for over two hours! During the conversation, I found out that she is a Christian, so I asked if I could pray for her. After praying, she told me that the secretary had told her that I was a missionary, and asked me, "Stacy, what were some of the

lessons you have learned?" I told her that there were two major ones:

The first one was being humbled and thrilled at how the Lord calls people to pray for others. I have had people all over the world, who have never seen me or heard of me until now, pray for me, the doctors and my family. WOW- our God is amazing! Such amazing love! Our world may be small, but God's world is huge!

Secondly, our God is sovereign and in control of everything in our lives. I have known this since I was a little girl, but I have not had the peace that comes with truly knowing and believing it. My life, my sweet husband and our kids' lives are in His almighty, holy and loving hands- always have been (before time) and always will be. There is such rest in this! I have not asked the famed question when going through a hard time of "Why me, God?" The Lord has a perfect and good plan for my life and I can rest in that, even when it appears chaotic.

Even when it is fearful...I was able to share with J.G. how I was fearful of possibly dying (a fear she shared). No, I myself was not scared to die because I would be with Jesus- what glory that would be! I was fearful of leaving Craig and the girls here alone. What would happen to them?? I have always wondered but Craig and I had never talked about this...never had a reason until now. We cried tears of sadness and joy mixed together as we talked about the possibility of me (or him) dying. Wow, what a blessing to be able to have sweet communion with my husband! We grew even deeper in our love for one another.

From this point J.G. just cried and opened up to me and asked me more questions about faith and areas she was struggling with. I was able to minister to her through the Word. I believe we both hung up the phone encouraged by the Lord that night! Just yesterday, Craig and I were able to visit with her and her husband in the hospital. Her surgery went well and her recovery so far has gone well, too. Please be in prayer for JG as she recovers and that we might continue our new friendship.

The GREATEST news is that on December 5th we will be returning to Quito! Karis is "counting down" the days. ☺ In January, I will return to St. Louis (Jan. 5-13) alone to have a minor surgery (Jan.6th) on my right wrist to complete the entire surgery process. During this time, I will go off Coumadin (blood thinner) for good- Yippee! We are also thankful that after Christmas my parents will be visiting us in Quito along with their friends. It is a blessing that my mom will be able to extend her stay to help Craig with the girls the week I'm in St. Louis.

So much to be thankful for! Thank the Lord and thank you, my dear family and friends!! Yes, indeed this will be a memorable Thanksgiving!

Love,
Stacy



Karis and Aimee enjoy the fall leaves.

Craig and Stacy Pohl

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