



Today's update

Good Morning!

Earlier in the week we had a wonderful nurse ask us our story. So I recounted the miracle of B. B was a miracle from the beginning. Jake and I went through 2 years of infertility begging the Lord for a child. Our last treatment was a hail mary, nothing was held back. This was our last try with treatment before we were going to close this journey and seek the Lord for next chapter, our new course in life. After 24 negative pregnancy test and 6 failed treatments, we got our first positive pregnancy test last March. A complete and total blessing, we were brought to the very edge, to our limits until all we had was to simply just give the Lord everything and let go. And then we got B against all odds, the Lord heard our prayers and blessed us with our son.

Our journey start with complete trust and we find ourselves in the same place day by day in the NICU. Pushed to the very edge where there is no other option than to trust the Lord. An internal battle of giving up control, sometimes kicking and screaming, and to trust the Lord.

After telling our story the nurse happened to also be a believer and she simply said you guys are like Abraham and Isaac. Pushed to the very edge to determine if we are willing to give our son to the Lord and trust his plans. A story that at the surface does not make sense but as you read and seek the Lords heart you begin to see the goodness of the Lord. God is asking Abraham are you willing to trust me completely even to give up your most loved and prized possession, your son. Are you willing to trust my goodness even when I take you to the very edge of the unknown that does not appear good. Are you willing to give me everything and in return be filled with an unending amount of blessings that will last generation. Are you willing to love me more than your son and in return love your son in the outpouring of Gods love which is infinitely more deep wide and consuming. Jake and I have been asked this over and over again through the last three years and have come to the same conclusions- yes.

"But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and

took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called the name of that place, "The Lord will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.""

Genesis 22:11-14

And we find ourselves a in the same worship. The Lord is worthy of all our praise. The Lord is worthy of all our trust. The Lord is worthy of all our love.

B surgery was a miracle. When surgery was finished the surgeon came out and told us they completed all three parts. The hernia was closed, the stomach was wrapped, and the GTube was placed. The surgeon stated it was a very difficult procedure as B has a rather large liver from his CDH that was blocking the stomach. They tried every angle to operate but could not see an opening. The surgeon stated on his last try the received a blessing. A blessing- his exact words a blessing. The had just the right opening to complete the surgery. Just as they were about to call it and only complete the GTube, just as the surgery was pushed to the edge with no further options, the Lord provided. When the surgeon stated they received a blessing, I knew, the Lord heard our prayers, and He answered.

B was brought into recovery and against all odds was extubated, breathing in his own, and keeping his oxygen saturations well above 90% on room air. B continues to be a little miracle. B has been on room air through the night and breathing well. No discomfort or signs of distress. B does have some significant pain, but the team has kept his pain well under control. We restarted feeding B last night and he did well. Occupation Therapy decided to restart bottle feeding this morning in a small amount of mL. A 20mL bottle was prepped with thickener and fortifications, B drank the whole bottle with no crying of distress. The surgery worked, B is now comfortable with eating and enjoying! From here we increase mL day by day till he is taking everything by mouth. We will leave the GTube in as an anchor to keep the stomach below the diaphragm and assist with feedings in case B does get sick at anytime. What a relief! Feeding is a million times better. Thank you Jesus.

Last report. Yesterday was the first time we saw our son face without any tape or tubing. So so so many tears. B has the most beautiful blue eyes. His cheeks are so soft. He has Jake's nose and my lips. He is perfect in every way, I missed his face for so long and we finally got to see it for the first time in completion. What a gift, one that I will not forget. The kind of moment I will be thinking about when I'm aged and recounting the blessings of my life.

Thank you so much for all the prayers. For all the support. I can honestly say the Lord heard our shouts and He answered. Thank you for loving me and Jake so well. B is recovering so well because yall went to partition before the Lord and He heard his people. Thank you thank you.

Jake and Kenna McDowell