



Pastor Phillip and Laura Morgan

Lydia's Story

One cool morning on our usual ride to the babysitters, I casually commented on the thick blanket of fog covering the rolling fields, "Man its yucky out here today!" My three year old daughter corrected me from the backseat: "No Mommy -- isn't it beautiful? It looks just like this in Heaven -- even the grass is ALLLLL white!" Cold chills ran down my spine because I know that she really knows, after all -- she was there!

Saturday, July 21, 2007:

Pretty normal day. Saturday. Our family was doing what is typical I guess for a summer Saturday. We made a trip to Lowe's - bought some plants. We ate lunch at home and put the kids down for a nap. I have flashbacks frequently reliving the calmer parts of the day - I remember wishing later "If I could only rewind to that morning or to lunch or" After naps were over I brought the kids outside to play. Bucky, my husband, was running the weed-eater and I was sanding down an antique highchair for a surprise gift for my sister who was about seven months pregnant. Cyrus, our five year old son, and Lydia, our 18 month old daughter, were playing on our swing set. I was about 15 feet away working on the highchair. The kids had been given strict orders to play in the sandbox only -- and had been doing great. Man- when people say something happens "in the blink of an eye"- they are not kidding! Literally, in the blink of an eye, I heard a "THUG." Cyrus was now standing over his baby sister sprawled out on the ground and repeating "Liddy, are you ok??" Apparently, she had climbed up the ladder of the swing set to go down the slide and fell. We assume she hit the back of her head on the corner of the sandbox. I could not get there fast enough -- 15 feet felt like a mile. I knew the second I saw her that this was not a normal injury. She was awake but not moving and her eyes stared, fixed to the upper left. She was moaning a noise that will be in my head for the rest of my life. Immediately I grabbed her up and ran into the house. I can fix this I thought, every second praying "God, PLEASE HELP MY BABY!" I laid her up on the kitchen counter, put water on her face, she was repeatedly snapping in and out. One minute she would come to, scream, and flail her arms, then just as quickly, she was back out and moaning again. I screamed to Cy to run and get his Dad. I picked Liddy up and carried her back outside -- totally clueless as to what to do. I laid her on the driveway and dialed 911.

Randomly, the responding 911 Dispatcher was an old friend -- I was so upset I just remember blurting into the phone that "the baby was hurt ... she fell off the swing set ..." When Bucky came running up I handed him the phone because I just could not get a grip to even tell her I needed help. He spouted out all that he could see and immediately help was on the way. We carried her back inside again to wait. Still she was in and out of her surroundings. She would come to, throw up, and then go out again -- her eyes never leaving the stuck position to the upper left. Soon the rescue squad & firemen arrived. Our home was full, furniture being shoved about to create an instant workspace. We knew it was serious yet still hoping that they will say "Things are going to be fine, don't worry!" -- But instead they radioed for the medical rescue helicopter. As they prepared her for transport to a local church parking lot to meet the helicopter, neighbors came from out of nowhere to take Cy under their wing. The two mile ride in the ambulance was a daze of chaos. Once we arrived at the landing pad to await the helicopter, the rescue squad workers asked me to step out of the ambulance. They needed to do a procedure that I could not watch (drill a central line into Liddy's shin). I was left in the parking lot clinging to Bucky and Liddy's favorite pink blanket. Again, *coincidentally*, our close friends - Liddy's babysitter, just happened to be driving by the church, saw us, stopped, and cried with us. The rescue squad workers told us that there was not enough room on the helicopter for a parent to ride with her to UVA so we would have to drive! Can you believe that?? This is a child who has never left our sight much less FLY, HURT with total strangers!?! (We later were told they did not think she would survive the flight and didn't want to have to also deal with an overly distraught parent in the helicopter.) I know that Bucky drove 100 mph- no exaggeration- the entire way to Charlottesville. What would normally take 30 minutes to drive -- took us 15 minutes. Praying every second of the ride ... I remember trying to plea bargain with God, "PLEASE, I will do anything you want me to - just please don't take her away, she is just a baby!" We parked at the ER entrance and went on a search to find our baby. The entire first night is such a blur -- CT scans, X-Rays, blood work, checking-in, questioning-by-social-services-to-make-sure-we-don't-abuse-our-children kind of blur. The scans showed that she had a skull fracture at the base of her skull/neck and a bleed in her brain. They would watch her and hope that the swelling would go down on its own without surgery. "Subdural hematoma" would be forever in our vocabulary.

Day 2 -- Sunday, July 22, 2007:

Lots of visitors ... long morning of staring at Liddy in her crib and praying around the clock. As hard as the staff tried - we were NOT leaving her room -- and that is where we stayed for the whole time she was there. About 3 pm Bucky and I watched in shock as she suddenly turned gray and the machines monitoring her alarmed the horrible truth: she was coding. Staff ran from everywhere dragging out tools like drills and instruments. They grabbed us and made us get out. All we could do was hold one another and cry ... begging God for mercy. "This can't be happening! Not our baby girl! Please God! Don't take her!! We need her!" Every thought runs through your head ... "I can't go home without her ... What about Cy!?! Why is this happening to her? She is innocent! She hasn't even lived yet!" The doctors came out and said they "got her back" - they drilled a hole in her skull and put in a temporary shunt to relieve the pressure. They explained that they would watch her ... do CT scans every couple of hours. If the pressure and swelling did not go down they would have no other option but to do a major surgery of removing the sections of the back of her skull. They didn't offer much hope warning us that with a child her age the blood vessels are small and there is not a good chance of survival. Through the night and into the next day there was little change. We were exhausted, changing into clothes Mom would bring to the hospital, eating meals from the cafeteria or what our babysitter would bring. We perched at Liddy's crib and waited -- no change. She was on a ventilator. There was a technician who would hook her up to a mobile unit -- breathing her breaths with the hand pump while switching her -- so they could take her to the CT scans. It makes me sick to even recall some of the details -- in your mind forever but just pushed into a place you hate to go.

Every scan seemed a little worse than before. "Dear God- PLEASE help us!!" I have never been one very good at expressing my faith, sharing my love for God, or well, even praying comfortably without my mind wandering from thought to thought, but on this particular night in the dark corner of the pediatric ICU- I dropped to my knees and begged God for mercy on Liddy. I have not cried so much in my entire life as this time. I told God, I could FEEL his presence in the room with us -- and I now know what that feels like.... Amazing!

Day 3 – Monday, July 23, 2007:

Today is the day. If the scan this evening shows no improvement – it would be time to do the surgery. The medical staff told us they would take her down at 3 pm for the "tell all" scan -- but 3 pm came and went and no technicians came. Then they came in and said it would be 5pm. Again, 5 pm came and went and no technicians came. The ER was overflowing with people and we were pushed back until they could free up the CT scanner. About 7 pm, I was saying good-bye to family that was visiting and heard my sister calling out my name. She had just left a few minutes earlier, so it caught me off guard to hear her calling my name. She was escorting three men and explaining "these men want to pray for Liddy!" They were strangers to me, but I assumed they were friends of my sister – maybe from her church. The men started to explain ... "I know this is going to sound weird but God sent us to pray for your daughter..." Average looking, clean cut men - if it were a different situation I may have hesitated – but something about them just seemed "right." Hard to put words on a feeling like this one- but I just knew. I quickly led them thru the crowd - visiting hours were over and you are supposed to call ahead and ask permission, only two visitors at time allowed -- but we WERE going! When we got to Liddy's room, the technicians were taking down her crib rails. The nurse indicated that it was time and they were ready for her. "WAIT! Please, wait for just a minute -- let them pray for her, that is why they are here!" She agreed hastily and continued scurrying around the room preparing for the scan trip. The three men gathered around her crib and began to pray for Liddy. They anointed her with oil and asked God to raise her up "in Jesus' name." Liddy had barely moved in three days – but at that moment, she SHUTTERED. I saw it with my own eyes. She was without a doubt- touched by God! I instantly knew! He heard all of our cries! The men completed their appointed task and the medical staff took Liddy down for her scan. We walked the men out and as they were leaving one of them told me, "She is going to be just fine, God sent us here and I know." Just before getting on the elevator, one of the men – Tony, reached in his pocket to retrieve a small plastic red cross - across the arm of the cross it read simply FOR YOU. He explained that on Sunday (the day Liddy coded) at church he found this small red cross in a basket of give-a-ways. He picked it up not knowing why or who he got it for. He handed the small red cross to me, smiled and said, "I guess it was FOR YOU." I knew at that moment - I felt different. God just showed me that He heard our prayers. I felt as though I could breathe again. It seemed I had not taken a breath in days and now I felt strangely comforted. I am not saying that these men were angels from Heaven- they were angels from Earth. They live ordinary lives just like us. They obeyed God even though they didn't know us or what our reaction would be. I knew that was NOT just a random thing -- It was a GOD thing. We later learned that these three men were from different parts of the valley and they all had their own "trials of faith." They were sent by God to help us, but they testify that God used this as a lesson in their own lives.

Day 4 – Tuesday, July 24, 2007:

After thoroughly reviewing the scan, the doctor reported, "I can't explain what we see ... her scan is showing remarkable results of improvement!!" We studied the "before and after" scans on the screen: the swelling was going down, the pressures were getting closer to normal, and she's on the road to recovery. Praise the Lord! Our miracle!

Liddy had to re-learn everything, walking, and hand-eye coordination. She hated seeing the nurses and doctors come into the room because that meant they were going to mess with her. She had spunk – and attitude! Her love for cheese puffs returned immediately! ☺ Her eyes remained in a “fixed” position – now lower right - because of the pressures that had been on her optic nerve. (It took about a month for them to return to normal.) Ten days after Liddy’s accident, we were taking her home – we had been given a gift! We were so very thankful, but almost felt guilty leaving children that may never walk out. The ‘crew’ that had been taking care of Liddy had become like family to us. I have so much respect for what they do ... healing ...comforting – they were great!

Today Liddy is a happy, singing, dancing little spitfire! She can’t wait to start school next year. She occasionally asks, “Mommy, can you tell me about when I was a baby and died and Jesus gave me back to you?” Wow, an experience like that opens your eyes to so many things. I have no doubt that there is something special God wants Lydia Faith Cox to accomplish -- she has a calling on her life. I feel as though we witnessed a TRUE MIRACLE. Every time I look at her, listen to her laugh, or even say prayers with her at bedtime, I am reminded of how great of a God we have. There is a small, faded and tattered picture of Jesus and his lambs hung on Liddy’s bedroom wall. Taped to the corner of that old picture is a tiny red plastic cross that reads FOR YOU. When I see it I am reminded that when we are given a MIRACLE – it is not to be kept secret – rather it is to be passed on FOR YOU, and you, and you ... until the world knows what we have witnessed.