

Our wedding was a beautiful moment for us. In the prayer that our pastor prayed for us, among his requests was that God would bless the children Carey and I would have together. We headed into our honeymoon with typical newlywed excitement. Like many young couples, we hoped that a pregnancy would happen down the road, just not early in our marriage. Though we both loved children and wanted to raise a family together, we hoped that children wouldn't present themselves too soon. I mean, come on! We were both busy with work that had us traveling regularly, and we liked being able to travel whenever we wanted.

Gradually, when month after month passed without a pregnancy, we started to wonder if becoming parents would take longer than we expected. We bought books on fertility, listened to the advice of well-meaning friends (just stop thinking about getting pregnant, relax, take a vacation). When the months without a pregnancy became years, what had been an occasional concern became an obsession. It was as though a cloud hovered over us, blocking any optimism we might have had. We'd listen with mixed emotions as other couples would share their wonderful news that a baby was on the way. Some would chuckle and say they hadn't even been trying to get pregnant. Funny.

Carey would find reasons not to attend their baby showers. Too painful. We bought more books on fertility. Nothing. We consulted specialists and learned that our situation was what they called unexplained infertility. Doctors could give us no specific reason for our failure to get pregnant, so our agonizing wait continued. Finally we decided that it was time for medical intervention. We found an infertility specialist in Nashville whose rates of success were very impressive. Consultations with him followed, and soon Carey began her regimen of injections to prepare her body for in vitro fertilization.

We were apprehensive but very hopeful as we began the procedures. Everything looked promising through the various stages, and we were beyond ecstatic when, for the first time in her life, Carey's pregnancy test came back positive. Now it was time to wait for that first landmark, the sonogram where we'd be able to see our sweet baby's heartbeat.

As the session began, the technician was able to find the baby without difficulty. Perfectly formed, just the right size for this stage of development. She was unable to find the heartbeat but encouraged us that it was nothing to be concerned about and said we should repeat the sonogram in a week. Before we left, though, she made sure we had our little Polaroids of the baby. She even put text onto the photos that said, "Can't wait to meet you, Mom and Dad!" So exciting.

As we waited for the second sonogram appointment, I was leading worship in my home church and shared the news of our pregnancy with those gathered. "I'm going to be a Dad!" Their applause was genuine and intense.

Fast forward one week. We're in the sonogram room of Carey's OB, a doctor who'd walked our road of infertility with us and was rejoicing that we were finally pregnant. This time the technician again found the baby, but, rather quickly, said that she needed to get the doctor. He came in, explored a little and then said the last thing we expected to hear. "I'm so sorry, Carey, there's no heartbeat." I remember it like it was this morning. Carey let out a primal moan and began sobbing. I watched in disbelief.

A DNC was scheduled, and within two days Carey's womb was vacant again. So were our hearts. The pain we both felt was indescribable. Friends were supportive and consoled us as best they knew how, but the cloud of disappointment was thick.

In time, though, we found ourselves hopeful that in vitro still might be our answer. We did a follow up visit with our specialist and determined that we would try in vitro again. More injections for Carey, more anxious days hoping for success. With great delight, we learned that Carey had become pregnant again. The doctor wanted to keep an eye on some of her hormone levels, but that seemed insignificant to us. We did many blood tests over the next few weeks, and, while the levels seemed a bit low, they were increasing. Eventually, though, as we sat in a WalMart parking lot in East Texas, we got the phone call that we somehow knew would come. The numbers were falling. The baby had died.

There weren't clouds this time. This was a tsunami. The grief washed away everything in its path. Among the casualties was my confidence in the kindness of the God I sang about when leading worship and writing songs. Job's wife encouraged him to curse God and die. I never verbalized a curse to God but certainly adopted that attitude in my heart.

No surprise, then, that during this season I found myself unable to write songs about the goodness of God. Also no surprise I felt as though I was just a puppet leading worship, saying what should be said but not giving any voice to what my heart felt.

Time passed, and it felt as though my heart wasn't budging at all. I was frozen. Faith seemed irrational. Hope for the future was a joke. All was darkness. I hid it well, at least from some, but Carey knew. And God knew.

Then, something odd happened. Carey's Mom was visiting us in our new home in Nashville, and I returned from a meeting to find she and Carey sitting in our living room. They were laughing. Carey was holding a pregnancy test, and she said the words I never thought I'd hear after eight long years of infertility. "I'm pregnant! And I really believe it, because I've done three tests!!!"

What? How'd this happen? Well, I knew how it happened, and that was great, but I could not have been more shocked.

From that point through the rest of the pregnancy we were so careful. All the right foods. The right amount of exercise. Carey quit her job because we'd heard of risks to pregnancies in her line of work. Days passed. Blood tests came back with very good results for hormone levels. There was a heartbeat at that first sonogram. A few weeks later, there was more to see. We learned we were having a son.

God is so in the details. He turned our heartbreak into joy and orchestrated the timetable perfectly so that the baby was delivered on Valentine's Day. What an incredible experience it was as Cameron entered the world.

The list of good things God has brought to Carey and me will not stop growing. In His kindness He graced us with another pregnancy, this time with a girl. Natalie entered the world with our doctor having to caution Carey to stop laughing, because the baby was coming so fast! How beautiful. Where once I'd heard Carey groaning because a pregnancy was ending in death, our sweet daughter was welcomed into our arms by Carey's laughter.

I think I'm still limping a little, leading worship when sometimes a nagging voice says it's dangerous to trust God. But then I hold my Cameron, who's getting taller while I watch, and my sweet Natalie, who couldn't be more girly, and see my wife's beautiful smile and I move forward, willing to let God be God, willing to believe again.