

*Heart To Heart
Weathering the Storm
February, 2001*

Who can Bear the Storm?

- *Look around. We've all had our storms to endure. Each of you has your own story. And the joys and heartaches continue to unfold in this gift that God gave us when he breathed life into us.*
- *Who are these heroes? Those who trust in the Lord. You and me. We all are. We are all able because the Lord is able. You are all my heroes.*
- *Who has lost a child through miscarriage, stillbirth or taken later? Who has lost a parent? Who has endured a divorce? Who has found them in a situation in life you would have never dreamed? Everyone has their joys and their heartaches in this life.*

Our Storm

- *Tonight, I'll talk about my unique story and the storm that the Lord has brought us through.*
- *Sam's history.*
- *Today's discomfort for Sam: frequent aspiration (choking on saliva, nasal secretions) requires suctioning in nose and trach; muscle and joint aches due to muscle tone issues.*

Hitting Rock Bottom – How Much More, Lord?

- *Just when you start to get perspective and God's wisdom is given to you, **something changes** and more heart aches are presented to you.*
 - *Swallowing problems – being in tears when Sam couldn't eat easily.*
 - *Reflux – fear after each tube feeding that we'd be watching him struggle to not choke to death.*
 - *Trach – with great dread we approached it, with a month of constant instability, he recovered from it.*
 - *Back – big risks either way ... no easy answer.*
- *Each time Sam is in the hospital, I hate being home with his empty room. A note from when Sam was in the hospital with pneumonia in Nov of '99: "when I walk by Sam's room and it seems as though my life hasn't changed (because of the other kids) ... except it seems as though Sam is dead – life with out Sam. I am not prepared."*
- *Even when Sam is "healthy", we live with **daily fear** because of unpredictability of Sam's health.*
 - *every message I get while he's at school I am afraid that something's happened and he died.*
- *Really, every day, I'm afraid that today is the day of **Sam's death**.*
- *Separate the feeling of wanting it all to end and **NOT** wanting Sam gone – I just want him well.*
- *I miss more of him already as if he were gone because the more health problems that arise, the harder it is to get past all of that during the day to spend time with just Sam. Get the nurses out of the way, get the health issues out of the way and get to Sam.*
- *At every milestone in Sam's childhood, I mourn what he could have been doing or about. What would Sam and talk about in the car on the way to school? What on earth would we do with all the time?*

Someday Death

- No one ever wants to out-live their children.
- But someday, I think I will. I don't know what God has planned. I can't even imagine the pain of not smelling Sam's hair or kissing his big cheek.
- David's note from Nov '99: "Oh, God. How I long for the resurrection, the restoration of all things, the quickening of the dead. Son of Man, can these bones live? Prophecy to the breath... His ankles strong. His spine straight. His mouth and throat move and form words and chew and swallows the bread of life and the wine of release. This Red Sea is not so wide. Moses why are you standing there? Move!!"
- **Ecclesiastes 7:1,2** "... the day of death better than the day of birth. IT is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, for death is the destiny of every man; the living should take this to heart." **WHAT?** How can this be? How long awaited is the arrival of each child into the arms of his mother and father – how can the day of death be better than the day of birth? Because how long has the child waited to leap into his Heavenly Father's arms? We all desire to be with the Lord.
- **Eternity is like 365 days.** Life on earth is like 1 day. Our life here will be like a blink in time. Put the struggles in perspective and know that 364 days of complete joy await.
- **Eternity is NOW.** Transform the belief, "I am going to live forever" into "I am living forever". Eternity is not the future – with Christ, it is now. We are part of eternity. We do not end.
- **Romans 8: 19,20,21:** The creation waits in eager expectation ... in hope that the creation ... will be brought into the glorious freedom of God.

Emotional Roller Coaster

- Turn "Why me?" into "Where can I follow you, Lord?"
- This is not about me. It's not even about Sam. It is about our trust and faith and willingness to follow Him.
- I had to decide that I was willing to follow Him ... not in spite of Sam's health, but because **HE IS WORTHY.** It's really only that simple.
- **But why Sam?** He's so good and innocent through and through.
 - Realize that God loves Sam more than we do. The Lord is good.
 - Throw out anger – Satan's deception.
 - Peace in knowing that the battle will be worth the victory in the end.
 - **God will use Sam** for His kingdom. He already has – we've seen people pray for Sam who normally wouldn't have prayed at all.
 - **John 9 - Jesus heals a man born blind.** "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, 'but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life... While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' ... So, is it too bold to say, "this happened to Sam so that the work of God might be displayed in Sam's life?"
- Don't try to rationalize – the plan is far more wonderful than we could create.
 - **Ephesians 3:11** "He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end."
- Don't fight where God leads you. Accept both your life and your love of the Lord.
- You don't have to like it for your spirit to be calm.
- Struggles make us grown for the Lord. The hard stuff is so very painful because it makes it so apparent how much we yearn for God's presence. Realize your discontentment is your desire for Him and restoration for all.

Believe the Promise ... What About Today?

- **Sam's verse: Philippians 1:20** "I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death."
- **1 Cor 15 40-44:** "There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is on kind, and the splendor of earthly bodies is another. ... So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."
- **Who can do such things? Our God who is mighty!! Isaiah 6:** "The Lord is on His throne and the angels say Holy Holy Holy." They have seen him and that is all that they can say! Amen!
- I believe Sam will be healed, whether now on Earth or in Heaven. I believe God will restore him.
- Can I even imagine it? Sam ... playing soccer, science experiments in the kitchen sink, riding a scooter, teaching Tevah to read, teasing Jacob or picking up Simone to be my helper.
- We talk about Sam's healing as a fact to him and our other kids. We want them to know what is coming.
 - Tevah says, "Sam, when you're healed this, and when you're healed that..."
 - Jacob told me that Sam really likes bananas and that some day he wants to go bike riding with Sam.
 - It's important to talk to Sam about this so that he has that total confidence and peace about the day of healing coming ... either now or in heaven.
- **AM I NUTS?** You might say, "No one is healed in today's times like when Jesus and the Apostles lived!"
- **But the Lord COULD heal Sam now? Absolutely! Am I planning on it? No ... but if He did it, I wouldn't be surprised – just grateful.** Even though we don't see healings like 2000 years ago, I wouldn't be surprised at all because the Lord is able. Sometimes I think Sam will just walk into my room in the morning and say, "Mom, it's me. It's all over and a new day has begun." But, Sam would still die some day ... like we all will.
- **Sam's understanding – he lives within his boundaries with patience and grace. I believe the Lord has given him wisdom and understanding so that he still loves life. He always has the motivation to get through the hard stuff to get to the fun stuff.**

Seek to Survive

- **Seek Out Prayer:** Pray for the struggle. Pray for Sam and family. Pray as a group. Pray alone. **Statistic:** Only 1% of couples who pray together end the marriage in divorce – prayer brings us together.
- **Seek Out Wisdom:** Pray and read God's word – nothing complicated. Just pick up the bible and read. The Lord will open your eyes to new perspectives every day.
- **Seek Out Family Needs:** Write notes to spouse when you're too tired to talk about it or don't know where to begin. Allow differences in the way the Lord leads you each through it.
- **Seek Out an Army:** Recognize your limitations.
 - Delegate whatever you can in your life. Humble yourself to allow others to serve.
 - Prayer – when you are too weak to pray, others can "lift up your hands" in prayer and worship (**Exodus 17: 10-13:** "As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning (Fighting Amalekites), but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat

on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up – one on one side, one on the other – so that his hands remained steady till sunset.” Who will hold up your hands ‘till the battle is over?

- Tell others what’s going on – be honest.
- Release expectations – those people in your life that you expect would support you through a struggle may disappoint you.
- Support will come from unlikely places – God will raise up the rocks to care for His people.
- Encourage friendships for your husband with men that the Lord can use.
- Seek out mentors your entire life!! God will bring them to you. Recognize who they are – they will be called to you.

God’s Calling is Still the Same – Storm or No Storm

- I watched a family who discovered their little girl, Kendall, had a tumor. It had to be removed within a week of finding it. They didn’t know if it would be cancerous. They didn’t know the outcome. They put her in the Lord’s hands. And then, their calling remained the same. They ministered to many other families at the hospital while they were there. They saw other needs and felt other families pain. This was their new mission field.
- When Chad Cooper was battling cancer, I wanted to watch him and Heather and Dan. I think I wanted to see what a family in pain looked like. But I didn’t see that. I saw a little boy and his parents living their lives as full as possible in the boundaries they were given. That’s what we are all called to do.
- Our path is the same as it has always been. Our life is lead by God. Satan tries to distract, but our focus and our way of living remains the same ... a response to His Almighty’s Goodness.



- Don’t focus your life on Satan’s distractions. Your path remains the same. Your calling is to your Lord God.
- He blew the breath of life into each of us – choose to follow Him.
- This life will be over before we know it and these earthly bodies will be traded in for spiritual bodies.
- **Revelation 21 3,4:** The New Jerusalem – “God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”
- **Live with the hope that we will live in His Holy Presence and that these storms will pass away.**

Trust in Him. Give Him Sam fully. Love Sam daily.

In February 2001, Kelly Beller was asked by a local women’s group to give a talk to other parents of children with “special needs.” Kelly wrote the outline above as a guide for her talk.

For more information about Sam Beller and his family, visit www.sambeller.org