



John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Romans 5:8 "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Monday morning came and so very early they took Rod down to surgery. It was time. All the months, days and hours of waiting had finally come to an end. A liver had been found and it was time for his transplant. God had provided the liver rather than Susan being a living donor. We were reminded of Abraham. God asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son and Abraham obeyed. At the last perfectly timed minute, God provided a ram for the sacrifice. Obedient Abraham did not have to sacrifice his son. Susan was our Abraham. She was willing but God had another plan. God provided a substitute.

As they prepared Rod for surgery, Caitlin, our sister-in-love, Brenda, and our Pastor, Don Chasteen, were with Rod and me. We were excited yet nervous, but God gave us the peace only HE can give. A prayer was said and as they rolled Rod into the OR, he gave a thumbs up and said, "Let's play ball".

As thankful and excited as we were, there was also a solemnness to the moment. You see, Rod's new healthy liver had to come from someone. Someone had to die so Rod could live.

God had a plan and worked so intricately through those months to carry it out. His plan was fulfilled just as his plan for sinners was fulfilled through His only Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus substituted his righteousness for our sinfulness. Jesus had to die so we could live.

Did God cry when He gave His only Son to die on the cross? I don't know but I'm sure he felt the pain of every nail that was hammered into Jesus' hands and feet. I'm sure he felt the agony of loss. But God endured the loss to fulfill the plan that gives hope to sinners everywhere. Jesus died the death we deserve and by believing in Him, we have the certain hope of eternal life. God provided the substitute.

As we rejoiced over God's miracle and provision for Rod, another family was heartbroken over the death of someone they loved. But they were able to see through their sorrow and make the ultimate sacrifice of organ donation. Their tears of sadness mingled through our tears of joy. Their Good Friday became our Easter Sunday. A substitution was made.

Isaiah 53:4-6



***Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering,
yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.
But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities, the
punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.
We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the
Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.***

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