

## Wondering Why

“Why does Noah have so many problems and I don’t have any?” asked my oldest son, after his younger brother, Noah, was diagnosed with Crohn’s disease.

I then began to reflect over the past fifteen years. Noah was born with allergic colitis, requiring him to drink a special formula that we had express shipped to our house by the case. One container cost \$30 and lasted only one and a half days!

At ten months, Noah began experiencing a series of ear infections which caused his ear drums to rupture three times. At age three, he had a suspicious melanoma removed from his scalp. He was so sad to have one of his “angel kisses”, as we referred to them, removed. At the end of kindergarten, Noah developed a limp. He had just learned how to ride his bike, so I thought perhaps he fractured his leg from one of his many falls. After visiting an orthopedic specialist, Noah was diagnosed with Legg Calve Perthes disease. Major hip surgery was required followed by six weeks of being in a body brace. Months of therapy and another hip surgery came the following year.

Then, at age eleven, Noah began having stomach pains after eating. He spent much of his day in the bathroom. I recall setting up a TV tray next to him in the bathroom so he could complete his homework. He lost weight and began having blood in his stool. After an endoscopy and colonoscopy, he was diagnosed with Crohn’s disease.

I remember feeling so overwhelmed and saddened that my son was so sick. You’d think that by now with all we had been through, I’d be so strong, knowing that God would once again help guide me in helping his child. ‘What would you have me learn, dear Lord?’ I prayed for wisdom and that God would put people in my path to help Noah.

I recall a huge weight being lifted one afternoon during prayer, when I was reminded that Noah is God’s child and I’m just his caretaker on earth. As his dear Father, of course God wants his child to feel better, and he would lead me. God hears my cries and the Holy Spirit intercedes for me even when I can’t organize my thoughts. **Romans 8:26-27** explains, **“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We don’t know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.”**

God has a plan and I needed to trust and find comfort that he loves my child even more than I do. He has given me this child and he will help me care for him. I, being a mom, am frequently reminding Noah to watch his diet and when I get anxious about him, he reminds me, “God has healed me. Believe it, Mom!”

Currently Noah is symptom free. If you were to meet Noah, now fifteen years old, you wouldn’t guess he has had so many illnesses. He is a positive, active boy with a great spirit and love for his Savior.

There are times that my mind wanders thinking about Noah's future health and potential problems. But then I find comfort in God's Word and remember to be thankful for today. In **Matthew 6:34** we are reminded, **"Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."**

"Why does Noah have so many problems and I don't have any?" my oldest son asked. I can't answer why Noah was presented with these challenges, but through them I am reminded of God's Word in **Romans 5:3-5: "We also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us."**

I now see how these challenges have helped me grow in my faith and have allowed me the opportunity to offer words of encouragement to others with sickness. We are God's witnesses, sharing what we believe by how we react to tragedies and illness. Let us fill our hearts, not with sorrow and worry, but rather with thankfulness and praise to our Heavenly Father!

**Prayer:** You, God, are a mighty healer and an ever-present help in trouble. Help me to come to you with a trusting heart. Please fill me with your peace. May I find my hope and joy in you. Amen.

Written by Dawn Nichols

Reviewed by Professor-emeritus Joel Gerlach