



I found myself sitting here this past week. The waiting room. The very word wait makes me cringe. I don't like it. The sitting. The unknown. The fear of what's going to be said once the doctor walks in. It's a double edge sword because as much as you want the doctor to tell you what's going on the news either brings relief or pain. I have experienced the news both ways. I grew up with a mom who frequently battled cancer. I think that is where my hate for the waiting room begin. In her situation every time the doctor walked in, he/she brought bad news.

I found myself this week at 3:30 am sitting in this waiting room. It was me and a large carafe of coffee that beckoned me to drink it. The stillness of the place or the hour did not escape me. Stephen had an esophageal blockage that had to be removed. As he handed me his watch and ring and left for the operating room, it hit me. The unknown is scary. What if he doesn't come back? I stared at the wedding ring he's worn for 19 years... well not that ring because he's lost it a few times. 😊 However, the symbol is the same. The last thing I heard him say to the doctor was, "Am I going to be okay to preach on Sunday?" He asked him if he had a good sermon to preach. Stephen proceeded to give him the outline. I just shook my head as I gathered his things and headed for the waiting room.

As I sat there waiting to hear how Stephen was doing, the Lord reminded me of a few things:

- In Christ, we are never alone. He walks & in my case sits beside us no matter the hour or location. His love for us His real & sufficient.
- Community is important. I received so many texts and calls from people who I don't even know how they knew what was happening. My 2am friends - who apparently don't need sleep as much as me.
- We are blessed to live in such a caring and compassionate medical community. A team of 7 people left their houses at 2:30 am for a man they had never met. For a man I got engaged to, on that very day, 20 years ago. A man who a lot of people, including me, depend on. They never complained. They only encouraged. As I continued to thank them and apologize to them for having to get up in the middle

of the night, they only ever said "this is what we do Mrs. Cannon-we didn't mind coming in." Spartanburg Regional's Village at Pelham, I am forever a fan, although I hope I don't have to see you often. 😊

I am sharing this in the hopes it may help you as you sit and wait one day. God can meet you where you are. Even in the middle of a completely empty waiting room on Valentine's Day, His love is sufficient. Even if the news had been different, He would still have been a sovereign God. Blackaby says in "Experiencing God" that we are to view our circumstances through the backdrop of the cross. The cross settled His unfathomable love for us.

I am thankful today that Stephen is okay and thankful for a loving God who knows & understands our pain. Thankful for The One who never leaves us no matter the location or time of day...even in a hospital waiting room at 3:00 am in the morning.

*Isaiah 41:10, "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."*