

“Dark night of the soul”

Miriam & I rejoiced greatly on July 25, 1969 when our second daughter Carla Kaye was born. On September 10, 2007 Carla, only 38 years old suffered a heart attack that resulted in a balloon procedure and the insertion of three stents. She is recovering well and went home from the hospital on Thursday September 13. We Praise the Lord for medical science and are grateful that a 911 call was acted on quickly and her life was spared.

The rare condition is genetic. Our oldest daughter Kimberly will have a check-up, as well as Kevin and Carla's three children (before age 20). The cardiologist explained the rare condition as a 'restricting' of the artery. Over time it gets smaller and collapses. The 99 percent blockage of the artery was not related to cholesterol or HBP (Carla's BP was 117/63).

I was unaware of any problem with the heart while growing up. It was not until 1988 when I experienced the aneurysm (no blockage at that time) and 1999 when I had the three bypasses.

Hearing that Carla's situation was genetic concerned me greatly. I couldn't help but think about what parents transmit to their children. It broadened my perspective while at the same time occupied my thought life – my prayer life.

Reflection on “genetic” could have been my “dark night of the soul.” Annie Dillard has written, “You don't have to sit outside in the dark. If, however, you want to look at the stars, you will find that darkness is required. The stars neither require it or demand it.” Darkness is a part of human experience. But stars are little comfort when you are

surrounded by the darkness.

Life has been so good to me. I am blessed: Miriam, Kimberly and Carla and their spouses and children fill my days with abundant joy. The Washington Pacific District Family has loved us and supported for 22 years. Along the journey there have been a few problems to make and keep us humble.

The conclusion I reached after reflection and prayer:

“I will give thanks to the Lord, call upon His name.

And make known to others what he has done.

I will sing to Him, sing praises to Him,

And tell of His wonderful acts.” (I Chronicles 16:8-9).

Until next time,

Straight ahead for Jesus!

Hugh L. Smith