

GRACE EXPECTATIONS: What's God been up to lately?

By Kathy Quinley

The end of July brought sadness to our family, but also healing, forgiveness, new beginnings and joy!

As my oldest brother, David, passed on July 25th, we were tearful and sad. It is difficult to say goodbye. David's healing came when he joined Jesus.

There are seven of us, and no extended family members except our children and grandchildren. I am the oldest, David was next, and we are a close-knit family. We get together twice each year and have such fun. The day David died was to be our summer reunion day.

When our nephew Kevin told us the doctor said to call the family, no one was really surprised; Dave has been very ill for several years. Four of us dropped everything and went to David's bedside, another brother followed shortly. Our last brother was unable to come as his wife was just out of heart surgery, but he was on the phone as we conferred with the Doctor and Kevin, David's only child. There was nothing to be done for David. Kevin was the one who had to make the decision if Dave was to be removed from life support. Kevin was not ready – so it was decided to wait 72 hours – and see if there were any changes. As we waited, we cried and laughed and enjoyed being together. We visited David and supported Kevin. God was in this.

Previously one of my brothers had little good to say about David, and just shut him out. Yet here he was praying with us at David's bedside! Several of our brothers did not feel a closeness with Dave, but all came together to be there for him, Kevin and each other. Forgiveness and healing.

We talked to Dave, we sang songs in his room, we prayed and we loved on him. We had a chance to say goodbye. Blessings for us all.

After 72 hours there was no change and Kevin took his Dad off life support. Pain with love attached.

Dave lasted about 15 hours and when Kevin called me in the wee hours that he got the call that his Dad had passed, he asked if we were still coming to get him so he could join us for reunion! This took me aback – that perhaps Kevin thought without his Dad we would “drop” him! Shock and compassion.

Kevin is a mentally handicapped individual and somewhat stand-offish with his rambunctious family. In the past, Kevin has been unwilling to pray or have his Dad see a pastor. But as we gathered at the hospital and around David, Kevin seemed alright with us praying and he was part of it! There is still so much unknown for Kevin, but he knows he is not alone, his family is here for him, and we keep telling him God is with him.

The day David died he and our Lord gave us the gift of being together, of having Kevin with us, of Father Charlie calling and praying with us and Kevin, of crying and laughing and enjoying our time together. This is God and His loving kindness at His best!

God bless you all,
Love Kathy