

The Divine Hand of God

I'll never forget how excited and nervous I was when the doctor told me I was expecting a child. It was a dream come true.

My mother carried all six of her children without any difficulty, so I just expected I would do the same.

In my first month I began cramping and spotting. The doctor said my body was trying to reject the fetus. I was put on several days of bed rest. After that, I seemed to be fine and went back to work.

But the next month, the same thing happened. Again the doctor sent me to bed for several days. He was growing more concerned about the possibility of a miscarriage. But after a few days I seemed to be ok.

As I was approaching the end of my first trimester, I began bleeding quite heavily and the doctor said I would probably lose the baby. I was ordered to bed for 2 weeks, only allowed up to use the restroom.

I began to seriously seek the Lord about my unborn child and felt that the enemy was trying to steal my promise. I urgently cried out to the Lord to touch my pre-

cious baby and let it live. God was so gracious to me and heard my prayers. After the 2 weeks of bed rest I went back to my normal routine without incident.

On September 19, 1971 my beautiful son, Mark Edward, was born. One week to the day he was dedicated and given back to the Lord.

Mark seemed extremely fussy and was very colicky. I just couldn't seem to find a formula which suited him. He cried constantly and when he was 2 months old began vomiting profusely every time he was fed. I took him to see the pediatrician and Mark was diagnosed with pyloric stenosis. The doctor explained that this was an obstruction between the stomach and the intestine. In other words, my son was slowly starving to death! The doctor wanted him immediately admitted into the hospital and put on iv's. Mark was very dehydrated and needed this surgery asap.

Again, I was brought to my knees and cried out to the Lord to spare my baby. This was a delicate operation. The muscle to be cut was the breadth of a hair. The surgeon was a born again Christian and prayed with me before the operation. He prayed for God to give me peace and for the Lord to guide his hand. That brought such comfort to my heart, knowing my precious baby was in the hands of

such a wonderful Christian physician.

Mark could not have anything to eat for 3 days after surgery to allow the incision to heal. The doctor and his staff were all in Mark's room when it was finally time for him to have his first bottle. If Mark was able to burp, we would know that the operation was successful. (Prior to surgery, Mark could not burp and this was the cause of his discomfort.)

He exhaled the bottle of water and no sooner did I sit him up then he belched so loud, you could hear it echo throughout the room. A great cheer went up in that hospital room and a prayer of thanksgiving went up in my heart! I never in my life thought a baby's burp could sound so sweet.

Mark recovered from this traumatic experience seemingly without incident and I thought to myself maybe this little guy will finally have a peaceful life. From conception till now it seemed like the enemy was doing his best to destroy him!

When Mark was four years old we moved to Florida to pastor a church. We had only been there 3 weeks and were still unpacking boxes. It was a Sunday afternoon and Mark and his little friend, Kevin, a sweet 5 year old boy were playing out front with a little fishing pole. It had rained prior to this, so Mark's father

told him not to get himself wet. They were fishing in a small puddle.

I would check periodically out the window on the boys. To my dismay, both boys were missing and I had no idea where they might have gone.

I went to Kevin's home and alerted his parents that the boys were missing. Kevin's dad was a Miami Dade police officer.

