

Title: "Healing for Loss of a Child"

July 17, 2023

Greetings all,

I just wrote out another true story for a project I'm working on and I thought the rest of you would enjoy it.

Blessings,

Dr. Lehman/Karl

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Supernatural intervention for loss of a child: Most people agree that the death of a child is one of the worst traumas a person can experience, and many believe that this trauma can never be fully resolved. This was certainly my friend Kent's experience.

Until a dramatic Immanuel Approach encounter.

On July 11th, 2000, Kent's eldest son, Peter, died at age 18 after three years of grueling battle with Leukemia. The night of his death, Kent's wife discovered that Peter had stopped breathing and he was rushed to the emergency room. Kent, his wife, and some close friends stood together in the waiting room while the doctors tried to resuscitate Peter. Then they were led into the treatment room to see his lifeless body lying on a metal table. Kent and his church community believe in miraculous healing, even for someone the doctors have just declared dead, so they prayed earnestly for Peter's return. Kent even told the Lord that he would not stop praying until Peter revived or the Lord made it abundantly clear that he was supposed to stop. And then a few minutes later, Kent had a very clear vision of his son in heaven: "I saw him, kind of looking out of these clouds, from heaven – there was lots of light around him, and he had a big grin on his face. He was just full of joy, and he said, 'Dad, I don't want to come back.'"

At that point Kent knew that the Lord wanted him to let Peter go, and even that *Peter* wanted him to let him go. So Kent stopped praying for Peter's return, only to be left with the worst memory of his life – looking down at his son's lifeless body on a metal table in a hospital treatment room. In addition to the grief – the huge, excruciating pain of losing a child -- Kent was especially haunted by the image of Peter's lifeless body, so ravaged and broken by the leukemia and three years of treatment, as well as the final attempts to resuscitate him.

Over the next twelve years Kent worked hard to resolve the grief and pain around his son's death. He received healing prayer for the grief, and for the traumatic memory at the hospital,

which was helpful. He did emotional healing work with a number of different ministries, which was helpful. He did EMDR work for the grief, and for the traumatic memory at the hospital, which was helpful. He participated in support groups that included others who had lost loved ones, which was helpful. And the glimpse of Peter's smiling, joyful face, and the assurance that he was in heaven, also helped. But even after twelve years, and all of the healing and processing that Kent had diligently pursued, whenever he thought about losing Peter the scene of Peter's broken, lifeless body on the table in the hospital treatment room would rise up in his mind and heart, and it still felt intensely painful and toxic – the memory was still filled with the intense pain of losing Peter, and the image of Peter's body on the steel table was still especially toxic.

And then in 2013 Kent had an extraordinary Immanuel encounter.

Kent was going through the Immanuel Approach process as part of a group training exercise he was leading at his church, when the Lord brought up the memory of the night Peter died. Except that this time, when Kent remembered seeing the vision of Peter in heaven the memory came alive, and the vision kept playing past the point where Peter had smiled at him and told him that he didn't want to come back. After Peter had finished saying that he didn't want to come back, he turned away from Kent, so that Kent could just see the side of his face, and Kent could see that he had refocused his attention on something to his left. Peter's face was suddenly bathed in blazing, brilliant light, Kent could *feel* his son's whole being exploding with joy, and he immediately knew that his son was standing in the presence of Jesus. Peter was gazing into the face of Jesus, who was barely three feet away, immediately off-screen from Kent's perspective.

As Kent watched this scene, he suddenly had the profound, deep, intense, *experiential* realization that **this** is the center and ultimate goal of our existence – to be in the presence of the Lord and to behold His face, just as Peter was doing. Kent suddenly became profoundly, deeply, intensely, experientially aware that **this** is the end of the story, not Peter's ravaged, lifeless body lying on a metal table at the hospital -- the end of the story is Peter in heaven, three feet from Jesus, with the light of Jesus' glory blazing on his face and joy exploding in his heart. Furthermore, this experience ignited an intense longing and expectation to be face to face with Jesus in Kent's own heart.¹

Now, whenever Kent thinks about Peter's death, instead of seeing his lifeless body lying on that metal table at the hospital Kent sees Peter looking into Jesus' face, with the light of Jesus' glory blazing on his countenance and joy exploding in his heart. And he feels his own longing to be in the presence of Jesus, looking in His face. In Kent's own words:

"From that point on, the pain has been sucked out of the memory, and the focus has totally changed– every time I have remembered it from that point on, it has been all about the joy

¹ When we were discussing these events to clarify the details for writing this book, Kent emphasized to me that part of why this moment was *so* transformational and healing for him was this intense flame of longing and expectation to be face to face with Jesus that got ignited in his own heart.

of being face to face with Jesus, and the delight that my son got to be there – ***gets to be there***. And so it was the ultimate grief healing, I would say, for my heart – the ultimate healing for the pain of losing him, and for the pain of seeing his lifeless body, so broken and ravaged from the leukemia....This experience changed my heart and mind so much that I feel free of the pain and grief related to this memory at the deepest level of my being.”