

****9/17 update on Christian****

Thank you to everyone who has prayed for our son Christian. We are deeply grateful for all of you.

If I was writing this update just a few days ago, I would have said that Christian is stable and making incremental progress. He had a number of good days the past few weeks. There was even some discussion that he might be going home - or to a rehab facility for strengthening - as early as today. Unfortunately this past weekend things took a turn for the worse. Early this morning I received a text from my wife saying that Christian's BP had dropped and they were worried he may be Septic. When I saw the text I immediately rushed to the hospital. By the time I reached the hospital they had stabilized his BP, but I could tell he was not doing well. His heart rate was elevated, his fever was very high (106 at one point) and he was not nearly as responsive as he was in previous weeks. He spent most of the day today in this state (not overly responsive).

They believe Christian has an infection – and they are speculating that the source of the infection may be from his brain (one of the Docs suggested it might be Meningitis although that has not been confirmed). They were originally going to do a Lumbar Puncture to confirm this suspicion, but ultimately decided not to do so due to his unstable condition (plus they are already covering with broad-spectrum antibiotics).

Earlier this afternoon Christian's Oncology team came by his room to discuss his most recent MRI results. Unfortunately the news they shared was not what we wanted to hear. They informed us that his most recent MRI shows some indications of tumor growth. Not a huge growth, but still a growth nonetheless. The original plan was to start oral chemo (Mek Inhibitors) today – but that is on-hold until this infection is addressed and Christian is more stable.

The Oncology team also indicated that Christian's brainstem tumor is a High Grade Glioma (HGAP). While they don't know for sure, they are speculating that his other tumors (two others on his brain and one on his spinal cord) may also be High Grade Gliomas. They indicated that we should prepare ourselves for the possibility that this treatment may ultimately just slow the spread of the cancer. They obviously don't know for sure – and they acknowledged as much – but they were preparing us for what may be the worse case scenario.

I really don't have words to describe how we're feeling right now. Any words I come up with won't come close to describing the pain, frustration, helplessness, and utter gut wrenching heartache we are experiencing. Despite these emotions, we are continuing to pray and trust that the Lord has a plan for Christian. I don't know what that plan is, but I trust that the Lord is holding Christian tightly right now.

I also want to take a second to highlight how strong my wife Karen has been during this difficult time. Karen has spent the past thirty-eight (38) consecutive days and nights at the hospital with Christian. She's only left a handful of times for a few hours each time. She is so much stronger than I am. I have a hard time staying in the hospital room for more than a few minutes before I need to go walk the halls or head outside to pray. Meanwhile Karen is there day after day, night after night. One of the Doctors approached her a couple of weeks ago and encouraged her to go home for a night to get some rest. Before Karen could answer I knew she would say no. She will never leave Christian's side. She is incredibly strong and Christian is lucky to have her as his mother.

As far as the days ahead are concerned – we just continue to ask you to keep Christian and our family in your prayers. I know lots of you are praying for us and we have been strengthened by those prayers. We've had some very difficult moments – especially during the past week – but the power of your prayers and our faith has kept us going. We will continue to keep putting one foot in front of the other and we will keep showing up each and every day for Christian. He would absolutely do the same for us. I have zero doubt about that.

Thank you to all of you. We are very grateful.

Chris Spicer