

## Cherie's Miracle

1. I watched Cherie's eyes flutter into unconsciousness.
2. I called 911.
3. 911: "Is she breathing?" Me: No. (A few seconds pass). Yes (Cherie took a big breath), and maybe one or two more.
4. 911: "Get her down on the floor." Me: Ok, going to be hard.
5. 911: "Position her head right...." (My mind thought he was talking about her head so that I can give breaths)
6. Me: (I literally forgot how to take a pulse. I'm apparently in shock!) Do I need to give compressions? (Silence) I ask a second time. Do I need to give compressions (Silence)
7. I see the ambulance lights. I tell 911.
8. 911: "Go open the door and turn on the porch lights."
9. I hang up on the call to 911.
10. The officer asks me to put up the dogs.
11. I do quickly and let the officer in. He stands at attention observing and I think asks where she is.
12. I see the ambulance and guide the EMT up the stairs.
13. EMT: (Sees Cherie, and is alarmed). Has anyone given compressions?"
14. Me: No
15. I think he starts immediately giving compressions as I'm made to go down stairs.
16. I hear multiple shocks from the defibrillator.
17. Another EMT: "Is that your boy upstairs?" Me: Yes. EMT: "Do you want us to bring him downstairs?" Me: Yes.
18. I start to frantically search for my billfold and keys. My billfold isn't inside the house. I get Cherie's purse and remove her license and insurance card. I search my glove compartment in my car and find billfold.
19. They finally bring Cherie down in a stretcher. They tell me we are taking her to St. John's the one near downtown. I ask if there is room to ride two in the ambulance. There isn't. Everyone exits. I let dogs out of computer room. Tristan and I leave together in our car, and I take Cherie's purse.
20. The situation is grim when I arrive to emergency. I finally check in, and they have me wait. I'm taken eventually to another family waiting room behind check in.
21. I call Cherie's parents to update them.
22. A blonde emergency Doctor tries to get details of when and what happened. The big key is I didn't give compressions. They communicate concern about not getting oxygen to the brain.
23. I call Jim and give initial facts to him. I call and text Dana.
24. I follow up, call Cherie's parents again, and tell them they should probably be here.
25. Tristan and I just hold each other. I try to communicate concern and comfort to him, and we pray.

26. Doctor comes back after a time and gets permission to do CPR again if she codes again. I tell her yes. She tells me they are going to do a CAT scan.
27. Cherie's parents arrive after a while. I have no concept of time since the event. I call and text Jim again.
28. We wait and eventually we are shown Cherie's emergency room. We all go inside. Tubes and more tubes everywhere... I talk to her as she is lying there unconscious. I cry quietly and kiss her head.
29. Doctor says the CAT scan shows no bleeding, one good sign. But this can't show detail of the brain. It did show some aspiration in the lungs. Later she would have to go on antibiotics for a minor case of pneumonia.
30. They wheel her to Heart Cath. They come for us and show us to the Heart Cath waiting.
31. I have no concept of time, but Tristan is getting hungry. I eventually check in with the administrator in the waiting area. I give her Cherie's license and insurance for the first time since the event. She makes copies.
32. Two elder women were seated next to us. I didn't really think much about them except to notice them sitting and talking together. I just assumed they were there for another patient. They eventually make it over to where Tristan and I are seated. They briefly asked us about our situation. Then they prayed a strong prayer for healing for Cherie. Tears came to my eyes, as they prayed. They left with compassion and concern for us. (Later, Cherie's mom Jeanette would point out to people the women's prayer for us was very touching and significant. I would later call them the elder angels.
33. The administrator tells me to call Heart Cath doc. He eventually answers. Doctor: "Her heart has no blockages; essentially healthy heart except it is like a weak pump." Me: What about the lack of oxygen to brain? Dr. "Was it 5 minutes?" Me: Yes. (That was the first time 5 minutes stood out to me as the length of time without oxygen. I had thought more like 3 minutes as the EMT was quick to arrive). "Given her age and relative health I would say she should be ok." (That was the last time we ever received positive news concerning the lack of oxygen. EVERYONE else on the hospital staff were quite grim about it from that point forward).
34. After Heart Cath we were given over to the CICU staff. There would be many hours of darkness and sorrow ahead, punctuated by moments of Light when the Lord comforted me from His Word.
35. The main nurse practitioner and point man for Silver team said early on, Cherie definitely has some brain damage. He was emphatic! I asked him, based on what? He said mainly the posturing she was displaying. These are unconscious movements she had of bending/straightening her leg. He also said there was nothing they could do to control the posturing.
36. CICU began the hyperthermic procedure of lowering Cherie's blood temperature to 91F, and leaving it there for 24-hour period. Then gradually bringing the temperature up again. This procedure I was told was for preventing further damage to the brain, but

couldn't heal any brain damage that had already occurred. In everyone's opinion, she definitely would have some brain damage.

37. Now it was a waiting game. I hesitate to call it a game, as this was the most intense ordeal I have ever went through in all my life. However, this is just an expression. It would be 2 days before we would know anything in a medical sense.
38. Soon after the nurse practitioner gave the dismal picture of Cherie, however, she began to exhibit no more posturing. I stayed by her bedside much of the time, and watched this improvement. I asked the RN in charge of Cherie, that I thought nurse practitioner said there was nothing to be done about this. She said there were some things you could do with certain IV fluids that could improve this. I took this as the first good sign that Cherie would eventually recover.
39. I cannot put adequately into words the deep dark despair I was experiencing in these hours of Cherie's unconsciousness. Literally, the halls of the hospital at night are like walking through the valley of the shadow of death. She had not woken since her eyes fluttered, and she died in my arms. Now they were medicating her to keep her asleep during the hyperthermic therapy, which they began on the morning of Friday September 8 and continued until her eyes opened on Sunday the 10th @ 9:49 AM.
40. Before this momentous occasion of opening her eyes, however, it was grueling and beyond difficult in every way. I, too, was experiencing Cherie's ordeal. She was experiencing it physically; I was experiencing it emotionally and spiritually. I was fighting spiritual warfare at its worst. The weeks prior to this event had been very trying, like a dark cloud hanging over Cherie's head. She had experienced a very bad and painful fall on concrete on both elbows, one of which we assumed was broken. Tulsa Bone and Joint had x-rayed and found it probably wasn't broken. Then she began battling a tick infection with antibiotics, we later learned was the cause of the irritation of Cherie's heart that caused her to have a cardiac arrest. The hospitalist later put a name to the tick disease. It is called ehrlichia. Cherie found recently that 50 something percent of people with this disease have to be hospitalized, and 1% die mostly elderly and children. She was neither, but was part of the 1% nonetheless.
41. The nurse practitioner had early on ordered an EEG, and the results weren't good. The gram had shown a slow brain. To the staff this had probably only confirmed there prognosis, but to me they said it is possible that her brain was still in shock from the trauma, and that they would look at performing another one later.
42. You can imagine the possible scenarios that went through my mind during these long hours of waiting. Will she open her eyes and wake up? If she doesn't wake, will I have to make the decision to turn off the ventilator? If she does wake, will her brain work? Will she be mentally impaired? If she's not mentally impaired will she walk, talk or ever play her flute again? These thoughts would jolt me like being struck by lightning. I had to work through these dark questions by going constantly to God's Word. I began reading the Psalms beginning with Psalm 1, and continued reading each one. Certain verses would highlight in my mind, and I simply gave them back to God. These are your words

Lord, not mine. They are on you Lord, and I believe You are completely able to apply them in our lives right now. An example highlighted verse is Ps. 66:12 – “We went through fire and through water: but you broughtest us out into a wealthy place.” Every time I seemed to be at the brink of despair, and I didn’t think the valley could get any darker, the Lord would lift me up. In these moments, I heard Him often say to me in my mind, “Trust me. See what I will do.”

43. The process went like this. I slept every night in the waiting room. Later I would notice it was really the family conference room where doctors met to speak to families. They let me sleep in there despite this fact for the entire time we were in CICU. I would, however, only get an hour or so of sleep at a time when I would wake up like being struck by lightning with some devastating thought. With these black thoughts, I would go and sit with Cherie in her room, and read the Psalms out loud to her and pray out loud until I would finally look at her and see some improvement like no posturing, or the nurse would say something like her pupils are responding. Through it all, I would hold onto a verse or verses in the Psalms, give them back to the Lord, and true peace would flood over me. This was no psychological trick my mind was using to comfort me to prevent me from going out of my mind or something like that. I would, however, have to wait until the end to prove it to myself and anyone else who has a skeptical mind about such things. Then I would again go and sleep a little while until the entire process started over again. This was the warfare I found myself in over and over again. It proved to be a definite spiritual battle with the literal enemy. He would use things like guilt from me not giving compressions, or dark thoughts the likes of which I already mentioned earlier to weaken me until literally all I had left to do was fall into the loving arms of the loving Christ.
44. “Trust me. See what I will do.” Was this God’s voice or my own voice trying to keep me from losing sanity? The Lord did not give me a specific promise that Cherie was definitely going to be healed. At the same time I did not believe the doctor’s word was final. She had not even been taken off the anesthesia yet. They had merely given the medical report from their experience from a finite perspective. I had to wait in faith upon the Lord, and see the end result that would be many long hours away. I believed through it all whole-heartedly that the Lord’s Word is real, and that His power is infinite. I believed too, that the Lord’s short and repeated word in my head was real. “Trust me. See what I will do.” But I would have to wait for circumstances to prove these words to be true. The Lord had not abandoned me. He was comforting us through the fire and water, and we were going to be brought into a wealthy place of wholeness once again.
45. One person that stayed by Cherie’s side and mine constantly during this CICU episode was our friend Shannon Rook. She would appear in the early morning hours, and often stay to late evening. She was there when I wasn’t, and even when I was there. I would say to her, you don’t have to stay. Shannon’s response was that Cherie is my best friend and I want to be with her. I was so glad she was with us. When it seemed I was all alone in those early days, Shannon was by my side hearing the doctor’s prognosis with me,

asking questions that I hadn't thought of, and reminding me to not dwell on the dark possibilities of what could be. She nicknamed the nurse practitioner "Doctor Death" because of his harsh reality pill he was feeding me concerning the probable outcome of Cherie's dilemma. Those were indeed dark days, but Shannon's faithful friendship helped me in many ways.

46. Another person who served as point man for prayer and communication to the church was Chris Whybrew. He faithfully helped to coordinate our specific prayer needs and physical needs such as food for me, Tristan, and Cherie's parents. He even brought a couple of meals himself, and visited with me briefly in the dark night hours when I needed someone to talk to and I was lonely and scared.
47. I began to prepare for the possibility that Cherie might need help getting back to her former musical professional status. I contacted her music friends early on, and got them involved in Cherie's predicament. Ingrid served as point person with the music world, as she coordinated sack lunches and dinners with Chris Whybrew. I would update Ingrid and she would communicate the news of Cherie to the Tulsa music community. Ingrid and Chris were both a great help to us in so many ways. I began asking Ingrid and another good music friend Janeen (who had sat with Cherie for a few hours) to begin thinking of ways to help Cherie if she needed help getting back on her musical feet so to speak. Dana was there too with her medical and music expertise. They were all so great and willing to help Cherie in whatever needs she had.
48. There were so many people praying for Cherie, literally hundreds of people around the globe from Bulgaria to Nicaragua to Idaho to Texas and many places in between. I am convinced that the faithful prayers of the saints turned the Lord's heart toward Cherie to give her a great miracle. Concerning the miracle of Cherie, I believe her miracle was only one-step removed from the miracle of Lazarus. Whereas Lazarus rose bodily with one word spoken by Jesus, Cherie rose in stages: first the removal of the body posturing; the eyes opening; the following of the commands of the doctors; the neurological show of purposefulness as she tried to pull the ventilator out of her mouth; getting up in the chair, jumping up in her bed like a gymnast; the return of short term memory (she never seemed to have any long term memory loss); the lack of need for any neurological, physical or speech therapy; and then going home. The completion of the miracle will occur when Cherie returns to the stage playing her flute in a couple of weeks like the professional she has always been.
49. Cherie's parents Charlie and Jeanette were wonderful to take care of Tristan during the hospital days, and help with his homeschool. Tristan was a trooper, and told me, "Dad, mom is going to return from the hospital just like she was before she was sick." Such is the faith of a child. He was a real comfort to me the first morning this occurred. We hugged, held hands and prayed together. He wrote a verse for his mom he wanted to text to her when she woke up: "For the Lord has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, love and sound mind." Very appropriate verse given the neurological concerns about Cherie.

50. Mom, Jim, and Nancy drove back with Dennis from Idaho to be with me. They made it on Monday evening, and were there for us through Friday. It was a comfort to have them there for prayer, advice and concern for us. Jim voiced his utter amazement throughout the process as Cherie made miraculous progress by stages. Laira being in the medical field gave good advice, and was totally amazed by the outcome. I should reiterate that for the possible exception of the doctor who performed the heart cath in the beginning, no medical staff gave us much hope that Cherie would survive or if she did, wake up without brain damage. This was due to the fact that (A.) I didn't give compressions before the ambulance arrived between 3-5 minutes; and (B.) the length of time (about 10 minutes) to get Cherie's heart back in rhythm. Cherie had a cardiac arrest, coded in my arms and died. That is how the nurse practitioner eventually greeted Cherie when she was coming off anesthesia. Jokingly he asked her, "How do you feel after dying?"
51. Later after Cherie was awake in CICU and talking, the original emergency doctor saw me, and told me. "Your wife is extremely lucky to have survived." I told her, it was a miracle. She agreed and said, "Yes it was."
52. I heard second hand from Susie, an adult student of Cherie's who had to visit a doctor at St. John's for her own medical need at the time of Cherie's illness, that the doctor said to her all the St. John doctors thought Cherie WOULDN'T wake up. Another testimony to the fact that Cherie's waking up and complete healing was a miracle.
53. As Cherie completely woke up in CICU, (they had originally took her off the sleeping IV, but then put her on another one Fentanyl because of the discomfort of the ventilator), I had felt like before we left the hospital one of the doctors would acknowledge that Cherie's case was a miracle. I asked the CICU doctor in charge what do you think of Cherie's miracle. He simply stated, "We witness our share of miracles." The nurse practitioner was beaming from the moment they had to put mittens on Cherie because of her trying to rip out her vent. He had originally set this up as a big test saying I would really like to see purposefulness by Cherie trying to rip out her vent. Well, she continually tried to do this, so they put mittens on her, which looked like boxer's gloves representing symbolically to me Cherie's fighter spirit.
54. Still these admissions by the hospital staff didn't seem to quite reach the threshold of admitting a literal miracle of the Lord – until we were discharged from CICU and handed over to the hospitalist doctor. She was different all together in the fact that from the moment she read Cherie's notes, and observed for herself her miracle, she exclaimed her joy and amazement for Cherie. She even wrote in her notes that Cherie had a "miraculous recovery." I asked the doctor about that and she said I just want to give credit to whom credit is due. At that precise moment I experience a feeling of utter triumph, joy and thanksgiving to the Lord. Jesus Christ had performed a great and mighty miracle almost on par with the resurrection of Lazarus. I wonder if it hadn't taken Cherie a few days of coming off the anesthesia medication, who knows perhaps

Cherie would have walked off the emergency table wrapped in her bed clothes just like Lazarus.

55. Cherie's ordeal was a miracle of phases. I wondered if there were any examples of this in the New Testament. I thought of the blind man whom Jesus spit on his eyes. When he opened his eyes, and the man said he saw men that looked like trees. Then Jesus touched his eyes with his hands and the blind man saw perfectly after that. This was actually a miracle of phases wasn't it? Cherie experienced several phases to her miracle, but the fact that she was dead, and is now alive is a matter of scientific fact. One can look at her miracle and say, well she is among the 10% that was just lucky. But that is not how Cherie's miracle unfolded before my eyes and those that were watching her case closely. Believers from many places of the world agreed together and prayed for Cherie's complete healing. Even two elder angels unawares prayed for her a great miracle. We know Jesus is capable of doing powerful deeds for He Himself fashioned the universe. He, however, doesn't always answer our prayers in that way. In Cherie's case, against all odds and against all medical knowledge, she is alive and healing well awaiting the final phase to the miracle when she is on stage and playing her flute like a pro once again.