

## Story of Faith: Adriane Ivey

I remember all of the most poignant moments of Sophia's life: the joyous, the anxious, and the ones tinged with pain. I remember finding out that Brad and I were both carriers for the Cystic Fibrosis mutation. I recall with perfect clarity getting the call that my unborn baby boy had beat the 1 in 4 odds and did not have CF. I can still feel the anxiety of strolling the halls of Egleston with 4 year old Sophia dancing at the end of my arm, her hand swinging mine, waiting for test results. The spectre of her disease looms in the background of life, sometimes small and almost forgotten and sometimes, like on CF Center days or when she coughs for too many days in a row, huge and menacing.

Two years ago, in January, Sophia had to spend 10 days in the hospital taking IV antibiotics. I was in the middle of round two of Chemo for breast cancer and had just shaved my head. Laying on the little sofa in her room, watching Sophia in her hospital bed, hooked up to the IV, learning song after song on her ukulele, I had a lot of thoughts about faith, about the meaning of life, and about suffering.

I was suffering. Not terribly, but still. Chemotherapy is no picnic. Nor is the recovery from a bilateral mastectomy. But what I thought in that moment, listening to her sing, was that I'd do all of it 150 times if it meant Sophia didn't have to suffer. If she could live life without the treatments she has to do everyday, or the medications that make her feel both better and worse, or the knowledge that CF gets worse with age, not better.

I do not have the kind of faith that believes that suffering is part of God's plan. I don't think God, or anyone else, could offer an acceptable reason for the suffering of a child, my child. I've thought, in those moments of anxiety and fear for her, of Sarah and of Mary. Would Sarah have accepted Abraham's explanation if the ram had not appeared in the thicket? If he'd actually had to go through with the sacrifice of his beloved boy? Did she know what he was up to when they left that day? And did Mary know all along that her child was marked for sacrifice? Did she watch him play and know he would have to suffer? If so, these women were stronger than I'll ever be.

No, my faith is based on the love and strength of God's people. The beauty of our church family, who brought us meals and contributed to GoFundMe. The love of Dan Walden, who brought Sophia the one treasured gift she didn't even know she needed but that brought the most pleasure to her hospital stay. And the power and strength of Sophia herself, who faces her disease and her life with joy and grace. She struggles, but she also shines. I thank God for that every day.