

## CALLING AMERICAN BAPTIST MEN TO PRAYER!

Pastor Bob Coats received an email from one of our dear friends of American Baptist men, Steve Etner, out in South Bend, Indiana, and about the journey he and his family are going through. He would appreciate our prayers. Here is his description:

"On Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup> I underwent open-heart-surgery at the Cleveland Clinic. Though somewhat anticipated it was still unexpected regarding the timing. There are so many ways we can see God's hand moving to make this happen. As a result of my heart catheterization on 6/13, our expectation was to have a consultation with a cardiovascular surgeon "sometime soon" to see if surgery was even an option. On Tuesday evening (6/18) around 7:30 pm I received a personal phone call from the surgeon stating that he felt surgery was necessary and that he had an opening on Friday. We later found out from his nurse that he "never" calls a patient.

Thursday morning, we made the trip to Cleveland where I underwent a series of pre-surgical tests and procedures. Thursday evening, we met with the surgeon, anesthesiologist, and nurse to discuss the procedure – only to discover that due to a previous diagnosis last year regarding a throat condition I have, surgery may not be possible the next day as I also needed to have a Thoracic Surgeon on hand during the surgery, and one was not available. As the nurse scrambled to see what she could do, Heather, our daughter Elisabeth, and I circled up in the surgeon's office and prayed – committing this once again into God's will. A few moments later, the nurse came back to inform us surgery was on for the next morning at 5 a.m.!

While waiting for me to be called back for surgery, we learned that there is typically a significant waiting list for heart surgery (some patients there waiting months). So, once again we saw God at work putting me to the top of the list! My particular surgery is called a "Myocardial Bridge Unroofing" – which is different from a bypass. Apparently, it's a rarer procedure and isn't often done. After the procedure, the surgeon told Heather that the "bridge" he removed was quite sizeable – and we should notice a significant difference in my quality of life. Again, another proof of God's hand at work.

As of this letter I am 18 days post-surgery. Healing is slow but progressing. Today is my first day back in the office – but only for a couple of hours as I get weak and exhausted quickly. My biggest frustration right now (besides dealing with the pain of having my chest "cracked open", lungs deflated and moved around, and heart operated on) is that I so desperately want to get back to meeting with my mentees. I hate not being able to continue mentoring, even though I know God is wanting me to take this time to heal properly.

So please pray for me to be patient as I am going through this recovery time and pray for the 11 men I am currently mentoring, as well as the hundreds of men who have gone through our program over the last 12 years. Pray that they not only discover the pure joy of a growing, vibrant relationship with God, but that they "maintain discretion" and "keep to a path far from [sexual sin, not going] near the door of her house" (Proverbs 5:2, 8)

Pray that God blesses and continues to grow this ministry however He sees fit. Pray for Heather and I to maintain our own marriage, our personal (and marital) walk with God, and for wisdom as we counsel couples through the damage and devastation often brought about by sexual sin."

Because of Christ,  
Steve Etner