

Identity and Security

I had an operation last week to have my gall bladder removed by keyhole surgery following five months of being unwell and struggling with constant pain and discomfort. Merle asked me to write a testimony to God's goodness and share what I've learnt during that time and I thought that would be really easy because I have been so very aware of God's goodness and leading even though it has been difficult at times. Yet it's really hard to know what to write about! – Should I write that I've learnt that God's timing really is perfect after months of getting frustrated and having had the operation cancelled once, that his timing was perfect because by last week I was well and strong enough to withstand the operation and make a good recovery which I hadn't been previously? Or should I write about that peace of God which passes understanding that I experienced throughout my hospital stay and especially in the difficult hours of recovery following the operation when I knew that I was safe with the Lord despite how my body reacted?

As I've thought about this and reflected back over the past few months I know that what I have learnt and experienced of the Lord goes much deeper than that but is really hard to put into words. What I have experienced is a depth of security that comes from knowing God's love for me and the practical love of his people towards me. In November I attended the 'Understanding Yourself – Step 3' weekend at this church and one of the things we thought about was how our identity was formed in our childhood and how security, self-worth and significance are built into our lives in our early years. We thought about these 3 stages of development as rooms we pass through and learnt that, if those rooms were quite empty in our childhood and we have struggled with facets of our identity, the Lord will take us on a journey later in life and fully establish our identity and our security in him. The Lord has used this experience of illness to establish my security in him. I have also experienced the security of belonging to a group of his people who truly love and care for me and have my best interests at heart. Even though I do not belong to this church geographically I have experienced a depth of love and support here which I have not previously experienced and which has enabled me to grasp just how deep and secure the Lord's love for me is.

I am now looking forward to the coming year, to a period of recovery – and the welcome hibernation given the current weather! - and to what the Lord has in store for me this year with an increased confidence that, whatever the year ahead brings, I will be OK because the Lord will be with me in it and I will be safe.

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For more information on the 'Understanding Yourself' courses, click [here](#)