

Martyn: When a policeman knocks on your door at 10.30 at night you think the worst. For me it was not quite the worst, but almost. 'I'm afraid your wife has been in an accident. You need to get to the hospital as soon as possible'.

When I arrived one of the surgeons came out from the theatre to brief me. As she described the list of damage I began to realise this was serious. 'Kidney, gall bladder removed ... three quarters of the liver removed ... collapsed lung ... broken ribs ... severe internal bleeding. We will be operating for a long time yet. I suggest you go home and we will call you'.

'Are you saying I should prepare for the worst?' I asked.

'Well I have never known anyone injured this severely who has survived', was the reply.

Sue and I had been happily married for over seven years. We had two delightful children. Life together was good. We also shared a common faith in Jesus. He was a living reality in our lives. But my faith had never been challenged like this night.

Friends came round, listened to the news and prayed with me. As they prayed, the uncontrollable trembling from the shock began to diminish. In spite of the dire prognosis, one of them ventured: 'I believe God is saying "She will live"'. Looking back, I can see this was either a very foolish thing to say or very brave! I did not dare hope. 'Even if she did live, what would be the quality of life?' I thought to myself. They went home and I went to bed.

Lying awake, I was gripped by an overwhelming conviction: 'Whatever the outcome of this night, in six months time I will be praising God'. A tremendous sense of peace flooded in and I dropped into a deep sleep. No phone call came and when I phoned they said Sue was now in intensive care. I made arrangements for the children and got there as

soon as possible. 26 pints of blood were used, she was still unconscious, but she was alive. A friend had arrived before me. The nurse had noticed Sue's blood pressure was dropping and went off to find a doctor. Meanwhile he prayed. When she returned the pressure was back to normal.

From then on she did not look back. Conscious and pain free in four days, a week later she was onto a normal ward and was home within a month. We later learned that the car behind at the accident was full of off duty medics! The main surgeon, who was also a Christian like us, had strong conviction while operating that he should do something he would never normally do in such severe cases. Having completely sewn her up and with blood pressure still dropping, he opened her up again, secured another leaking blood vessel and sewed her up again. God clearly had a purpose for her to live!

Sometimes people ask me: 'So why do you think God saved your wife, when others die?' A dear friend who was the driver was killed. I find that very difficult to answer. People all over the country were praying, but sometimes God still takes people. All I can say is this: 'I came to know that night, without a doubt, that whatever God allowed was ultimately for good.' If Sue had died, she would now be in a far better place. For myself, God would have given me the strength to continue to trust and praise Him. We are both profoundly grateful that thirty years later we can still trust and praise him together.