

## **A Father's Lament** – by *Jonathan Romaine*

I first want to thank all of our family who have come from out of town to come grieve the death of our son Ian with us today. During these last 10 months we were able to leave the hospital and travel to you in many states across the country making precious memories for our entire family. Not a single day traveled ever felt like a vacation to Hannah and I. Even as the days grew closer to death the physical burdens on us grew and demanded our all. Thank you for loving, encouraging and praying for us along the way.

I want to thank our friends in the US as well as in Spain. Your love and support spoke volumes to us and we want to testify of the goodness of God amidst the time of crisis. You will hear the gospel today which Ian and we have believed and we plead with you right now to hear God calling you into an abundant life in Him through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I want to thank my God for His church which He designed for this present time and age. Salem Baptist Church, our local church to whom we are accountable. You undergirded us with prayer and met our needs. To the Oaks Church, you surrounded us with love and prayer while seeking radiation treatment and advisement while Ian was receiving treatment at Cincinnati Children's Hospital in Ohio. To the many other churches that support us in accomplishing the Great Commission in Spain who came along side us and encouraged us every step of the way.

Ian said Jesus was his hero, and when he walked through the valley of the shadow of death, his eyes were on His hero. Ian constantly reminded me in whom his faith rested, and he challenged me that even when the situation seems impossible, I must diligently seek the face of God, saturate my mind with His Word and yield my will to the Lord even in times that I don't understand.

We are gathered here together to worship the Lord as we celebrate the life and faith our precious son Ian. Most people associate worship with music, songs, rejoicing, and praising God. The first time we find worship mentioned in scripture is in Genesis 22 when God told Abraham to sacrifice his only son Isaac on the altar. All Abraham knew was that (a) God planned the future around Isaac, and (b) God wanted him to sacrifice Isaac. He could not reconcile the two, but he would obey anyway. That is faith. In response to Isaac's question Where is the lamb? Abraham again revealed his faith: God Himself will provide.

Killing Isaac would remove any possibility for the promise of a redeemer to come through Abraham's seed. Abraham didn't question God, but by faith he obeyed. By faith, Abraham pointed to his son, told him to take up the wood for the altar and said, let us go worship the Lord. In that moment both Abraham and Isaac displayed their faith in God through their willful act of obedience. When our children, including Ian, were born we received them as a gift from God and it has been our desire to daily lay them at the feet of Jesus. In Ian's cancer journey I wished to walk with Ian the road that God would bring him through. Ian displayed his faith and trust in Jesus and he willfully obeyed the Lord until his last breath on earth.

In the first month after Ian's diagnosis, he struggled with discouragement. He was unable to do the things he used to all of his life. So, we looked at our son and said, come let us worship the Lord and pour out our prayers of pain at the feet of our Savior and trust that the Lord will keep His promises. Ian's life and testimony through his cancer journey taught me how to trust in God even when I didn't understand. God is always good, he is always working and He is worthy of worship even in times of suffering, pain and loss.

It has been a week since Ian left his earthly body. I miss playing soccer with Ian and teaching him about God and His Word. I miss seeing him give away things that he enjoyed so others could receive and be blessed, he was so generous. I miss his tender heart and hearing his burden for his lost friends to know Jesus. My only son is gone from this earth, But I choose to trust in God with the blessed hope and promise that we will be together again and spend eternity with Jesus, our Hero. May the life of Ian challenge us to have the same faith in his God and trust him even in times that we don't understand.

Job 1:21 - "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised"