

A Mentor Writes...

I met Carolyn years ago when she was just in elementary school and the absolute delight of her family. She always seemed so young and carefree. One of the last times I talked with her a few years ago revealed that her biggest worries were middle school cheerleader tryouts and an outbreak of acne.

During those early days Carolyn seemed scatter-brained and light hearted...just your typical kid who loved movies, sleep-overs, and chocolate. Today, I watched a nearly 17 year old Carolyn deliver her first born baby. Like most first time mothers, she was worried about how to handle labor and its accompanying contractions, I.V.s, shots, and high drama.

My mind recognized that Carolyn was too young for this journey. She was too immature to parent a child. What in the world would she do with this new responsibility? My heart felt regret for her lost youth...her prom dress replaced with baby quilts, bibs, and diapers, her carefree childhood traded for long nights of walking the floor and worrying about colic and teething.

In spite of all those thoughts, while I watched Carolyn work through the stages of labor, I saw a girl pass through the rites of womanhood. Yes, she is young and afraid, but I watched a bravery born of necessity take hold in her young heart. She faced every labor pain with a determined grimace and only asked questions about the safety and health of her baby.

This young person showed the poise and composure of a person decades older. When the birthing process was completed, Carolyn held a baby who was close in age to her younger brother. She held the baby tightly, kissed his forehead, and excitedly said, "Look at my baby. He is the most perfect gift from God. How lucky I am!"

The timing of this episode in this young person's life is poignantly wrong; but who of us would say that God doesn't have a purpose for this precious new life? Carolyn is like so many others...a young person learning to be an adult before her time. What I learned from watching Carolyn give birth was that the worst of times for someone could also become a study in God's grace..."For He works all things for the good of them that love the Lord." Romans 8: 28.

My wish for Carolyn? A ONE BY ONE MENTOR!