

# 6 STRONG

DEUTERONOMY 31:6

## Stories of Strength

October 2016

# DORIAN MILLER-PFEFFERLE

I think my story began years before I realized God was setting HIS plan in motion. When I was in high school, my mom asked me where I was going to go to college. I questioned her, and she told me I needed to go because my husband might leave me some day, and I would have to take care of my family. I laughed. I told her that once I got married, my husband would never leave me. She then asked, "What if he dies?" I graduated from Purdue in 1993 with a degree in elementary education.

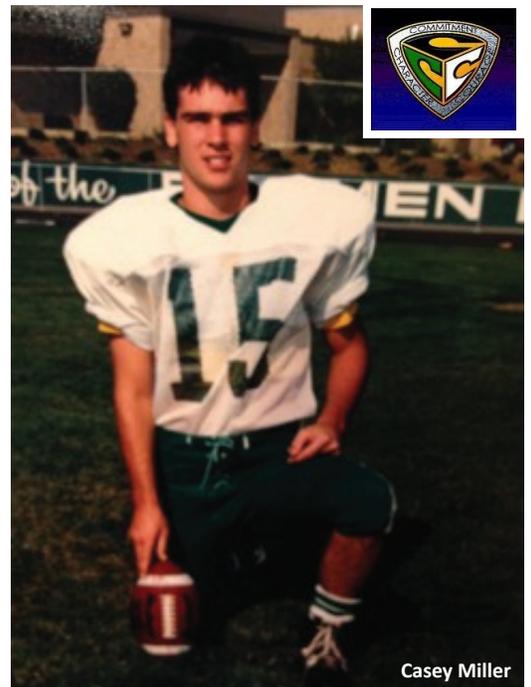
I married Casey Miller on June 17th, 1995. We had our first daughter, Lindsay, in 1997, our second daughter, Lexi, in 2000, and our third daughter, Lauren, in 2003. We attended church regularly, and the children participated in Sunday school. I felt as though we were your everyday young family, going to ball games, working, playing in the yard, until October 24th, 2003.

Casey volunteered keeping stats for the Bremen High School football team. He loved helping the team in this way. He had been a part of the Long Green Line for many years starting back in middle school, wearing number 15 in high school, and setting a record for the most punts in a football game during his senior year at the State Championship game in Indianapolis. He loved Bremen football.

I remember the night of October 24th well. I decided to stay home with the girls while Casey drove to the first game of sectionals at Eastside (in Butler, Indiana) with four other men who also volunteered. I remember telling him good luck and I'll see you when you get home. I remember looking at the clock, saying my prayers, and going to sleep. At 10:30 p.m., the phone woke me. There had been an accident involving Casey's truck. Eight people were caught up in the accident, and six of them had died. I remember immediately praying the Lord's Prayer and praying Casey was not one of the six.

I had so many thoughts and feelings. I kept thinking how was I going to do this? How was I going to go on? How was I going to raise three small girls by myself? The girls and I continued to attend church regularly, but I felt so far away from God. I turned my back on God. I missed Casey, I missed our life, and I missed our family. I felt alone. A piece of me died that day with Casey. I questioned God and His plan. When I look back and remember Proverbs 3:5, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart; and lean not unto your own understanding." I realize it is not for me to understand even though I wanted to desperately.

There were, and are, so many blessings in my life that encouraged strength. God knew what I would need and continue to need. He never turned His back on me. There were so many times I wanted to shut the blinds and block out the world. The holidays were extremely hard. Even though I was invited to family parties, I didn't want to be there without Casey. Easter Eve was when I decided I was done going to holidays. We were going to spend Easter by ourselves. We were going to spend the day alone. On that day, the girls and I went to church. Then, we came home, pulled into the garage, and closed the door. I had prepared a meal and had colored Easter eggs. I thought I could do this on my own. I was wrong. I started to cry. (Tears are prayers too. They travel to God when we can't speak, Psalm 56:8 reminds us.) What was I doing? Why was I blocking out the world? A voice in my head was questioning me. Slowly, I began to feel as though God were talking to me. He was telling me to go on, live and take care of these children. He told me to stop pushing Him away.



Casey Miller



Dorian and Steve Pfefferle with their family  
Sam, Lindsay, Lauren, and Lexi.

So I called some friends and asked if it was too late for us to join them. They were just getting ready for the Easter egg hunt and they said they would wait. After that day, I realized I had no choice. I had to do this for my girls and for me. I felt my strength was provided through the gifts God gave Casey and me—Lindsay, Lexi, and Lauren. When I looked at them, I knew I had to make their lives as normal as possible. When I looked at them, I saw Casey—Lindsay’s dark hair, Lexi’s eyes, and Lauren’s smile.

The help and support I received from people was overwhelming. It made me feel strong; I wasn’t alone. The people around me were part of God’s plan. He knew I needed them. Immediately after the accident, my mom moved in with me for a few weeks until I finally said I needed to live on my own. My brother and sister-in-law came on the weekends to help. My dad was always there to help with the girls. Many people and many friends were there for me. I was surprised later to hear of ways people supported me that I never realized. One example may seem small but was huge to me, when there was a raffle for a 3C’s needlepoint. People would buy tickets and put my name on them so I could win. Kind words and prayers were being spoken on my behalf all the time. God worked through almost everyone around me.

I hold on to the Bible verse John 11:25, “Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:” I know Casey loved God; I know he believed and he tried to live the way God wanted. I do believe I will see him again someday. I believe my girls will meet their father again.

I feel God did not want me to be alone. I did not want to be alone. I was young, and the girls were young. I started dating Steve and we married. Together we have a son, Sam. God continued to provide exactly what I needed through the love of the people around me. I am forever grateful to all of the people who have loved and supported us and continue to lift us in prayer. They help me see God’s plan in motion.

“Grief never ends...But it changes. It’s a passage, not a place to stay. Grief is not a sign of weakness, nor a lack of faith...It is the price of love,” Author Unknown.



Lindsay, Lauren, and Lexi Miller in 2003.



Laura & Landon Bates and Lacey Bennitt, with Dorian and Lexi at the 2015 b STRONG event.

# GOD MADE A WAY FOR GOOD NEWS!

## John Chapter 1: The Word Became Flesh

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, “This is the one I spoke about when I said, ‘He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’”) Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but the One and Only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, He has made him known.



**BLACK** stands for the **SIN** that separates us from God. (Romans 3:23)



**RED** is for the **BLOOD** that Jesus shed on the cross for us that cleanses us from all sin. (Romans 6:23; John 3:16)



**WHITE** stands for **FREEDOM**. When we accept Jesus our sins are forgiven and we are made white as snow. (Isaiah 1:18)



**YELLOW OR GOLD** We will someday walk the streets of gold in **HEAVEN**. (Revelation 21:21)



**GREEN** represents our need to **GROW** in the **LORD** day by day. (2 Peter 3:18; Isaiah 40:31)

### A SIMPLE PRAYER

Here is a prayer you can use to receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. It is a suggested prayer. The exact wording doesn’t matter, what counts is the attitude of your heart: **“Lord Jesus, thank you for showing me how much I need You. Thank you for dying on the cross for me. Please forgive all my failures and the sins of my past. Make me clean and help me to start fresh every day in a close relationship with You. I now receive You into my life as my Lord and Savior. Help me to love and serve You with all of my Heart. Amen.”**

Jesus said: “Whoever comes to me I will never drive away.” John 6:37

**\*If you prayed this prayer for the first time, please tell someone you love so they can celebrate your eternal life in Heaven with you.**