

Our Dearest Stephen,

In the spring of 1986 we prayed for a "happy, healthy baby with a heart for God." He answered our prayers and has exceeded our every dream. You are and have been one of our greatest gifts and joys. Our greatest hope for you was to acknowledge Christ as your personal savior, which you did at an early age. God has given you a strong, healthy body. You have learned what it means to serve God and others. You have become a good friend, a delightful companion, and a helper whenever needed. You have developed a love for reading and good study habits. You have an understanding and appreciation for what is good, right, and holy. You have developed a keen sense of humor with a love for laughter. In short, you have become a wonderful young man. It is a privilege to be your parent.

Along the way, we have laughed, cried, worked and played together. We have experienced new places and new adventures, all making happy memories as a family. We have shared thousands of movies together. We have cooked, camped, skied, hiked, climbed, kayaked, rafted, swum, snowmobiled, gardened, practiced martial arts, and just shot the breeze.

As parents, we hope we have lived what we tried to teach you along the way. We have tried to give you a strong Biblical foundation as your life's guide and filter. God's grace and mercy cover everything. You cannot out sin God's capacity to forgive. His plans for our lives far exceed any dreams we may have for ourselves. Keep your priorities straight: God first, family second, business third. Seek God's wisdom in ALL things first, not last. Remember who you are and whose you are. Serve Him with ALL your heart ALL the time. Remember, you are an alien in this world. Your home is in Heaven with our Lord! We are called to live in this world but not to be a part of it. Maintain God's standard, not what the world's standard is because the world's standard will continue to change and be lowered. God's standard has not and will not change. Maintain a healthy balance in body, mind, and spirit. People will disappoint you, but God will forever be faithful to you!

PS 20:4 May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your *plans* succeed.

PR 16:9 In his heart a man *plans* his course, but the LORD determines his steps.

PR 19:21 Many are the *plans* in a man's heart, but it is the LORD'S purpose that prevails.

11 "For I know the *plans* I have for you," declares the LORD, "*plans* to prosper you and not to harm you, *plans* to give you hope and a future. 12 Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. 13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. 14 I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity."

You are forever loved! Thank you for the laughter, the challenge, the joy! Remove the constraints you put on yourself! You have earned your Eagle; now soar like one!

Mom and Dad

Here ends a chapter in your life and another begins. Let God be the author!