

My brother Caleb....

Mike, Vik, Jordan, Joel, and Sam, family members and friends, you have my deepest condolences.

I ask for a few minutes of your time to talk about Caleb. I had the privilege of meeting Caleb around October 2002 when I started as the Alpha Company Commander. As a commander, I am responsible for my soldiers and their lives.

It's a responsibility that I've never taken lightly, and I carry it for life. Like so many of our soldiers, Caleb joined shortly after high school, especially after 9/11. Our company was full of young patriots and warriors.

As a company commander, I felt like a father to my soldiers. I was in command for five years, about two to three years more than usual. It was done so that we could go as a team, fight, and come home as a team. That time solidified my feelings for my men.

Caleb is my brother, and I'm honored to say that. Caleb and the men endured grueling training, many horrific events, and countless stressful life-and-death situations, we completed over 1,800 patrols mounted and dismounted in temps that were frequently above 110°F, and we came home.

Caleb served honorably and I am proud to have served with him while deployed. He showed love toward the kids, he was one of the guys that got and understood how to interact with the local populous.

The experiences that we shared created an unbreakable brotherhood. That brotherhood and love is why I'm in front of you today.

Caleb and I developed a strong bond. I distinctly remember Caleb's enthusiasm and when talking with Caleb I would see that sparkle in his eyes. Caleb never lost that sparkle in his eyes. I saw that sparkle in his eyes numerous times over the last two decades, especially when I visited with him at the hospital.

I can't stop thinking about being pleasantly surprised many years after we got home from Iraq when Caleb got a job on Fort Richardson at the front gate. The ear-to-ear smiles when we saw each other and I handed over my ID. I got to enjoy seeing Caleb every morning for quite a while.

Down the road, I was blessed to see Caleb near the VA facility near JBER. I had infrequent interactions with him for over a year and finally convinced him to attend the Chris Kyle Center. Caleb called me the day before graduating from the program and asked if I could pick him up. Yes was out of my mouth before he finished.

Driving Caleb home from the Chris Kyle Center was the last time we had the opportunity to have an unconstrained heartfelt conversation. The next time I got to see Caleb was after his cancer diagnosis.

God gave me a chance to visit Caleb several times, and then a fellow brother-in-arms and I stayed with him on Friday, April 28th. Caleb was called home two days later. The last three times I saw him, I told him that he was a brother and loved.

I thank God for the opportunity to have met Caleb and serve with him, look upon him as a son, and love him as a brother.