

Youth Evangelist Winkie Pratney Recovering After Stroke

✖ New Zealand-based youth evangelist Winkie Pratney is slowly recovering from a stroke that caused a brain aneurysm the day after Christmas.

“Each day we’ve noticed marked improvement, and his recall seems to be deepening,” wrote Pratney’s son, William Pratney, in a Dec. 28 blog posting at . “He began writing in a notepad we got him, attempting to remember things like people’s names, books he has written, sermon topics he has spoken on.”

Affectionately called the “world’s oldest teenager,” Winkie Pratney, 65, preaches to a half-million students each year. In the last 30 years, he has written more than a dozen books on youth and discipleship, including the best-selling manual *Youth Aflame*, and he has partnered with such ministries as Campus Life, Master’s Commission, Youth With a Mission and Teen Challenge.

Pratney began complaining of a headache the day after Christmas and was rushed to an Auckland, New Zealand, hospital when his communication became confused. Doctors said he suffered a hemorrhagic stroke, which includes bleeding within the brain and in the inner and outer tissue covering the brain.

Though Pratney was released from the hospital Dec. 31, his son said there continues to be swelling in Pratney’s brain, and his memory and linguistic skills are returning slowly. In a blog posting on Tuesday, William Pratney said his father’s recovery seemed to have slowed since he was first discharged from the hospital.

"I want him to make progress, and quick, but he's definitely not acting like all the man I know him to be," he wrote. "Part of him has been lost. Part of him has died. And that part (that part of his brain or that part of his functioning) is what we need to see revived."

"The doctor said he would 'never fully recover,'" William Pratney continued. "And from a medical standpoint, apart from some kind of miracle, he is right. But we believe in miracles. ... We serve an awesome God, and I believe that He gets the last word, the final say."

William Pratney called the stroke a "satanic attack" that was trying to stop his father's international ministry, but he is hopeful that with prayer support his father will be preaching again soon.

"We can't say enough how grateful we are for all the saints of God rallying together to lift up this servant of the Lord that he might recover (fully), rise and once again go out to bring light and truth to the nations," he wrote.