

# CANCER: Comfort for the Christian



By  
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## PREFACE

As a Christian who was diagnosed with cancer in 2000, I know the struggle to think Biblically when facing this dreaded enemy. And once the chemotherapy was over, I found that the battle continued on in a new way, a battle with fear in my mind. The fear was, “What if the cancer returns?”

Pastor Sensenig’s reminders of Biblical truths help to put thinking back on track. Section six on courage was especially helpful in battling fear. *~Kathleen Leach*

**O**VER THE YEARS as a pastor, I have had many opportunities to try and comfort dear Christian people who have been suddenly diagnosed and afflicted with the dreadful disease of cancer. I have watched them as they sit on pins and needles awaiting the doctor’s details about what type of cancer they have and how to treat the particular kind of cancer that has invaded their body. In some cases, Christian people whom I have known and served the Lord with for many years, had to face the challenge that they might not have much time left on earth. I have sat with people and sorrowed with them and have tried to enter into their world. But I knew that they needed something more and Someone bigger than myself to bring them through such a deep valley. That is why I have pointed them to the promises of God’s Word and the person of our blessed Lord as they have faced this dreaded foe of cancer.

There is a very real fear and many new challenges that dear Christian brethren face as they deal with this life-changing disease. Because of this, I have been led to write some comforting, reassuring and hopeful truths for those cancer patients in my church and other believers who might benefit from the precious promises and comfort that the Scriptures bring to our hearts even in the time of cancer.

**Romans 15:4**— “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”

Like most pastors, I try and give encouraging and helpful words to those dear saints who have encountered this dreadful monster, which is raising havoc in so many lives today. But over the years, I have discovered that the comfort we receive only comes by looking into the eternal Word

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of God. It's here that we rediscover and reclaim the promises and those portions of Scripture for our own personal lives which help us face times of personal crisis and hurting—even cancer.

Cancer does not seem to pick and choose whose body it's going to invade. It is a growing problem among all walks of life - both adults and children and Christians and non-Christians alike. It is not a friend to Christian people. But we must understand that the Christian can face cancer with a different outlook and attitude than the non-Christian or unsaved person who is not in touch with the living God. They can face this dreadful monster with reassurance that God is on their side and God's promises are never taken away from them in the time when they are battling with cancer. Many books have been written on how we develop cancer in our bodies. But to my knowledge, little has been written concerning how the child of God can deal with cancer from a spiritual perspective.

Not long ago I was handed a little note that in a small way dealt with cancer from a spiritual perspective. The note came from a concerned wife whose own husband had been diagnosed with cancer. Everything was up in the air at this particular time of their lives. They were not sure what the future held physically or financially. The cancer had turned their lives in a totally different direction. But on this little piece of paper some anonymous author wrote down several points about what cancer couldn't do to the Christian life. The unknown author entitled his or her thoughts this way—"What Cancer Can't Do." I would like to take this title and the short points expressed on this paper and share them with you. However, I would like to take the time to expand these points with Scripture and several comments. I would also like to add several points of my own to those already expressed by this unknown author. May God be pleased to use these Scripture promises to help those who have been diagnosed with cancer and who are now suffering through the effects and treatments of cancer.

### **What Cancer Can't Do**

#### **1. Cancer cannot destroy the Spirit's ministry in your life.**

Jesus said in **John 14:16**— "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter (helper), that He may abide with you for ever."

The hymn writer wrote these lovely words:

"I'm rejoicing night and day,  
As I walk the pilgrim's way,  
For the hand of God in all my life I see,  
And the reason of my bliss,  
Yes, the secret all is this:  
That the Comforter abides with me.  
  
He abides, He abides, Hallelujah,  
He abides with me!  
I'm rejoicing night and day,  
As I walk the pilgrim way,  
For the Comforter abides with me."

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As a Christian, you must remember that cancer cannot take away the Spirit's abiding ministry in your heart and life. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would have an eternal ("for ever") abiding ministry in your heart and life. The Spirit is promised to be your helper ("Comforter") as He reveals the power and provision of the life of Jesus Christ to your own personal life. In other words, the ministry of the Holy Spirit takes the things of Christ and makes them real and precious to your own life.

Jesus also said in **John 16:13-14**— "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you."

How wonderful this is to contemplate! The Spirit's ministry is to reveal the glories and grandeur of the life of Jesus Christ to your own personal life. As you face various types of cancer, you can be sure that the Holy Spirit will be with you to reveal Christ to you and bring His comfort, strength, and help into your life. This is the Spirit's special ministry today. He wants to make the life of Jesus real to your own life in your time of suffering. You can be sure that God will be with you through the abiding ministry of the Holy Spirit. Your body is "an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:22). God is with you, beside you, before you, behind you, below you, above you, and in you. Yes, God dwells in you through the Spirit's presence. As you face cancer you must remember that you will not face it alone!

"On life's pathway I am never lonely,  
My Lord is with me, My Lord divine;  
Ever present Guide, I trust Him only,  
No longer lonely, for He is mine.

No longer lonely, No longer lonely,  
For Jesus is the Friend of friends to me;  
No longer lonely, No longer lonely,  
For Jesus is the Friend of friends to me."

**Hebrews 13:5**— "... for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

**Psalms 46:1**—"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

**Psalms 46:11**—"The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah."

God cannot forsake His own children. He is forever with His children and by their side. The Holy Spirit, who reveals the presence of God to you today, will help you in your time of cancer in every way imaginable. This is because He will reveal Christ to you in a new and wonderful way. As Jesus said, the Holy Spirit will be your Helper or Comforter by revealing the life of Jesus Christ to you as you face your daily and hourly battle with cancer. He will help you mentally with your spiritual battles of the mind and help you physically as you encounter new kinds of pain and discomfort. Cancer does not have to quench the Spirit's ministry in your life! As we will see, the remaining points of this study are actually the results of the Spirit's ministry and work within your own life. But what is the goal of the Spirit's work in your life during your time of cancer? Ultimately it is to help you become more like Christ.

Someone once said: "Every time we say, 'I believe in the Holy Spirit,' we mean that we believe that there is a living God able and willing to enter human personality and change it."

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The Holy Spirit will continually help you to become fashioned into the likeness of Jesus Christ as you pass through your battle with cancer and as you receive chemo treatments. The Holy Spirit will reveal Christ to you and give you the power to conform your life to the likeness of the lovely Savior.

**2 Corinthians 3:18** says— “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass (mirror) the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory (one level of Christlikeness into another), even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

Yes, it’s the job or ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives to reveal Christ to us—His power, provision and lovely person. The reason for this particular working of the Spirit’s ministry in our lives is so we might become more like Jesus Christ. As you pass through your cancer it should mold you more into the likeness of Christ as the Holy Spirit makes the person of Christ real to your own life—His patience, peace and joy. Your cancer should change your life as the Spirit reveals the life of Jesus Christ to you in a powerful and dynamic way. “The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:2) means that the Holy Spirit wants to introduce Jesus Christ to your own life and reveal Christ to you so that you might become more like Him.

“All the way from earth to Glory,  
I would be like Jesus;  
Telling o’er and o’er the story,  
I would be like Jesus.

Be like Jesus, this my song,  
In the home and in the throng;  
Be like Jesus, all day long!  
I would be like Jesus.”

Cancer cannot quench or extinguish the Spirit’s ministry in your life (1 Thessalonians 5:19). The Spirit’s ministry can continue to operate in your heart as it always did even as you pass through your battle with cancer. This is a wonderful promise and is something that you can cling to in your time of cancer. This is because you need the Spirit’s ministry. If you do not know or depend upon the Spirit’s ministry in your life, you will become a spiritual pauper in the time of cancer. But if you depend upon His ministry in your time of suffering, you can experience the true riches, which you have in Christ, as the Holy Spirit reveals and unleashes them to you (Ephesians 1:3). The Holy Spirit is both the Comforter and Conformer who makes us more like Jesus Christ. Your prayer during this time of cancer should be:

“Dear Lord, control and empower me by the Spirit’s assistance. Change me into the likeness of Christ through the Spirit’s ministry. Help me to see Thy beauty and grace.”

### **2. Cancer cannot cripple your love.**

This is a pleasant reminder while you suffer with cancer.

*First*, cancer cannot cripple the love that you have for the Lord. This is a love that will live on in your heart as you walk close with the Lord.

The Psalmist said in **Psalm 18:1-2**— “I will love Thee, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.”

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Cancer cannot cripple your love relationship and fellowship that you have with the Lord. The nearness and dearness of God to your own heart cannot be lost as you pass through the deep waters of trial such as cancer. In fact, cancer should deepen your love relationship with the Lord. A new awareness of His divine presence should flood into your soul and you should grow closer to the Lord. Cancer cannot take away the love that you have developed and had with the Lord over the passing years. Cancer can only strengthen this relationship and bring you into a closer relationship with the precious Lord.

**James 4:8** asks us to— “Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you....”

Trials should cause you to inspect your life and ultimately draw you closer to the Lord. The cancer that you now have should be used as a springboard to deepen your walk and relationship with the Lord. This experience should bring a new awareness of God’s presence into your life and reveal His earnest desire to fellowship with you on a daily basis and deeper level. Cancer cannot destroy your personal relationship with Jesus Christ. This is a comforting truth to know and experience. Paul said, “For me to live is Christ...” He did not say, “For me to live is cancer.” Cancer cannot take away your love relationship with Jesus Christ. Your life must continually revolve around your personal love relationship with Jesus Christ. You can fellowship with the Lord in a deep and wonderful way as you face cancer.

The martyred Jim Elliot expressed fellowship with God in this way:

“To stand by the shadows of a friendly tree with the wind tugging at your coattail and the heavens hailing your heart, to gaze and glory and to give oneself again to God, what more could a man ask? Oh, the fullness, pleasure, sheer excitement of knowing God on earth. I care not if I never raise my voice again for Him, if only I may love Him, please Him. Mayhap, in mercy, He shall give me a host of children that I may lead through the vast star fields to explore His delicacies whose fingers’ ends set them to burning. But if not, if only I may see Him, smell His garments, and smile into my Lover’s eyes, ah, then, not stars, nor children, shall matter—only Himself.”

**Psalm 42:1**— “As the hart (deer) panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God.”

“Wherever I go—only Thou!  
Wherever I stand—only  
Thou! Just Thou; again Thou!  
Always Thou! Thou, Thou,  
  
Thou! When things are good,  
Thou! when things are bad—  
Thou! Thou, Thou, Thou!”

*Second*, cancer cannot cripple the love that you have for other people. Your precious love for family and God’s people cannot be taken away from your life. Cancer cannot kill loving friendships or memories that you have with other people. They will continue to be part of your life even as you face cancer. This is a positive outlook that you can have as you deal with cancer.

**Proverbs 17:17** reminds us that— “A friend loveth at all times....”

This is true even in the times of cancer. True friendships cannot be dissolved as you pass through cancer in this present life. God has given to you close family and Christian friends to

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encourage your heart and pray for you during your bout with cancer. This can become a tremendous uplift to your heart in times of desperation and need. Faithful friends are one of life's greatest assets.

A friend is:

“A push when you've stopped  
A word when you're lonely  
A guide when you're searching  
  
A smile when you're sad  
A song when you're glad.”

*Third*, cancer cannot steal away your love for lost souls who are in need of the saving message of Jesus Christ. In fact, I have seen how many Christians with cancer have been given opportunities by the Lord to share their faith in Jesus Christ. Affliction brings new opportunities to share Christ with others such as nurses, doctors and those who are suffering with the same disease.

In 2 Corinthians 2:12, Paul said that when he came to Troas to preach the gospel: “... a door was opened unto me of the Lord.”

Cancer brings many open doors of witness where we can effectively share Christ with the lost. We can reach people that we could not reach before. You must view cancer as an open doorway to reach others for Christ. This will put a new perspective on your time of suffering. You have the Gospel blessing that you can share with others.

“Lord, teach me how to love and live  
That I may cheer each heart,  
And to my fellowman in need  
Some blessing rich impart.”

*Fourth*, cancer can allow you as a Christian to have a loving ministry with other believers in Christ who need to experience the comfort of another brother or sister. You can comfort them through writing a letter or speaking with them over the phone or perhaps meeting them in person.

**2 Corinthians 1:4**— “Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.”

The words of Joseph Parker can be applied to your life as you seek to comfort others who have the same disease as you have: “Preach to the suffering, and you will never lack a congregation. There is a broken heart in every pew.”

### **3. Cancer cannot steal away the joy in your heart.**

**Philippians 4:4**—“Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.”

Joy is not dependent on outward circumstances. Real joy cannot be stolen away by the cancer that has invaded your body. True inner joy is not dependent upon cancer. The Bible says that you can always rejoice or experience joy in the Lord. This means that joy comes from having a right relationship with God. Joy comes from keeping your eyes on the Lord and focusing on His person and wonderful abiding presence in your life. Let's be realistic. You are not rejoicing over the fact that you were diagnosed with cancer. But in the midst of the cancer you can rejoice in the Lord.

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What a difference this can make in your life! You can have joy even when the tears are flowing down your cheeks. This is because joy comes from the inside. You can rejoice in the Lord even when you are not rejoicing in the circumstances that are surrounding your life at this particular time. This is because joy comes from your close walk and relationship with the Lord and is not some kind of phony outward display of glee or happiness.

Tim Hansel said: “Happiness is a feeling. Joy is an attitude. A posture. A position. A place.”

Of course, this place of joy is found only in the Lord. When you learn to rejoice in the Lord the circumstances that surround your life, even cancer, cannot destroy your inner joy. Like the Thessalonian believers, you can have God’s inner joy even in the times of affliction. This is because joy is not dependent upon your outward circumstances or surroundings. It is not based upon your physical condition or predicament in life. Cancer cannot steal away our joy.

Paul said in **1 Thessalonians 1:6**— “And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.”

Haydn, the great musician, was once asked why his church music was so cheerful, and he replied: “When I think upon God, my heart is so full of joy that the notes dance and leap, as it were, from my pen, and since God has given me a cheerful heart it will be pardoned me that I serve Him with a cheerful spirit.”

**Psalm 32:11**— “Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.”

Many years ago I sang in a music group these words which are true of the Christian life of inner joy:

“Always there is music  
Always there is singing  
Always there is gladness  
In my heart since Christ has saved me!”

### **4. Cancer cannot eat away your peace.**

Sometimes you might become discouraged and distraught at what the cancer is doing on the inside of your body as it tries to invade your body and overtake your vital organs and interrupt your normal pattern of living. But dear brother or sister, let me remind you today that there is something that cancer cannot eat away or destroy. It is your inner peace that comes from the presence of the Lord. This is a reassuring promise that you can claim today even as you wade through the deep waters and the raging storm of cancer. There is peace in the midst of the storm.

Jesus said in **John 14:27**— “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

The peace that Jesus gives is “not as the world giveth” which means that His peace which He grants to His children is of a different nature than the world’s offer of peace. The world of lost humanity looks at peace as something that we can have when everything is going our way and when our bank account is full. The world’s peace is centered on cooperating circumstances whereas the Lord’s peace is centered on Jesus Christ and our personal relationship with Him. It’s a peace that can be possessed even when you know cancer has invaded your body. The peace of Jesus Christ can be yours even as you pass through the dark night of cancer.

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“Drop Thy still dews of quietness,  
Till all our strivings cease;  
Take from our souls the strain and stress,  
And let our ordered lives confess  
The beauty of Thy peace.”

God’s peace is an inner tranquility of soul that finds complete rest or calmness in the person of Jesus Christ.

**Isaiah 26:3** records this similar promise— “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee.”

Reflection or meditation upon the Lord’s goodness, grace, mercy and beautiful person (“whose mind is stayed on Thee”) keeps our mind in a state of “perfect peace” and rest that the world without Christ cannot experience. It’s a peace that we can have in our lives as we focus our attention upon God. And we meditate upon God’s grace and goodness because of the great faith that we possess in His plan, program and provision for our lives (“because he trusteth in Thee”).

God’s peace is an inner tranquility and stillness that guards our hearts from worry and anxiety. Jesus gives peace in the midst of the storm. As a result of constant prayer and communion with the Lord, God’s peace keeps overcoming fear and worry from invading our heart and destroying our lives from a spiritual perspective. God’s peace sets itself up as a military guard on the outside of the door of your heart so that worry and fear do not overtake your life.

**Philippians 4:7**— “And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep (guard) your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

“Like the sunshine after rain  
Like a rest that follows pain  
Like a hope returned again  
Is the peace that Jesus gives.

Like the soft, refreshing dew,  
Like a rosy day break new,  
Like a friendship tender, true,  
Is the peace that Jesus gives.

Oh the peace that Jesus gives  
Never dies but only lives.  
Like the music of a psalm  
Like a glad eternal calm  
Is the peace that Jesus gives  
Is the peace that Jesus gives.”

### **5. Cancer cannot corrode your faith in God.**

**Isaiah 26:4**— “Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD Jehovah is everlasting strength.”

If your life has been rooted in the goodness and faithfulness of the Lord throughout the years, you will continue to possess great trust or faith in the Lord’s power, provision and purpose for your life even as you pass through the deep waters of cancer.

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“Through it all. Through it all,  
Oh, I’ve learned to trust in Jesus;  
I’ve learned to trust in God.  
Through it all, through it all,  
Oh, I’ve learned to depend upon His Word.”

Faith not only looks at what God can do but also at what God does not do. It takes far greater faith to realize that you may not be completely healed from cancer and accept this condition as coming from the Lord. We must view faith at both ends of the spectrum—when God does heal and when God does not heal—when God answers our prayer in the way we want or in the way that He knows is best. Whatever takes place in our lives we are told that our faith must be built up and become strong in the Lord and His providential plan over our lives.

**Job 13:15**—“Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him: but I will maintain mine own ways before Him.”

Erwin W. Lutzer said:

“A Christian who walks by faith accepts all circumstances from God. He thanks God when everything goes good, when everything goes bad, and for the ‘blues’ somewhere in-between. He thanks God whether he feels like it or not.”

**Psalm 73:28**—“But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust [faith] in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all Thy works.”

We can see the kind of strong faith that the psalmist had in God. This is the kind of faith that you can possess as you pass through your own personal experience with cancer. You can know that He is the sovereign God who is in charge of the events of your life and as a result you can allow your faith to continually bloom within your heart.

Oswald Chambers once said:

“It is a great thing to be a believer, but easy to misunderstand what the New Testament means by it. It is not that we believe Jesus Christ can do things, or that we believe in a plan of salvation. It is that we believe Him; whatever happens we will hang on to the fact that He is true. If we say, ‘I am going to believe He will put things right,’ we shall lose our confidence when we see things go wrong.”

“And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God” (Mark 11:22).

Dwight Lyman Moody said that there are three kinds of faith:

1. Struggling faith, like a man in deep water desperately swimming.
2. Clinging faith, like a man hanging to the side of a boat.
3. Resting faith, like a man safely within the boat (and able to reach out with a hand to help someone else get in).

**Proverbs 3:5-6** —“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him (His will and purpose for your life), and He shall direct thy paths.”

The Scriptures repeatedly ask you to trust in the Lord or have great faith in Him. God wants you to possess a heart that trusts in Him. God is looking for your heart! You must learn to trust or have faith in His will and program for your life no matter what the details of that program

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might include. If you practice living by faith you will not lean “unto thine own understanding,” which means that you will not rely upon your own wisdom, direction and will in regards to some situation that you face. Rather, as you face the many different situations and trials in life, including cancer, you must learn to “acknowledge him” which means to give consent to God’s will and purpose and all-wise plan for your life. You must give Him the right to lead your life in every way that He plans. When you “acknowledge” God you recognize God’s sovereignty over your life and are willing by faith to follow His plan for your life no matter what it might be. It’s only then that God can “direct thy paths” (“make straight your paths”) in life, which means that God will show you His will and purpose for your life. He will cause you as a believer to rest in His will and purpose for your life whatever that might involve. Cancer cannot corrode your faith if that faith is strong and rooted deeply in the sovereign workings of God.

Helen Adams Keller once said:

“Dark as my path may seem to others, I carry a magic light in my heart. Faith, the spiritual strong searchlight, illumines the way, and although sinister doubts lurk in the shadow, I walk unafraid toward the enchanted wood where the foliage is always green, where joy abides, where nightingales nest and sing, and where life and death are one in the presence of the Lord.”

### **6. Cancer cannot silence your courage.**

**Joshua 1:9**— “Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.”

Fear is one of the key battles that cancer patients face. I do not know this by experience, but I can verify that it is true. I have spoken with many dear saints over the years that have struggled with fear while going through various experiences with cancer. There is the fear of the cancer spreading, the fear of what lies in the future, the fear of reoccurring cancer, the fear of paying bills, and the fear of leaving loved ones behind to face life without your help. There are many fears that can overtake you as you face cancer. But please remind yourself that God can help you to overcome your fears so that they do not overcome your life. It is human to experience fears. But by God’s divine help you do not have to allow these fears to control or overtake your life and ruin your life from a spiritual standpoint. The presence of the Lord in your life will help you to “be strong and of a good courage.”

I’ve always taught people to pray through verses that give promises about deliverance over the fears that invade our lives. This is one way you can use the Bible as the “sword of the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:17) and effectively ward off Satan’s attempts to bring fear into your life. Here are some verses you might want to use to help you overcome fear in your life as you face cancer. Practice praying the Word of God, and you will find great comfort and deliverance from overcoming fears. Take the time to look up more verses dealing with fear and write them down on a note card. Make them part of a daily routine of praying as you face your battle with cancer. This will help you immensely.

**Psalm 34:4**—“I sought the LORD, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.”

**Prayer:** “Lord, I am coming to You in prayer and I know that You hear me today. Please deliver me from all my fears as I face this trial of cancer in my life. I need Your delivering power.”

**Psalm 118:6** —“The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?”

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**Isaiah 41:10**—“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.”

*Prayer:* “Lord, I know that you are on my side. You have not forsaken me. Because of this, I know that I do not have to fear. I know that You are my God and will strengthen me, help me and uphold me so that I do not have to be overcome with plaguing fears.”

**Romans 8:15** — “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption [son-placing], whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”

**2 Timothy 1:7** —“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”

*Prayer:* “Thank You Lord that You have promised to deliver me from an inward spirit of fear. Lord, thank You for giving to me Your own power, love and this sound or disciplined mind, whereby I can experience deliverance from fear. Thank you for your promised deliverance. I claim it today.”

On this side of Heaven we will never completely rid our lives of fear, but we can be delivered from that type of fear which overcomes our lives, pulls down our spiritual lives and takes away our faith in the Lord. The presence of the Lord will help us to “be strong and of a good courage.” There is deliverance from the debilitating effects of fear.

A large old Bible, frequently used by Abraham Lincoln during the critical years of the Civil War, falls open easily to the 34th Psalm. If you examine that page, you will note that it is smudged at one spot. It seems obvious that the long, tapering fingers of the great emancipator often rested heavily on the fourth verse, which reads: “I sought the LORD, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.” Lincoln had obviously come to realize that God is a mighty refuge. The awareness of the Lord’s presence had undoubtedly garrisoned the President’s heart during his most severe difficulties and trials.

John Newton said:

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds  
In a believer’s ear!  
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,  
And drives away his fear!”

### **7. Cancer cannot invade your human soul.**

**2 Corinthians 4:16** — “For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.”

The outward man is our body. And we can be sure that every one of us has a body that is moving in a downward direction. The second law of thermodynamics is true when it comes to our bodies. Everything breaks down in time and deteriorates. But you can be sure that the second law of thermodynamics does not apply to your inward spiritual life or to your soul. Cancer cannot invade the soul and destroy your soul in any way. Your soul cannot get cancer! This is wonderful assurance. The inward control center of your life can continually be tuned to God and you can walk with Him and experience inward strength and growth in your Christian life in the same manner that you always have throughout your past life. Cancer cannot invade your inward fellowship with God, your spiritual communication with the Lord and the inner strength and joy

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that comes from simply walking with God. It can be summertime in your soul no matter what the outward cold winds of pain and cancer do to your body. What matters most in life is what happens in us, not to us!

The following story is about a handicapped high school student. Although the crutches on which he hobbled kept him from being physically active, he excelled in his studies and was well liked by his peers. They saw the problems he had getting around, and they sometimes felt sorry for him, but for a long time nobody asked him why he had this difficulty. One day, however, his closest friend finally did. “It was polio,” answered the student. The friend responded, “With so many difficulties, how do you keep from becoming bitter?” Tapping his chest with his hand, the young man replied with a smile, “Oh, it never touched my heart.”

Dear friend, cancer cannot touch your soul or heart. It cannot invade the inner life where God supplies you with a daily renewing of spiritual strength and where He provides you with a continual feast of joy, peace and fellowship with God. God’s main field of work is still the inner man, because that is where spiritual life exists and where it must grow. It’s here that the Holy Spirit changes the life of the believer from glory to glory (2 Corinthians 3:18).

**Ephesians 3:16** says—“That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.”

You will notice that the text in 2 Corinthians 4:16 says: “day by day” our inward man can be renewed through the Lord’s inner presence and work of grace. While physically we might grow weaker, spiritually we can experience the inward renewing, renovation and growth of our soul. David said, “He restoreth my soul” (Psalm 23:3). What a marvelous promise and ever-present reality this can be in our lives today. Day by day we can experience this inward renewing of our soul. Our inward spiritual life can continue to blossom like a rose because of the Lord’s inner work of grace upon our heart.

“Day by day and with each passing moment,  
Strength I find to meet my trials here;  
Trusting in my Father’s wise bestowment,  
I’ve no cause for worry or for fear,  
  
He whose heart is kind beyond all measure  
Gives unto each day what He deems best—  
Lovingly, its part of pain and pleasure,  
Mingling toil with peace and rest.”

### **8. Cancer cannot silence your thanksgiving and worship before God.**

Most of us are aware of the man in Scripture called Job. Job lost his family, fortune and fame. One would think that he would throw in the towel, curse God, and die. But this is not what Job did after facing his great calamities in life. In the midst of the plaguing events and problems that Job faced, we find that he worshipped God.

**Job 1:20** records these words— “Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped.”

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Wreckage in life should always cause us to worship God. Wreckage leads to worship. Trials should not drag us away from the Lord, but draw us closer to the Lord where we worship Him in newness and freshness of spirit.

**Psalm 25:1** — “Unto Thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.”

Oh the beauty of lifting your soul up to the Lord in worship! Oh the beauty of opening your heart to Him and pouring out your soul to Him. The Bible says that in the midst of life’s trial we can be thankful and have a worshipping heart.

**1 Thessalonians 5:18** — “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

You may not necessarily be thankful for the cancer, which has invaded your body. But you can be thankful in the midst of everything that you face in life. You can always be thankful to the Lord and rejoice in the wonderful life and presence of the Lord. You can always show gratitude for the wonderful things that He has done throughout your life and what He is doing in your life even as you pass through the deep valley of cancer with its related pain and treatments. In the midst of the storm there can be a song of thanksgiving and worship. After all, we are to rejoice in the Lord and the beauty of His presence.

Let us look at **Philippians 4:4** one more time—“Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.”

We do not necessarily rejoice in the trying circumstances that we must face as a cancer patient. But we can rejoice in the beauty and wonder of God’s person and the blessings of peace, joy and patience that He provides. There can be a song of worship and thanksgiving in our heart even in the midst of the storm. This is because the Christian finds thanksgiving, joy and a worshipful heart, not in the absence of danger and trial, but in the presence of God. And it’s through deep trials, such as cancer, that our ordinary worship can increase into a beautiful melody and symphony or praise.

A composer told the true story of the great pianist Paderewski, who on one occasion was performing in Carnegie Hall. In the audience was a mother and her young son. During the intermission the woman suddenly realized that the boy was no longer at her side. Just then, over the voices of the milling crowd, she heard the distinct notes of “Chopsticks” being played on the piano. The child had found his way onto the stage and was sitting at the magnificent Steinway concert grand. A moment later lovely music could be heard. Paderewski had quietly slipped behind the youngster, placed his talented hands over the boy’s and added a beautiful accompaniment to that simple tune.

In a similar way, the Lord wants to create the beautiful music of worship and thanksgiving from our own lives as we allow Him to slip behind us on the music bench of life. We must allow God to take our hands and use our trials, such as cancer, to bring forth the sweet music of praise and glory unto the Lord. Hebrews 13:15 calls our worship “the sacrifice of praise to God continually.” Indeed, cancer cannot keep you from worshipping and praising the Lord. God actually uses trial to increase your praise, thanksgiving and worship of Him. In the midst of the darkness there is worship. God will give us songs in the night!

**Job 35:10**—“But none saith, Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night.”

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**Psalm 77:6**—“I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search.”

“Songs in the night,  
Songs in the night,  
The Lord giveth songs in the night;  
Sorrows may come,  
Days dark and drear,  
Still He giveth songs in the night.”

### **9. Cancer cannot shut out your past memories.**

**1 Thessalonians 1:3** says—“Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.”

Paul also said in **Philippians 1:3**—“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you”

The old saying goes like this: “God gave us our memories so that we might have roses in December.”

To remember the past is to see that we are here today by His grace and realize that our survival is a gift from God. Therefore, we should remember our friendships that we have made in the past and be thankful unto the Lord. Cancer cannot shut out your past memories with family and those people whom you love deeply. It cannot dissolve the wonderful years and experiences that you had together and the precious moments of life that you have shared together. Like Paul, you can be thankful for memories and the wonderful times that God has given to you with family and friends. You can roll back the curtain of memory and praise the Lord for family and Christian friends that He has given to you and graced your life with. Cancer cannot shut out these memories. Furthermore, recalling the past should give us a thankful heart in view of the blessings that God has showered upon our lives over the years with our family and Christian friends.

Someone has said: “You can’t turn back the clock. But you can wind it up again.”

### **10. Cancer cannot lessen the power of God’s grace.**

The Bible gives the promise of sufficient grace. 2 Corinthians 12:9 has been a verse that many have claimed in the time of suffering and ailment. Who can forget what the Lord communicated to Paul when He said: “... My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

We often talk about the sufficiency of God’s grace but do we really believe in it? Have we really experienced it when the rubber meets the road?

**2 Corinthians 3:5** reminds us—“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.”

God has not always promised to give us answers but He has always promised to give us grace! God promises complete inward strength for every situation that we must face in life. This is the promise of God who gives sufficient grace. In 2 Corinthians 12:10 Paul said, “for when I am weak then I am strong.” So in reality, you become stronger only when you become weaker. Only when we feel our insufficiency are we ready to experience God’s sufficiency.

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Vance Havner once said: “Jesus we all have; He is all we need and all we want. We are shipwrecked on God and stranded on omnipotence!”

**John 1:16** says—“And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.”

The word “fulness” speaks of God’s complete resource of grace that is at our disposal. God’s strengthening grace is provided to us in a repetitive and consecutive fashion much like the waves of the sea continually crash upon the shore. The waves of God’s strengthening and sustaining grace continually break upon the seashore of our own existence. Cancer cannot lessen the power of God’s grace from working in and through our lives. It cannot stop the waves of God’s grace from rolling into our lives.

“He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater;  
He sendeth more strength when the labors increase.  
To added affliction He addeth His mercy;  
To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.

His love has no limit; His grace has no measure;  
His power has no boundary known unto men;  
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,  
He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again.”

**James 4:6** reminds us of this continuous flow of grace—“But He giveth more grace....”

God promises sufficient, sustaining and strengthening grace to help in the time of need. Who can forget the promise of **Hebrews 4:16**—“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

Christianity is not a way out; it’s a way through. And God has promised us the grace that we need so that we can go through whatever life throws in our pathway. Yes, we can even pass through the dreaded experience of cancer victoriously by receiving the fullness of God’s unchanging and sufficient grace.

“Many times I’m tried and tested as I travel day by day;  
Oft I meet with pain and sorrows, and there’s trouble in the way,  
But I have the sweet assurance that my soul the Lord will lead,  
And in Him there is hope for every day.  
Oh His grace is sufficient for me,  
And His love is abundant and free;  
And what joy fills my soul just to know, just to know  
That His grace is sufficient for me!”

### **11. Cancer cannot stop Jesus from caring for you.**

**1 Peter 5:7** says— “Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you.”

These words are very short and to the point. And yet they become very valuable to us as we face great mountains that seem insurmountable. How reassuring and comforting it is to know that Jesus cares for you and that He will take your burdens or anxieties upon Himself so that you do not have to bear them. My dear friend, Jesus does care about you, and He is deeply concerned about your burdened heart that is weighing you down. Peter reminds us that through prayer we can cast our anxieties upon the Lord, so that we do not have to be overcome by them. Jesus is the

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burden bearer. God's shoulder will bear the burden of your heart. This is the promise of the Word of God. The great and mighty God cares about your burden that you have right now in your life and He wants you to cast it upon His shoulders. He cares for you!

“Our God is far greater than words can make known,  
Exalted and holy, He reigns on His throne.  
In infinite splendor He rules over all;  
Yet He feeds the poor sparrows, and He knows when they fall.

He rides the wild heavens, He strides thro' the seas;  
The high mountains tremble to hear His decrees.  
His voice with great thunderings sounds from above;  
But to His own children He whispers His love.

His power is great and will ever endure,  
His wisdom is peaceable, gentle, and pure.  
But greater than all these glories I see,  
Is the glorious promise that He cares for me.”

Do not despair my beloved friend. Jesus cares!

**Hebrews 4:15** says—“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”

“In every pang that rends the heart, the Man of Sorrows has a part.”

Because Jesus became a man and wondered on this earth for thirty- three years, our Lord has shared our experiences and can therefore understand the testings which we endure. This does not mean that Jesus had cancer. Jesus did not inherit the direct effects of sin (death and disease) from the fallen race since He was sinless. What this text means is that Jesus went through great trials and testings, the greatest being the cross, so that He can sympathize with us and understand what we go through when we pass through deep trials. He is the sympathizing Jesus.

“The great Physician now is near,  
The sympathizing Jesus;  
He speaks the drooping heart to cheer:  
O hear the voice of Jesus.

Sweetest note in seraph song,  
Sweetest name on mortal tongue,  
Sweetest carol ever sung,  
Jesus, blessed Jesus.”

Jesus does understand about human frailty and the heartaches that can accompany humanity. And because He cares so much about you, He wants you to approach Him through prayer, so that He can help you and express His tender loving care toward your life.

**Psalms 34:18**—“The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite (crushed) spirit.”

“Does Jesus care when my heart is pained  
Too deeply for mirth and song;

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As the burdens press, and the cares distress,  
And the way grows weary and long?

O yes, He cares; I know He cares,  
His heart is touched with my grief;  
When the days are weary, the long nights dreary,  
I know my Savior cares.”

A younger lady, who was somewhat handicapped, gave to one of my friends a sign with the straggly or irregular written words, “Jesus Cares.” My roommate at college hung that sign in his room to remind himself that Jesus does care about his deepest needs and is deeply concerned about him. Dear friend, Jesus wants to shower His loving care and provision upon your life today. He is near. He cares.

### **12. Cancer cannot thwart God’s purpose for your life.**

**Psalm 119:75** reads like this—“I know, O LORD, that Thy judgments are right, and that Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.”

This verse has always been in the Bible! It’s amazing how many Christians have missed it. The Psalmist knew that God was working out a plan in his life even when he suffered affliction. There was a fresh awareness of the sovereignty of God working in connection with his life and affliction. You too must learn the secret of resting in the providence and purposes of God. You must see divine providence in all of your affliction. This is something that many Christians fail to understand. God is “working” or more literally weaving a plan together for your life.

**Romans 8:28**—“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.”

Henry van Dyke said:

“Happy and strong and brave shall we be—able to endure all things, and to do all things—if we believe that every day, every hour, every moment of our life is in God’s hands.”

That’s why **Job** could say in chapter **1:21-22**—“... Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.”

Somehow we must come in touch with the providence of God over our lives and understand that nothing happens by chance or without purpose. God never moves without purpose or plan. God is sovereign and this means that God is ultimately in control of everything that happens to our lives—even cancer. And we can know that when we are in the furnace of affliction, God keeps His hand on the thermostat, never allowing us to experience more than we can bear. His unfailing purpose will come to pass in our life just as He planned. Cancer does not overturn God’s purpose for our lives. What we pass through is always according to God’s ordained blueprint and pattern for our lives.

God’s plan and promise in suffering can be seen in **1 Corinthians 10:13**—“There hath no temptation (trial or test) taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted (tested) above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”

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The same God who promises controlled pressure over the direct temptation (“test”) that comes from the devil (James 1:13) also promises the same kind of control over our physical suffering which comes from His overall sovereign hand. God promises that you will not be tested above what He has planned and what you can bear as His child. The Lord has His hand on the thermostat and He is in control. Furthermore, God always provides a way to escape so that you might be able to bear your test or trial. In the area of suffering, many times the way of escape comes to us by showering His added grace and power upon our lives so that we “may be able to bear” our load of suffering. God will grant us His sufficient power and strength as we pass through the deep waters. The will of God will never lead us where the grace of God cannot keep us.

God wants His children to see His faithfulness in the midst of their trials. Even while we suffer in God’s plan and purpose, God is still faithful to us in that He blesses our lives with His acts of kindness and love. He has not abandoned us in any way. He will continue to shower His mercies upon our lives in so many ways that we will worship Him, in spite of the cancer that has invaded our bodies. Faith in God’s providence and purpose for our lives will cause us to worship the Lord. We must remember that when Jeremiah viewed the destruction of his beloved Jerusalem, he wrote in **Lamentations 3:22-23**—“It is of the LORD’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is Thy faithfulness.”

Even in the midst of destruction and turmoil Jeremiah found himself worshipping the Lord for His constant flow of mercy and compassion or His daily acts of kindness, love and goodness. The Lord of all mercy and compassion will continue to be faithful to you by meeting all of your needs and blessing your life even as you pass through the effects of cancer. His acts of goodness and kindness will continue to abound and you can always experience God’s wonderful blessings and receive of His continued grace and power so that you can say along with Job, “Blessed be the name of the LORD.”

Rowland Bingham, founder of the Sudan Interior Mission, was once seriously injured in an automobile accident. He was rushed to a hospital in critical condition. The following day, when he regained consciousness, he asked the nurse what he was doing there. “Don’t try to talk now, just rest,” she replied. “You have been in an accident.” “Accident!” exclaimed Dr. Bingham. “There are no accidents in the life of a Christian. This is just an incident in God’s perfect leading.”

Someone remarked: “There are no accidents in the Christian life, just appointments.”

**Job 23:13-14** says—“But He is in one mind, and who can turn Him? and what His soul desireth, even that He doeth. For He performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with Him.”

How wonderful to realize that, when everything seems out of control, we are reminded once again that God is in control! Job understood that God was in charge of all the events of his life. God always moves according to His sovereign plan and will bring it to fruition in our lives, no matter if that plan seems to stop us in our tracks. We must remember that the same God who ordered our steps in life also orders our stops.

John Wesley traveled one day along a narrow road filled with ruts. His carriage soon became stuck in the mud. The delay especially disturbed him because he was eager to get to the next town where he was scheduled to preach. While some helpers tried to get the vehicle moving, another

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Christian came by. Wesley talked with him a moment and perceived that the poor fellow was deeply troubled. Asking why he was so distressed, he learned that because of crop failure, the man was almost destitute. “I haven’t been able to get the money together to pay the rent,” he said despairingly. “The landlord is ready to turn us out, and I don’t know where to go with my wife and children.” “How much do you owe?” Wesley inquired. He was told that 20 shillings would clear the debt. “Well,” said Wesley, “I believe we can handle that. The Lord evidently wanted me to meet you.” Taking the money from his wallet, he handed it to the man and said, “Here, go and be happy!” Then turning to his companions, he exclaimed, “Now I see why our carriage had to get stuck in the mud. Our steps were halted so that we might help that needy family.”

When God does stop us in life and we find ourselves stuck in the mud suffering with cancer or some other disease, it is wonderful to know that God is still on the throne. We may think that God is no longer in control. But God is always in control of our lives even when we are stuck in the mud. God is always in control even as He is in control of the events of nature.

**Nahum 1:3** states—“... the LORD hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet.”

William Cowper described God’s providence like this:

“God moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonder to perform;  
He plants His footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.”

This immortal hymn “God Moves In A Mysterious Way” has been a source of great comfort and blessing to God’s people. Yet few know of the trying circumstances which led to its composition. The writer, William Cowper, had sunk to the depths of despair as the result of grief and disappointment. Finally one foggy night, in a state of depression he called for a horse-drawn “taxi” and asked to be taken to London Bridge on the Thames River, intending to commit suicide. After driving around in the mist for 2 hours, the cabby reluctantly told his passenger he was lost. Disgusted by the delay, Cowper left the cab and determined to find his way on foot. Walking only a short distance, he discovered he was back at his own doorstep! They’d been going in circles. Immediately he recognized the restraining hand of the Lord in this providential turn of events. Convicted by the Spirit, he realized that the way out of his troubles was to look to God for help, not to jump into the river. As he cast his burden on the Savior, his heart was comforted. With tears of gratitude he sat down and penned these words which have strengthened thousands on the brink of despair:

“God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants His footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.  
Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;  
The clouds ye so much dread  
Are big with mercy, and shall break  
In blessings on your head.”

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God is in control right now even as you face cancer. Don't lose sight of the thing that God is performing for your own benefit and good. Don't lose sight of the providence of God over your life. As you grow in your faith toward God's sovereign workings, you will find greater peace, joy and blessings.

### **13. Cancer cannot stop you from growing in your Christian life.**

Trials such as cancer should not cause you to become bitter, but better. Job recognized that even through His great calamities, God was in control of His life, and through the sovereign fiery trial of God, he would emerge as a better and stronger saint who has grown in his walk with the Lord. We must remember that God does not always change the circumstances, but He may often change us! God wants us to continually grow in our Christian walk into the likeness of His Son. Suffering should lead to greater fruit and growth as we view suffering from God and part of His sovereign purpose for our lives. It should help strengthen our faith and increase our love, joy, peace, patience and many other Christian virtues. We are pruned by God's sovereign acts of suffering so we might grow and bear "fruit" (John 15:2), "more fruit" (John 15:2) and "much fruit" (John 15:5). Cancer may stop your physical body from functioning as it should, but you can be sure that this disease cannot stop the spiritual fruit from increasing in your life. Cancer does not need to effect your spiritual growth. In fact, the presence of trial, such as cancer, should cause you to grow more and bear much fruit in your life. Growth flows out of suffering.

**1 Peter 5:10** declares—"But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."

You will notice how Peter said "after" you suffer for a while that you will find yourself reaching the goal of maturity ("perfect"). Through suffering, God is making you what you ought to be. God is helping you reach the goal of maturity. He is completing or perfecting your life in a greater way. It's only "after" you suffer that you will find yourself becoming more stable and strong ("stablish" & "strengthen") and find yourself established ("settle") in your Christian life and walk in a greater way. Suffering is for your good. And you can be sure that cancer cannot stop spiritual growth from occurring in your life since the suffering that God allows to come into your life should produce greater fruit and maturity.

The mother eagle teaches her little ones to fly by making their nest so uncomfortable that they are forced to leave it and commit themselves to the unknown world of air outside. And just so does our God to us. He stirs up our comfortable nests, and pushes us over the edge of them, and we are forced to use our wings to save ourselves from fatal falling. Read your trials in this light, and see if you cannot begin to get a glimpse of their meaning. Your wings are being developed. Growth or development is taking place.

**Job 23:10**—"But He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

Job describes the hardness of his trial. And yet, he says that in the end he would be a better Christian for passing through the fiery trial. His suffering and your suffering with cancer are like the fire in a furnace, which removes the dross and refines the gold. Job feels that the suffering, pain and disappointment that trial brings will remove from his life those things that are not pure. In the end, when he has passed through the fiery trial, he would be much more pure and refined

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as a person, even as gold that passes through the fire. My dear friend, the trial of your cancer will not keep you from growing. It will actually make you more golden and Christlike in the end.

**1 Peter 1:7** also speaks about the gold—“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”

Our faith is put through the fire of trial so that in the end it might become much stronger and more pure. And someday when we stand before the Lord, our faith will be seen to be pure as a result of those tests or fiery trials that we have gone through. The fire is not designed to burn us out but to purify us for the future. Trials change us for the good as we accept them from the Lord. They make us better Christians by causing a growth spurt to take place in our lives.

It’s amazing how a single event can awaken within us a stranger totally unknown to us. It can awaken a person that is more spiritual and complete as a result of great trial. God is looking for the gold that comes from those Christians that suffer with cancer. And we must remember that all of our suffering comes into our lives because God loves us and wants to change us. God loves us the way we are, but He also loves us too much to leave us the way that we are! He wants to see us grow into greater Christlikeness as we pass through the fiery trial of suffering.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon said:

“I am certain that I never did grow in grace one-half so much anywhere as I have upon the bed of pain.”

“But He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”

“God never moves without purpose or plan  
When trying His servant and molding a man.  
Give thanks to the Lord though your testing seems long;  
In darkness He giveth a song.

Now I can see testing comes from above;  
God strengthens His children and purges in love.  
My Father knows best, and I trust in His care;  
Through purging more fruit I will bear.

O rejoice in the Lord, He makes no mistake.  
He knoweth the end of each path that I take.  
For when I am tried and purified,  
I shall come forth as gold.”

### **14. Cancer cannot shatter your future hope.**

Hope is our positive outlook for the future. The Biblical view of hope is not uncertainty or pessimism but complete certainty in what God has promised. We do not say, “Oh I hope that it will all pan out in the end and be true.” We say, “I can’t wait for I know it will all be true!” All of our hope must rest in Christ and the future promises that He has given to us in the Scriptures. Cancer cannot shatter the future hope that we have in Christ.

“When darkness veils His lovely face,  
I rest on His unchanging grace;  
When all around my soul gives way,

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He then is all my hope and stay.”

*First*, cancer cannot shatter your hope in the imminent return of Christ and the ever-present hope of a new body.

**Philippians 3:20-2** says—“For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.”

“Someday, all pain and sorrow will erase,  
Someday I’ll see my Savior face to face,  
Someday He is coming back for me!”

You will not have cancer forever! You can be sure of this. Even if your cancer is not totally cured in this life, you can be sure that it will be cured when you receive your new glorified and eternal body at the coming of Jesus Christ. Someday, and it may be today, you will receive this body of glory or this body of magnificence, just like Jesus Christ received when He rose from the grave. Think of it, my friend. Someday you will receive a new body no longer subject to pain, cancer, sin or any earthly sorrow. It will be a body that will never die. It will be a perfect, immortal body that you will enjoy throughout the ages of eternity.

A newsboy, thinly clad and drenched by the soaking rain, stood shivering in a doorway one cold day in November. First one bare foot and then the other was lifted for a moment and pressed against his leg to get a little warmth. Every few minutes his shrill cry could be heard, “Morning paper! Morning paper!” A man who was well protected by his coat and umbrella stopped to buy the early edition. Noting the boy’s discomfort, he said, “This kind of weather is pretty hard on you, isn’t it?” Looking up with a smile, the youngster replied, “I don’t mind too much, Mister. The sun will shine again.”

This is also true for the Christian who is suffering with cancer. The sun will shine again, if not in this life, then the next life. The gloom and rain might prevail for a season (1 Peter 1:6) in relationship to your physical body, but the future promise of a new glorified body gives us the blessed hope of a brighter day of sunshine and gladness in terms of our physical health. The sun will shine again! The clouds will one day break, and we will receive a new body that will never die or experience pain and sorrow again. What a hope we have as a born-again Christian.

**Titus 2:13** says—“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

The blessed hope of Christ’s imminent return should become a living reality and hope that permeates our hearts. This hope does not have to be stolen away from our hearts even when we suffer with cancer. We must keep looking up! Jesus is coming. Living in light of His return, standing on our tiptoes with great expectancy, gives us a blessed hope that can never be stolen away from our hearts. We must lift up our heads and hearts for our redemption draweth nigh! Cancer cannot touch the hope that we have in Christ’s return and the redemption of our body from all physical disease and pain. As we live and walk in light of this eternal hope, we will not allow cancer to shatter the future glory that awaits us. Cancer does not cancel out the blessed hope that we have in Christ’s promised return and the ever-present reality of possessing a new body.

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**2 Corinthians 4:17-18**—“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

Your affliction with cancer must be put in its proper perspective with eternity and the future glory of your new body that you will receive when Jesus Christ returns. Your future destiny as a believer is one of great glory and splendor. Therefore, if you compare the wondrous future glory to your present earthly battle with cancer, your cancer is seen to be a light and momentary trouble that is only passing by in your present existence on earth. This does not mean that cancer is an easy trial to bear or pass through in this life. What it means is that we must learn to view cancer and all of our trials from a spiritual perspective. As we look forward to the degree or abundance (“weight”) of glory that we will someday enter, it makes our present day trials seem small. Possessing a proper perspective on eternity and the future outshines and outdoes any momentary trial that we pass through in this present life on earth. In other words, the degree of suffering in the present does not compare in its intensity and greatness with the degree of glory and blessing that awaits us in the future, when we receive this magnificent body of redemption and release from all pain and sickness. So we must keep a spiritual perspective on our present suffering.

**Romans 8:18**—“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

Paul says that there can be no comparison between our suffering in this present life and the future of our glorious inheritance when we receive this glorified body. This is because the future far outshines and outweighs the present stress that we face through cancer. The future is so much more glorious in degree and intensity when compared to our present suffering that we can’t begin to compare or measure the two intensity levels. This is because the future glory is far more outstanding in greatness and blessing than the small momentary suffering that we pass through in this life. I must repeat this statement because it is so important to grasp. The degree of suffering in the present does not compare in its intensity and greatness with the degree of glory and blessing that awaits us in the future.

Look at the contrasts that we have seen in these two verses:

Light affliction	Eternal weight of glory
Moment	Eternal
Things which are seen	Things which are not seen
Temporal	The glory
Present time	Which shall be revealed in us

An anonymous poet put it like this:

“One little hour of watching for the Master,  
Eternal years to walk with Him in white;  
One little hour to bravely meet life’s duties,  
Eternal years to reign with Him in light.  
One little hour for weary toils and trials,  
Eternal years for calm and peaceful rest.”

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*Second*, cancer cannot shatter your hope concerning the future inheritance of Heaven.

As John and Betty Stam, early missionaries to China, were led to certain execution by their communist captors, someone asked, “Where are you going?” After saying he didn’t know where the guards were going, John added, “But we’re going to heaven.”

**1 Peter 1:3-4** states—“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.”

Peter promises the saints that we have been born again (“begotten”) by the mercy of the Lord. As a result of this new birth we can develop a “lively hope” or “living hope” that stems from the resurrection of Jesus Christ. You will notice that this is called a “living hope” which means that it is designed to affect us in our everyday pattern of living. Doctrine must get into our daily living. Because Jesus rose from the dead we can possess the present day hope that we too will live on throughout eternity and enter into a glorious future inheritance in Heaven. Heaven is a prepared place for prepared people (John 14:1-3). And the place that God has prepared for us in Heaven is a confident hope that we can have ringing in our hearts today as we walk this pilgrim pathway (“living hope”).

“And just think of stepping on shore and finding it Heaven,  
Of taking a hand and finding it God’s,  
Of breathing new air and finding it celestial,  
Of waking up in glory and finding it home.”

Although we live on earth we have already established legal residence in Heaven because of the work of Jesus Christ. Peter talks about this place of inheritance as being “incorruptible” which points to something undecaying, something that will never die or wear out or be damaged in any fashion. He also says that it is “undefiled” which speaks of this future place as having no spot or blemish. It will not be stained or cheapened in any way by sin. It is also a place that is timeless and eternal (“fadeth not away”). Our place or inheritance in Heaven will remain the same throughout eternity and will be everlasting in existence. Finally, this special place is “reserved in heaven for us” meaning that it is guarded for us and will be there when we get there! We have this positive and reassuring hope that the place God has prepared for us in the future we will someday receive. The hope of our future inheritance in Heaven is a sure hope that can never be shattered by cancer. Cancer cannot touch the inward hope of Heaven. It’s this hope that must become a “living hope” and reality to our hearts as we battle with the various kinds of cancers, which invade our human bodies.

A little girl was taking an evening walk with her father. Wonderingly, she looked up at the stars and exclaimed: “Oh, Daddy, if the wrong side of heaven is so beautiful, what must the right side be!”

Dear Christian friend, we are going to a better place. The better land is Heaven and the half has never been told about the wondrous glories that await us in this beautiful place! Cancer cannot steal this hope from our hearts, since we have the promises of the Word of God that our inheritance in Heaven will be there waiting for us as soon as we pass from this side of glory into the next.

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A little boy got on the elevator in the Empire State Building in New York City. He and his daddy started to the top. The boy watched the signs flashing as they went by the floors: 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70. They kept going, and he got nervous. He took his daddy's hand and said, "Daddy, does God know we're coming?"

Yes, God knows we are coming! He has a place already prepared for us which is incorruptible, undefiled, unfading and reserved or guarded for us. What a living hope! What a present assurance we can have in our hearts today even as we suffer with cancer. There is something that cancer cannot shatter—hope.

### **15. Cancer cannot reduce eternal life.**

This is the promise of Jesus Himself. The Gospel of John records for us the simple sayings of Jesus in regards to eternal life. Here are several of them.

**John 3:16**—"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

**John 6:47**—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life."

Jesus said that the only kind of life that He gives is eternal spiritual life that is based upon our belief or faith in Him. First, eternal or everlasting life speaks of a new birth where we receive a spiritual life that will never end. It is actually something that we possess at this very moment if we have personally believed on Christ ("hath everlasting life"). Second, this life which we now possess will continue to exist following our physical death in the unending bliss and glory that we will experience with Christ. Eternal life means that we receive spiritual life and are born again from a spiritual standpoint so that we can live with God throughout eternity. Eternal life is promised to us based upon our belief in Jesus Christ.

There may be some hurting cancer patients reading this booklet that do not understand what it means to believe on Jesus Christ. Very simply, let me say to you today that Jesus died upon the cross taking your own sins and judgment of hell upon Himself.

**1 Peter 2:24**—"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree ...."

**1 Corinthians 15:3** also says—"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures."

Jesus, as the perfect sacrifice, took your sins upon Himself when He died upon the cross. And there on the cross, Jesus paid the penalty for your sin, which was hell. Jesus was judged by the Father because of your own sin.

**Galatians 3:13** speaks about this judgment that was placed upon Christ—"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law (a curse of judgment and spiritual death), being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

God's perfect Law condemns us to the place of judgment because we have all broken this Law and sinned before a holy God. In fact, we are born sinners and because of this we commit acts of sin.

**Romans 3:23**—"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

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The wages that we must receive because of our sin is spiritual death or separation from God forever in the judgment of hell. Sin is what separates us from a holy and righteous God who cannot tolerate sin in any measure.

**Romans 6:23** says—“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Jesus took the wages or the payment for our sin upon Himself and now offers to us the gift of eternal life as the Scripture says. Eternal life is the free gift that we can receive as a result of the sacrifice that Christ made for us. Since Jesus, as our substitute and sacrifice, took our judgment upon Himself, He made a way for us to receive eternal life instead of eternal judgment. The way to receive this gift of eternal life is to make a personal response of faith in Jesus Christ. The gift of eternal life can only be yours when you believe or express personal faith in what Jesus Christ has done for you upon the cross.

When Jesus said in John 6:47, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life,” He was talking about expressing your own personal faith in what He has done for you upon the cross. Faith in Jesus Christ means that we want to personally apply what Jesus has done for us upon the cross to our own lives. Faith is the way to receive the gift of eternal life that Jesus offers. Jesus cannot give you eternal life until you believe or trust in Him as your only Savior and hope of Heaven. Personal response is required! In essence, we must be willing to say, “Lord Jesus I believe you died on the cross for me bearing my sin and judgment, and I reach out in faith and willingly take what you have to offer—the gift of eternal life which is salvation from hell.”

**Revelation 22:17** says—“And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

Faith in Christ is likened to taking a glass of water and drinking it since faith involves the appropriation or application of Christ to your own life. We must personally reach out and take what Christ has to offer to us—salvation from hell and eternal life.

Here is a simple prayer that might help you to express your own faith in Jesus Christ:

“Dear Lord Jesus, I am a sinner that is separated from your holy presence. I have never trusted in You to be my Savior. But today I understand that You died upon the cross for me bearing my sins and judgment. Today, I am ready to transfer all of my trust in You. I believe that You alone can become my Savior. Thank You for being my Savior from hell. And I thank You for the gift of salvation and eternal life that You have given to me. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

When Michael Faraday, the great English physicist, was dying, friends gathered at his bedside. As was often the case in the nineteenth century, they sought some final words from the dying man. “What are your speculations?” they asked. His answer was firm: “Speculations! I have none. I am resting on certainties.” The greatest certainty that you can have is to possess eternal life through personal faith in Jesus Christ. And no amount of cancer can reduce the gift of eternal life.

Well, you may have thought that it could never happen to you. But it did! Face it! You have cancer. You must now get over the shock and come to claim these wonderful promises of God’s Word and allow them to saturate your heart so that you will find grace to help in the time of need. These precious promises promote a spiritual bright side for those dear saints who are suffering with cancer. They become like a breath of fresh air in the midst of smog and pollution. I trust that

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you will cling to these promises and allow the Holy Spirit to use them in a mighty way in your life as you battle with cancer. There are many things that cancer cannot do to you!

**Psalm 119:50** speaks of the divine provision that God's promises give to us in our time of affliction—"This is my comfort in my affliction: for Thy word hath quickened me."

**Psalm 119:92** addresses the divine protection that we receive from God's promises in our time of affliction—"Unless Thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction."

The promises of God's eternal truth, which deal with hope, comfort and strength, are what you need to reflect upon as you fight your battle with cancer. You can't face this crisis alone. God with His eternal promises will come to your rescue. The promises of God's Word will keep you from going to pieces mentally and spiritually. It will keep your train on the track. God will not fail you. Tarry at a promise and God will meet you there! God is the God of promise. He keeps His word. God will grant you the grace to stand on the unfailing promises of His eternal Word.

“Standing on the promises of Christ my King,  
Thro' eternal ages let His praises ring;  
Glory in the highest, I will shout and sing,  
Standing on the promises of God.

Standing on the promises that cannot fail,  
When the howling storms of doubt and fear assail,  
By the living word of God I shall prevail,  
Standing on the promises of God.  
Standing, standing, Standing on the promises of God my Savior;  
Standing, standing, I'm standing on the promises of God.”

**Psalm 119:28**—"My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen Thou me according unto Thy word."

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*This message is available from him in booklet form and hopefully we can help get it into the hands of many dear believers who have been afflicted with cancer, so that they might see this disease from God's point of view.*