

A Faith Message

Breast cancer is a journey that I think that every woman feels “there, but by the grace of God goes I” ...it has touched so many lives. Well, this is my breast cancer story...

About ten years ago, out of the blue I said, “If I ever had brain cancer, I would want my friends Cindy Berry playing music over me, Joyce Tuggle reading scripture over me and Barbara Little praying over me in the hospital”. So, I started making a list of hymns I loved and kept them in my Bible. I even told my daughter that if anything happened to me to look in my Bible for the songs. I realize God speaks to us all of the time and we have to listen, to hear His voice.

You see, I am a worrier and a fretter. I am like a magnet attracting things to worry about. I carried many worries for many things for many years. I did not give things up to the Lord even knowing that He would take it from me. That He is in control of everything. I took a self-help seminar where one of the exercises was to make a list of all of the junk and yucky stuff in your life ...up to 100 things. My list was not that long because my life was good...no issues from childhood because I had a wonderful family. As we stood in a circle in the seminar and tore our list to pieces, I dropped a piece, bent down, and picked it up. The leader yelled and jumped on me...”Why are you picking the junk back up? You dropped it...leave it there!!!” Then we symbolically threw the pieces in the air and stomped

them, I realized all my junk looked like everyone else's. A very eye-opening experience!

Now if you will, fast forward to January 2012. I had a normal mammogram for the first time after enduring years of many biopsies, aspirations and ultrasounds. My condition never turned into cancer, they assured me.

Late January our daughter decided to sue her ex for primary custody of our grandson, so that he could go with her and her new husband to their next military assignment. During the tenuous court battle, I agreed to be the supervisor for the visits with our grandson and his dad because the judge did not want him to be alone with him. It was an emotional and stressful 10 months. In early October of 2012 the trial finally ended. It ended well for us and our grandson is a happy, well-adjusted 2nd grader.

While the trial was going on my left breast" blew up "and became red, swollen and painful. I put off going to the doctor thinking it was nothing different from what I had experienced before. My family Dr. gave me some antibiotic and sent me to Temple for an ultrasound biopsy. On October 30th the "Breast Navigator" assigned to me, from Scott & White called me to tell it was not good news, stage 3b breast cancer! Of course it was devastating to us. Our daughter and her husband were staying with us the last few days before they moved to Alaska. My grandson stayed behind for a few days while they went ahead to get settled. I flew our grandson to Alaska in late November,

after he had spent Thanksgiving with his dad. I spent a whirlwind 3 days and 2 nights in Alaska so I could be back to start treatments on November 28th.

I was so afraid to take chemo. I had spent my life eating well, not gaining weight, no caffeine etc. I was afraid of the chemo...knowing it was just putting poison in my body.

We decided to be very open about the journey on Facebook. Thinking maybe just maybe I could help someone else by my journey. I wanted to be covered in prayer. God's people are so good, I was getting prayers and cards and well-wishes from all over the world. Total strangers would stop and hug me and say "I am praying for you" AMAZING!!! Notification of Special Prayer services have been said for me in Trinidad, Belgium Kansas, Iowa, and Louisiana and around the world began to arrive. I had my last chemo treatment on March 11, 2013. Next came my bilateral mastectomy on April 10th 2013. After healing from the surgery, we flew to Alaska for the birth of our Granddaughter Zoey. After returning to Texas, I had 21 radiation treatments sometimes twice a day ending on July 5th.

My Dr's told me I was cancer free! I was so happy to be through. My hair was growing back; the eyebrows and eyelashes were coming back. My mouth was healing. My taste was coming back. Finally, I was on the road to recovery. All I had to do was take a pill for 5 years and have regular checkups. Dick and I left immediately to make a "Celebration Tour" to the National Exchange Club Convention in Greensboro, NC. We

stopped along the way to see Family and the Duck Dynasty location in Monroe Louisiana, the Vicksburg National Civil War Battlefield and even stopped to pick Georgia peaches. We visited Mayberry or Mt. Airy, NC and took Ms. Lorio and Maureen china replacement shopping. We attended the convention and had a great time. UntilWe realized that I was “listing” or walking to the left and feeling dizzy when I turned around too fast. We drove over a river called Pigeon River and I called it Pigeon Rigger. Dick and I both became alarmed at the subtle but sudden changes.

As soon as we got back, I had a follow up appointment with my oncologist. Dick asked her to run a Brain MRI. The day after the test was run she called to tell us that I had a very aggressive breast cancer that had gone to my brain and that I also had bone cancer in my neck, announcing I had 4-6 months to live. We were devastated once again. I had done everything they asked me to do. I had endured.

The next day our daughter flew in from Alaska with her new baby to see her husband who was at a school at Ft. Sam and to take her son home from his summer visit with his dad. We decided not to spoil her visit and just decided not to say anything to anyone until the following week after a pre-planned family birthday party. The following day we broke the news to family and friends during tear filled face to face visits.

As we planned our treatment options, I lost weight and just existed for a while. At night the Lord started to lay things on my heart that I needed to do, take care of and lay down. One morning I woke up and was hungry for breakfast that was the turning point. I decided to make a choice either I was going to live and have a great day or just exist. I chose to have great days as many and as long as I can.

This really has been a gift to have the time to see people, love on people, and to lay things down. I have such peace and no fear. I do not know what is ahead. None of us does. It is all in His hands, every breath.

I just want to glorify Him and His Peace which is beyond all human understanding.

I cannot tell the story without putting some love on my dear husband. He basically walked out of his business office and has taken care of and been with me 24 hours a day, for a year. He has ministered to me in ways that I did not know he was capable. God will bless the caregivers and servers. Our love has grown so much this past year!

God Bless You All! I Love Exchange and am missing working with the KHS EXCEL and "The Ride for a child" motorcycle ride fundraiser! I am hoping to be around to see The Ride in person next March.

I encourage each of you to remove the stress from your lives, and replace it with friends and family. Lay down your troubles

and forgive those who have wronged you. Forgive yourself for your imperfect ways. Know God and his love and blessings

Make the most of everyday and make lasting memories because there will come a time when memories is all that is left.

I love each of you and thank you for sharing my life.

Teresa Young