

HEALED!

The diagnosis of cancer catapulted me into a new dimension of life. Suddenly I was helpless, face-to-face with a reality that was bigger than I. Some evil force was trying to direct—to take—my life. I seemed caught in its inescapable power, no longer able to plan my future, no longer master of my body nor captain of my soul. I was being wrenched and torn by a force greater than anything I had ever experienced.

It began the afternoon of my initial diagnosis. The internal medicine physician, two radiologists and a urologist all examined the CAT scan. All agreed it was renal cell carcinoma—kidney cancer—which had spread to the lymph glands in my abdomen. The verdict: The kidney was inoperable and the cancer incurable by conventional methods (that is, by chemotherapy or radiation). A powerful force inside my body was determined to kill me.

It was as though I had been handed a black-edged death certificate. The only thing left blank was the date.

Then God took over.

It started with a time of anguishing personal repentance. Then my wife, Jackie, picked up a theme that she never backed away from, even in the darkest days: "You will not die, but live and proclaim what the Lord has done," she said, quoting Psalm 118:17. My family and church went into deep intercession. I cannot imagine the anguish of facing such an experience without the help of a loving church. Word came from around the nation: God's people—great and small—were praying for me. At one point I realized I might be the most prayed-for man in America. Awesome.

Something was changing. No longer was Satan controlling my life. Now it was God. What happened was a series of miracles—starting with daily miracles of direction—that are too deep and too numerous to mention here. I shall save them for the book. ("You will not die, but live and proclaim what the Lord has done.")

My older brother, Clay, called: "Jamie, faith is not believing in God; faith is believing God."

My younger brother, John, a medical doctor, flew down and insisted I get a second opinion.

Then I received a phone call in the middle of the night from a Spirit-filled cancer specialist in St. Petersburg, Dr. Ralph Johnson. We had never met, but God had burdened his heart to get involved.

Before the night was over he had consulted with my brother John, then called a renal surgeon—one of the world's finest—at the renowned M.D. Anderson Cancer Clinic in Houston. An appointment was made for me to fly out the next week for more examinations.

The doctors in Houston were "mystified." They were afraid to recommend surgery and unwilling to recommend treatment. "Go home and think about it," they said.

Two days after we returned home, Oral Roberts called. He'd just had a vision of a battle raging in my gut between Beelzebub, the prince of corruption, and the Holy Spirit. "The cancer is still removable," he prophesied.

A half hour later, Dr. Johnson knocked at my door. He had driven across the state, intending to encourage me to start treatment. But on the way, the Lord spoke to him. He walked into my house and said, "Attack this thing. Take it out by surgery."

Jackie and I had an immediate inner witness. Despite what the doctors said about the inoperable nature and the high risk, we decided to put God to the test. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). For too long I had allowed Satan to call the shots.

Jesus will not go back on His Word or His nature. God is the kind of God He says He is. He is a God of healing who brings life, not death. The Bible said I was healed. It was time to go on the offensive and prove it.

Four days later we were back in Houston. On July 31, Dr. David Swanson removed my kidney, a huge growth in my renal vein and numerous lymph nodes. I awoke in the surgical intensive care unit looking up at my wife's tearful but smiling face: "You got your miracle, honey. The cancer is gone."

A week later, as I was slowly recuperating, a grinning Dr. Swanson came into my hospital room. "I sent all those lymph glands to pathology. Although they seemed cancerous on the CAT scan, under a microscope they were cancer-free. The disease was limited to your kidney, and I got it all. No further treatment is needed. You're healed!"

Now begins the great adventure—walking out this new life in Christ! ■

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