

Cancer Answers

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Time Alone With God

This month's newsletter is the third in the series on "New Beginning's." Because I am focusing on spending time alone with God in Bible study and prayer I know that I will offend some of you and, of those I offend, some will not bother to read any further, but what I have to say is from my heart. Please read it in that spirit and gain encouragement from it. One thing I was fully aware of during my personal journey was that I was not in control of what was happening. I believe that I was able to completely come to grips with that fact because of my faith in Jesus Christ. As a Christ follower since my childhood years I was very aware that being out of control was not a bad place to be. In fact it was a wonderful place to be. I could use my strength to focus on the things I could control like what I ate, how much sleep I got and my relationship with God, my family and friends.

I have often said if God had asked me if I wanted breast cancer so I could grow spiritually and emotionally I would have answered "NO!" But, God didn't ask, I had cancer and I GREW! Following are some simple principles for daily Bible study and prayer that helped me grow spiritually. During your cancer journey is not a time to start a new a grueling Bible study. It is a time to focus and meditate on verses, or portions of scripture that you are familiar with. If Bible study is new to you, the book of John is a perfect place to start. Also, the Psalms will bring comfort and encouragement, while teaching you about the character of God. There are many wonderful translations that are easy to understand. Try the New International Version or the New American Standard Bible.

If you are familiar with the Bible and/or study the Bible on a regular basis you might want to download an excellent wonderful Bible study tool called e-sword. The website to download the free software is: www.e-sword.net/. It has the entire Bible in several versions and translations of the Bible along with some commentaries from respected commentators to help you understand and explore different meanings of scripture.

Proverbs 3: 4-6 is one of the most encouraging portions of scripture in the Bible. Do a word study on "trust" and "lean" over several weeks. These two words have so much power as they relate to these verses when you get them down into your spirit.

Psalms 37: 1-7 is a beautiful example of how to face life with Christ by your side. The beginning words of verses 1, 3, 4, 5, 7 are good phrases to study. In the Amplified translation these words are: "Fret not yourself", "Trust in the Lord", "Delight yourself also in the Lord", "Commit your way to the Lord" and "Be still and rest in the Lord."

The more you read and re-read, do word studies and meditate - the more the words will get into your spirit and change how you act and react to your cancer journey. For some of you, using Bible studies guides are already your style of daily study. Continuing those studies is important, but

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also spend time meditating on the greatness of God and His power. Revel in the fact that He is in control.

Your prayer time during times of crisis is often focused on the crisis and YOU in the crisis. There is nothing wrong with that. God cares and desires us to bring our burdens, concerns, fears and petitions to Him in prayer. However, one thing that I have learned as I grow older and more mature in my faith is that often when we worry about ourselves, we are thinking more of the creation - US, instead of the creator - GOD.

When we begin our prayer time focusing on who God is, it puts us in a worshipful mindset and sets the tone for our prayer time. I love to begin my prayer time by silently reciting words to certain hymns, worship songs and scriptures. Here are several phrases that I often pray: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, the whole earth is FULL of your glory. The Lord is in His holy temple. Let ALL the earth keep silent before Him...for He alone is worthy of our praise. I bow my knee before your throne, I know my life is not my own.

These words so calm my heart and prepare me to worship God prior to making my petitions. It brings such peace at the start of each day.

I like to picture myself kneeling before the throne of God in a place like Minas Tirith in Lord of the Rings III. Except that the king on the throne is The King of Kings and Lord of Lords, unlike the weak and evil King in the movie. What a vision to then see myself rise and actually climb up into the lap of the King MY Father!

Find time to be alone with God...and you will face LIFE with new HOPE and JOY!
...till next month...