

The Testimony of Cathi Myers RN, BSN, MA

In October 2007, I was diagnosed with breast cancer in the form of Ductal Carcinoma In Situ or DCIS. Although I was thankful my doctor believed it was the non-invasive type of cancer, it was difficult to go through all the tests, procedures and 2 surgeries that were necessary to prove it was non-invasive and rid my body of the cancer. After my second surgery, I went through 28 radiation treatments and started an oral medication to help prevent cancer reoccurrence. Although I know DCIS is one of the most treatable types of cancer, dealing with my cancer and its background was and still is extremely hard for me at times. Some people now give me the label “Cancer Survivor” or “Cancer Warrior” even though I know it is God’s healing and strength that gets me through each of the necessary steps in treatment.

As hard as it has been at times to deal with my cancer, there is something else during periods of my life that continues to be even more difficult to face. The part of my testimony that begins prior to my cancer diagnosis explains it best and starts with my quoting Daniel 4:2 -“It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me.” I use these words of Nebuchadnezzar because our testimonies have a significant common factor. God allowed both of us to experience a type of insanity for a time. Then He graciously brought us back to reality. This is my testimony: At age 5, I realized that I had done bad things so I asked Jesus to take my sins away and be my Savior. At age 17, I struggled with giving the Lord my total life even though I knew it was the right thing to do. I sincerely prayed what I thought to be the perfect prayer: “Lord, *if* you give me the strength I’ll live for You.” I thought it was perfect because if the Lord didn’t give me the strength, it wouldn’t be my fault. The next morning my devotional book said to read: Isaiah 40:28-31. The last verse reads: “But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” I was awed and amazed by how the verses answered my prayer. It was like the Lord was saying to me: “Cathi, I have all the strength in the world and I offer it to you. If you don’t take it, it won’t be My fault.” My commitment to totally live for the Lord was solidified.

Over the next 13 years, the Lord directed and helped me achieve many things including graduating from a Christian high school; from a Christian College with my Bachelors of Science in Nursing degree and passing my RN licensing exam; from a Christian University with my Masters in Counseling degree; from T.E.A.M’s candidate school; and from an Italian Driving School. If you want to hear a funny story ask me about my Italian Driver’s test. It included learning all the parts of a car in Italian and a practical test where I was instructed to break a traffic law. The funniest thing of all was that I actually passed the test.

Reaching an academic or professional achievement is wonderful. However, I receive the most pleasure when God gives me the privilege of helping draw people to Himself. While I was a missionary in Italy, my greatest joy was when God allowed me to be a part of bringing an Italian boy to know Jesus as Savior.

In 1993, my insanity started when I was finishing my language training and an internship in an Italian Church. I began having trouble sleeping. Then I couldn’t sleep at all, my thoughts raced no matter how hard I tried to turn them off. I remember lying in bed, praying, quoting scripture and trying to sleep without success. My speech and behavior became strange and illogical. I heard voices and saw things that really weren’t there. In God’s amazing love, He had placed 4 other nurses on our Italy missionary T.E.A.M. I was told that they cared for me; got me medical treatment in Italy and 2 of them flew home with me to America. God allowed my sanity to return in a Chicago hospital appropriately named “Mercy Center.” Physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually, I was devastated and wanted to die. After some time, I agonizingly cried out to God for help and understanding. In my Bible, I started to reread Isaiah 40:28-31. Verse 28 states: “Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and *his understanding no one can fathom.*” It was like He was saying to me: “Cathi, I know you are deeply hurting and don’t know why, but I love you and know why. Trust me and I will give you the strength to get through even this.” I made a pact with God that day. I told God that as long as He gave me the ability to make conscious choices, I would not try to take my life, but trust Him to help me.” Then I prayed for God to give me strength and wisdom that would aid His healing of my brokenness. From being a nurse, I took the nursing approach of A PIE© or Assessment, Plan, Implementation and Evaluation to every aspect of my being. Prayerfully, I used “Interwoven Health” practices along with working with my doctor and counselor.

Over a year later, God had brought much healing in my life. I was a missionary with Handi*Vangelism (now H*VMI) and my doctor agreed that I could try stopping my medicine since my insanity was brief and could have been a one-time episode. As Paul, I prayed that the Lord would “take away the thorn in my flesh.” Nine months later, despite my trying to prevent it, God allowed me to have a second similar brief insanity. At that time, the doctors “labeled” me with a chronic “mental illness” – bipolar illness. Today, I thank Almighty God who created me that His “label” for me has not and never will change. No matter what “label” people try to put on you or me, the irremovable “label” God wove for us in our mother’s womb is “Beloved.” In II Corinthians 12:9, God encourages us with His Words: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Prayerfully, I practice “Interwoven Health” and praise the Prince of Peace for His Amazing Love, Grace, Hope and Strength.