

Chapter 2

My Freedom from Cancer

In 1989, without warning, I was attacked by breast cancer. I was shocked, because I had tried always to be careful about my health, exercising and eating healthful foods.

At the time of the attack, I did not know very much about God's divine physical healing and how it applied to me. Being aware of some of the biblical principles of healing, such as James 5:14–15 or "the prayer of faith," I requested that elders of my church pray for me, and they did so.

My confidence rested in God's healing and His supernatural wisdom. He gave me direction regarding treatment alternatives, and He directed me to the Chairman of the Department of General Surgery of a highly regarded teaching hospital, a lumpectomy, and follow-up radiation. Consulting with the Lord, I rejected other medical recommendations for medication and further follow-up.

After surgery, I received more prayer at my church. Hands were laid on me for God's supernatural power to heal my body. I received by faith Jesus' divine healing power imparted to me by those who were praying for me. My desire was that my future

Jesus Heals Today

experience would be victorious evidence that Jesus still heals today.

I consulted with an MD who gave me nutritional advice, and I changed my diet.

I began to see the importance of meditating with faith on God's promises in His written Word and of learning more about what believers receive through Jesus' provision of salvation. I intensified my study and memorization of His promises, particularly those dealing with physical healing. During the day, I quoted out loud to myself these memorized verses to demonstrate my faith in God for His healing in my life. Expressing God's words of power and life, I began to realize the crucial importance and power of His words. Proverbs 4:22 indicates that Solomon thought his words to be a reflection of God's words: "For they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh." I meditated on passages like 2 Peter 1:3-4: "As His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness ... have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature," I realized that in partaking of His nature, we can escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. We can escape from weakness; we can escape from frailties; we can escape from sickness.

During this time, I was building up my spirit and continuing to renew my mind by focusing on Scriptures that I had memorized. I received spiritual support from many people, especially from my husband and my mother. (My father already had been experiencing God's Heavenly glory since his death in 1981.) My husband and I worked together, using spiritual warfare against Satan's kingdom. Everything seemed to be going smoothly.

In the spring of 1990, a friend at church told me, "My daughter had a dream about you." I did not know her daughter well. The mother said that in the dream I was standing before my church congregation, telling everyone that God miraculously had healed

My Freedom from Cancer

me. I appreciated her telling me this, but I had not yet had an opportunity to tell my story publicly in a church service, and I did not understand the part of the dream about the healing being miraculous.

In the fall of 1990, almost a year to the day from my cancer diagnosis, I went again for my quarterly routine mammogram. After the mammogram, the radiologist instructed me to bring the x-rays to the doctor's office for my appointment that same day. I noticed an "x" within a circle on one of the X-rays, as I looked at them on the way to my appointment with the surgeon. After examining the X-rays, he ominously declared, "You've got the same thing on your right side as you had on your left!"

I couldn't believe it!

The doctor's face suggested a sentence of death. What previously had been a positive attitude on his part now was displaced by fear. All that my doctor knew about helping me was to do what he had done before, cut by surgery and prescribe burning by radiation. It wasn't that he didn't want to help me; he had seen too many devastating endings to this often fatal disease.

Within fifteen minutes, the doctor's receptionist had set up an appointment for me at the hospital for another lumpectomy, another lymph node dissection, and something new, a stereotactic procedure. The doctor also mentioned radiation after the surgery. I thought with terror, *Oh, no, here we go again!*

On the way home, my mind started to hear fear-filled lies from Satan's kingdom: "See, God didn't heal you. All those words you were learning in the Bible? They didn't help you; they're meaningless! That diet you went on? All that healthful food? It didn't do a bit of good. You are going to die. God did this to you." I knew all of these words were coming from Satan, so I began to reject the lies by using Jesus' authority against them.

To counteract this attack, I asked God for help and He brought to my mind some of His promises regarding physical healing:

Jesus Heals Today

I am the LORD who heals you.

—Exodus 15:26b

Psalm 103:2–3:

Bless the LORD, O my soul;
And forget not all His benefits:
Who forgives all your iniquities,
Who heals all your diseases,

During this time of anguish, God gave me Psalm 103:2–3 as His *rhema* (His spoken words to me), which became my spiritual sword, as explained in Ephesians 6:17. I began to use these verses, and I still use them against the enemy in spiritual warfare.

These and other verses started ministering “life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh” (Proverbs 4:22). They were giving me hope and they were giving me faith in God’s healing power.

When I got back home and told my husband the news, we pursued intense prayer and spiritual warfare. For the next few days it was a tough and exhausting battle. Every time my husband would notice me weaken, he would say something like, “You’re healed by the stripes of Jesus Christ” (from Isaiah 53:5) and “by whose stripes you were healed” (1 Peter 2:24).

At home and by myself during the day, I often made vocal declarations of resistance against Satan, such as “You can’t do this to me. Jesus created me and paid for my whole being on the cross. By His stripes I was healed. You can’t have my body. You can’t kill me. I refuse to accept your attacks and lies. My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Jesus came to bring me life, and that means abundant life.”

Second Corinthians 7:1 indicates that we need to “cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” With this verse heavy on my heart, one evening I got down before God on the family room floor, crying

My Freedom from Cancer

out to my Heavenly Father. I prayed something like, “There must be some reason why the cancer returned. If there is anything wrong in my life, perhaps something I don’t even know about, would You please reveal it to me now?” In answer to my question, He did reveal some things to me that were ways in which Satan had gained footholds in my life and in my health. I realized that these areas from the past, not consciously known to me before, were keeping me from God’s total protection. I quickly confessed them to Him.

The major problem God revealed to me that evening was that I had a stronghold of grief in my life. It was true. My obsession with grief especially was related to my father’s death about nine years previously. I realized that because of this overwhelming grief, I had allowed Satan’s kingdom to access my life and body and to play havoc with my health. Over the past nine years, I had grieved over the death of my father, often crying and feeling anxious at the very mention of my father’s name. Nine years later, I still was grieving over my father’s death, as if he had just died.

I confessed all of this to my Heavenly Father, and I went into the kitchen. There, my husband, Paul, had just finished a phone conversation with an out-of-state ministry to cancer victims. He had not called them about my cancer crisis, but had asked them to send information to someone else who had the same disease. He told me that he had written down five underlying conditions, learned in the phone call, that generally accompany cancer patients. He showed the piece of paper to me: “Anger, lust, unforgiveness, grief, and ancestral curses.” He pointed to the word “grief” and said, “That’s you!” He said this without knowing anything of my experience a few minutes earlier in the other room. His statement was confirmation to me that I had heard correctly from God. I shared with him what had just happened to me.

There wasn’t much time between the sentence-of-death look on the surgeon’s face and my hospital appointment. I went to my

Jesus Heals Today

church on Wednesday morning to speak to a counselor who knew of my first cancer problem. I wanted her to agree with me by faith that God would turn this situation around for my complete healing. Arriving there, I found that she was about ready to start the women's Bible study, so she didn't have much time. I told her, "The same condition that was on my left side is on my right. They say the right side has changed."

The counselor's response stunned me: She stuck her face into mine and said with much determination, "But God hasn't changed!"

Everyone there laid hands on me and asked God to release His healing power into my body.

After the women's prayers, I got into my car and started driving home. What I felt next was not my imagination. God's powerful presence came down upon me in the form of electric waves of love, from my head to my waist and back up again to my head. This calming, healing sensation lasted about fifteen minutes. I sensed great peace. I had faith in God, that He had touched me and that He would take care of the problem.

At my church's midweek service, still others prayed for me. Thankful for their ministry, I especially appreciated one friend's advice that I should go step by step through the planned medical procedures, following God's leading. She believed God would reveal what I should do as I took each step. I again sensed more peace.

The night before surgery, instead of my usual difficulty in falling asleep, I slept well. My husband, however, woke up at about 2:00 A.M., hearing these words: "Confound the wise." That's another way of saying, "put to shame." Before driving me to the hospital, he read to me the 1 Corinthians 1:27b (SCO) passage: "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise."

We went with that verse to the hospital, asking Jesus to go before us as our warrior in the battle and as the "confounder" of any wisdom of the doctors not based on what God wanted to do.

My Freedom from Cancer

At the hospital we met with two doctors, my surgeon who had planned a lumpectomy, and the doctor who would perform a stereotactic procedure. This procedure can be a form of needle biopsy, as it is used to locate and map the surgery area. I had understood that the needle biopsy results were going to be made available to us before the scheduled lumpectomy. However, we found out that this was not the case. The doctor had planned a repeat of the same surgery of the previous year to follow immediately after the needle procedure. My husband and I objected to this; we wanted to decide what would be done based on the pathology report. At first, my surgeon didn't like the confrontation, as we had interrupted his busy schedule. But the specialist with the stereotactic procedure agreed to our slower, step-by-step process. Ultimately, the surgeon agreed as well.

After the needle procedure, while we were waiting for pathology results to be available to my surgeon, my husband prayed with me that he would become a "robot of the Holy Spirit."

The surgeon appeared after a short period of time. He seemed like a different person! No longer impatient, he was now cooperative and personable. He sat down and said, "It's highly suggestive, highly suggestive [of cancer]. If you were my wife, I would want you to have a biopsy."

Suddenly "lumpectomy" had become "biopsy." I thought, *As we take one step forward in the Lord, Satan is retreating!* I sensed that the Lord was going ahead of us in the battle. He was leading while we watched Satan and his hosts retreat in defeat. I began looking for the next step toward God's victory.

I said to the surgeon, "You told me I had to stay in the hospital two days."

"No, you can go home today."

"But I thought you were going to test the lymph nodes."

"No, not now. Probably next week."

Jesus Heals Today

I finally agreed to the biopsy, but I told the surgeon I would like a local anesthetic, so I could be awake during the surgery. (I wanted to pray during that time.)

He replied, “No, you need a general anesthetic, so it will be easier for you and me. With this biopsy, we’ll be 100 percent sure, but remember that it’s highly suggestive [of cancer].” He left the curtained area with those ominous words.

A few minutes later, the anesthesiologist appeared. She said, “Hi, I’m here to give you a local anesthetic. You’ll be awake during the surgery.”

While I was waiting to be taken into surgery, I heard my surgeon talking in another enclosure to a woman I had seen a few months before in his office. He told her she would soon be taken to surgery for another lumpectomy and that, when one breast is affected by cancer, the other one usually becomes affected later. The woman was agreeing to the surgery.

The surgeon had told me that we could know the results that night, but he suggested allowing one more day for thorough study of pathology results by several doctors. After the biopsy, I was released from the hospital, and my husband brought me home. That was Friday afternoon, and the surgeon gave me instructions to call him Saturday night at his home.

When Saturday night finally came, I nervously called the surgeon. He said, “No, I don’t have the report yet; call me Sunday at noon.” On Sunday, I called him at noon and again he told me, “No, I don’t have the report yet, but, if you don’t hear from me within the hour, call me back.” So I tried again after an hour. He said, “No, I still don’t have the report. I’ll have the written report in my hands Monday. Call me at my office Monday at 10:00 A.M.” Later we realized that the unusual delay was due to the fact that the results were very different from what the surgeon had expected. He wanted more time for the pathologists to go over the biopsy results. During this time, my husband and my mother

My Freedom from Cancer

kept encouraging me. I remember my mother saying, “There’s nothing there. I know that there’s nothing there!”

Just before nine o’clock Monday morning, my husband, Paul, answered the phone in the kitchen. I was upstairs. Before long I heard what sounded like Paul laughing and crying at the same time. He was shouting as he ran upstairs, “Marcia, Marcia, the test results are in. There’s no cancer—100 percent certainty of no cancer! No cancer!” (The surgeon later acknowledged to us that prior to the biopsy, he would have assessed the likelihood of cancer at a very high percentage.)

“No cancer!” His voice and those words still echo in my head after all these years. Since all of this has happened to me, I can’t stop telling people how gracious, loving, and powerful God is and how He wants to heal them. He wants to heal you, too. He wants to provide for all of your needs. As believers, we have all of God’s provisions available to us. Sometimes we do not receive them because of our unbelief. Sometimes we are too busy to take time to understand and receive them. Let’s not wait until someone in our family, or one of our friends, is sick and/or dying of a dread disease. Let’s start memorizing God’s promises. Let’s start applying relevant verses. Let’s start having faith in God’s promises and in God, that He will accomplish what He promises!

Soon after the surgery, I took advantage of the opportunity to fulfill the dream of my friend’s daughter by publicly telling my church’s congregation one Sunday evening the story about how God healed me. I closed my testimony with Psalm 118:17:

I shall not die, but live,
And declare the works of the LORD.

Since the 1990 victory, all follow-up tests have revealed no cancer. The surgeon used to see me every three months. During the quarterly exams each year for several years after 1990, he would shake his head in bewilderment, stating something like,

Jesus Heals Today

“Marcia, until you’re eighty years old, we’ll still be talking about this. What happened?” I always responded with a smile and said, “Jesus healed me!”

In October of 1994, after five years of mammograms and examinations, I was declared “medically clean,” with no recurrence of the cancer that attacked me in 1989. Thanks, Jesus, for Your healing power! To You be all glory and honor!

The Lord has been faithful, and one of my ways of thanking God for His healing has been my determination to tell this story and what I have learned about His supernatural healing power that is made available through Jesus’ atonement. God has led me to tell my story to scores of people here at home and in many parts of the world.

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).