**Thanking God for “Cancer”?**

I have not met this 93 old woman, but my son has. Just a few years ago she was told that she has cancer, a slow growing kind. She has not much time left. She has six faithful children in the church today, yet she has expressed her thanks to God for her cancer. As I type this story, this still seems strange to my ears. The crisis of cancer has brought her closer to Jesus, the purpose of her life. Too often we can get caught up in everyday things of life and forget the joy knowing of Jesus.

“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.” (Philippians 1:21). The old preacher once turned this around and said, “Death will not be gain, if we don’t live for Christ”. Cancer seems to have kindled afresh the hope of Christ in her.

Being such an age, and having so many faithful children serving Christ today, she has had many years of service. So what could cause her hope to grow stronger now? “Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed.” (Rom. 13:11). Her hope is now stronger looking back at the struggles of a godly life. She is not giving up or giving in.

We cannot change cancer, sometimes. We cannot change death, it is coming, probably sooner than we think. But what we can change is how we live today. The apostle Paul thinking how close his hour to awake from death, adds, “The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.” (Romans 13:12-14). The clean life is the best life.

Why not live like you were dying? Let him know that he didn’t die in vain. Let the gospel message of Jesus change your life and your view of life itself. That his willingness to take our sins upon himself has impressed you so much that you resolved never to sin again (repentance). That you now live for him, and not for yourself only: “the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked. (1John 2:6). I sincerely hope you are seeing your own steps growing closer and closer to his steps. That your confidence and peace in Jesus is getting stronger (1John 3:19-21). May your crisis bring you closer to Christ. Dan Peters