

Parent with Cancer

We found out my mom has cancer. She had an operation and she hasn't been her self lately and I'm worried for her. There's so much stress and I don't know what to do. Please help.

From Bob – We're really sorry to hear about your mom. I can't imagine how scary this must be for you. It's hard to imagine a world without someone we love, and the idea of possibly losing your mom to cancer must be overwhelming at times. I have relied on faith in God through the hard times of my own life. It's a reminder that the only one whose love will never leave or forsake us is the love of God - our Heavenly Father. Let Him take you through the difficult times you face, and never let go when things are going well. It's not a magic formula to take away our pain, but in God's mysterious way, he comforts us and gives hope. If we look at our circumstances we will always question if God loves us, but if we look at the cross we will always know we are loved. I know you probably have a ton of questions for God right now. And it really is ok. God can handle our questions. I know I had a ton of questions when my mom and dad died. I still don't have all the answers, but I do have a closer relationship with God now because of it.

From Tiffany – My mother in law has had cancer 3 times and is now doing well. So, please don't give up hope that your mom will fully recover. Although cancer was the hardest thing she ever had to deal with, she's glad on this side that she went through it because she grew so close to God and others around her. The mom of another friend of mine was recently diagnosed with cancer and my friend freaked. She told her mom that there's just no way she could imagine her life without her. Her mom laughed and said, "Honey, if we never went through tough times, how would God ever be glorified in our lives?" What an amazing response. Just yesterday while listening to the radio I heard something about the abundant life and my mind went wandering (it does that a lot) and I realized that the abundant life isn't a life without problems and an abundance of blessings; the abundant life is realizing that through all the hard times God has an abundant supply of strength to help us through. If we can catch His vision of all that He can accomplish through these troubles, then we can have hope and joy in the midst of it. I'm not trying to be trite...I really feel sad about sorrow, and hopeful for the good that can come from it at the same time.

From Both – When cancer or illness strikes a family, it reminds us that relationships are the most important part of our lives. It's crucial to pursue strengthening them and making them a priority each and every day. When we're reminded of our mortality, we can be tempted to withdraw from others. We know of friends that have actually avoided people who were struggling with a serious illness because they believed it would ease the pain of losing them if they were removed from their lives. But in each instance, it only resulted in guilt and remorse. Absence makes love grow fonder; it doesn't remove it. It might be really good for you to talk with a youth pastor about what's going on. They can help you deal with the feelings too. Plus, don't be afraid to share your feelings with your mom and other loved ones.

We wish our letter could give you a bunch of answers to your situation, but there are no easy answers when we're told something like this. We are praying for you and your mom's recovery. Still, despite all our hopes and prayers for you, your mom, and your family, we still can't guarantee that everything will turn out the way you would like. It is inevitable that each of us will face loss in our lives eventually. That is why it is so important to extend love, respect and honor to those in our lives each and every day, because we just never know when something like this may happen. Bottom line – enjoy your relationship with your mom now. We encourage you to live in the present and enjoy and strengthen your relationship today, rather than fearing what it may or may not be tomorrow. That is all any of us can do.

Articles are written by Bob Lenz, Tiffany Thompson and other national youth communicators with Life Promotions Inc., a non-profit youth organization committed to instilling hope, worth and value in youth.

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