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‘If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.’ 2 Chronicles 7:14

By the time you get this newsletter, Memorial Day 2019 will be behind us. It is important for our country to remember those who have given their lives to protect us and keep our country free. More important than that is to remember that Jesus gave his life for us so that we could experience true freedom and all the blessings of being part of the family of God. We also need to remember to pray for our country and our leaders every day. God will honor those prayers!

We want to thank everyone for their prayers, phone calls, get well cards, and texts before and after my surgery. One call that really blessed my heart was when Bart, our blind friend from South Dakota called. He had knee surgery a few days before my surgery and we had prayed with him many times, but he said this time it was his turn to pray. My surgery went well, and I was released the following day. I worked the day before surgery and before I left for the day, my boss prayed with me. When I got in the car to go home, the song ‘My Fear Doesn’t Stand a Chance’ by Josh Baldwin was playing on the radio. Talk about God’s timing! I can honestly say I was not afraid to have the surgery, but this song just confirmed that I didn’t need to fear. As the song says, ‘my fear doesn’t stand a chance when I stand in Your love’.

I had to be at the hospital at 5:30AM. One of my pre-op nurses was originally from Ireland. Larry shared some of his testimony with her and we told her about our prison ministry. I don’t remember a whole lot after I talked to my surgeon, Dr. Ochoa in pre-op. The next thing I remember is being in the recovery room. Dr. Ochoa had told me they would do what they call a quick test of my lymph nodes during surgery. This test showed my lymph nodes were clear praise God! I had quite a bit of pain but that eased up after they gave me some medication. I was in a room and eating lunch by 1:00. The following morning Dr. Johnson came in and asked if I was ready to go home. I told her I was, so she checked me over and we were on the way home not long after that. We are thankful for neighbors and friends that brought us meals after we got home.

I was amazed at how little pain I had after coming home. In fact, I didn’t have to take any pain pills. I know it was God and all the prayers! I had two drains in my chest. We had to empty the fluid that collected twice a day. I didn’t realize how much I used my arms until I couldn’t reach things on our kitchen cabinet shelves! We do take things for granted, don’t we? I had a follow-up visit with Dr. Ochoa was on April 18. She said everything looked good and the drain tubes were removed which made me very happy. She also gave us the good news that the pathology report showed my lymph nodes were clear and the margins were clean. We give God all the glory for this! Since this journey began, we have shared our faith with the doctors and nurses we have met. On April 30, I followed up with Dr. Ochoa again and got another good report. They also gave me some arm exercises to do to prevent lymphedema and to get good range of motion back. The exercises have helped and exactly six weeks after surgery, I rode my motorcycle about forty miles. That was a blessing!

I also saw my oncologist on April 30. Dr. Pennisi has recommended that I take a chemo pill to prevent recurrence. This was not the news we expected although she had mentioned the possibility of this prior to surgery. I would take a pill each day for three weeks, take a week break and then start over again for six cycles. I am still praying about this and doing some research. My next appointment with her is on June 10. I have met some Godly women the last few months who have had breast cancer and I am so thankful for their encouragement, suggestions and willingness to share their experiences with me.

Dr. Ochoa told me that recovery time for a bilateral mastectomy is four to six weeks. I went back to work part-time on April 22, only seventeen days after surgery. I am back at work full time now praise God. I feel good and have started to get some energy back. My hair has started growing back too. God gets all the glory for my awesome recovery!

Larry continues to minister at the Tucker Unit every Tuesday. He has reconnected with several men that he ministered to years ago and has also met some new men. God can use things in our past to allow us to minister to others, such as the old days of drug use or riding with an outlaw motorcycle club. And having been in prison also gives Larry an advantage with some of the men since he can honestly say he knows what it is like to be locked up.

We had the honor of attending the grand opening of Hellfighters USA in Laurel, MS the weekend of May 4-5. We have known Richard and Gina Headrick, founders of the Hellfighters Ministry for several years. They truly have a heart for God and have been a huge blessing to us. The grand opening was held at their store which was originally an old garment factory. Saturday morning as we were eating breakfast at the hotel, we met Sylvia. She and her husband are members of Hellfighters and live in South Carolina. Sylvia is a breast cancer survivor. We visited awhile and then she asked if we knew Ann and Brad who are also Hellfighter members. We told her we didn't and she said we needed to meet them. Ann is also a cancer survivor who is going through cancer treatments. As it turned out, we spent most of Saturday with Ann and Brad. We ate lunch together, talked, and even had our picture taken with Uncle Si Robertson from Duck Dynasty! God knows who to put in our path when we need them or they need us. We also met several Hellfighter members from Laurel who have been praying for us. I was surprised to see some of my Motor Maid sisters at the event too.

Richard was preaching at a church Sunday morning so we decided we would attend church there before we left for home. Some of the men who are living at Hellfighters Mission at the Cross shared their testimonies before Richard brought the message. Several of the men from the mission helped renovate the old garment factory and some work at the motorcycle shop. They are mentored and disciplined during their stay at the mission. From the testimonies we heard that day, we know that God is using the mission to change lives for His glory. The service and fellowship afterwards were a good way to end a very good weekend.

We are hopeful that we will be able to attend some rallies soon. We are also starting to make plans for a rodeo/revival at the Tucker Unit, probably in September.

We appreciate your prayers and financial support so much. We could not do this without our faithful supporters! And remember that we are collecting socks for our Christmas Behind Bars outreach.

Blessings and Peace,

Larry and Kathy