

This is a transcript of the testimony of Jared Cory Guthrie given to a number of church congregations and student athletic groups. As a father you hope your sons grow into better men than yourself. I have received that blessing.

Message Feb. 21, 2010

In April of 2005, I was involved in an accident where my vehicle hit a tree. As a result, my injuries consisted of a collapsed lung with contusions, head concussion, damaged spleen, broken ribs, and a dislocated right hip. The orthopedic surgeon that had patched me up advised that I would never be able to run again. By the Grace of God, up until very recently I was running upwards of 8-12 miles a day.

Psalms 146:3 Put your trust not in princes, nor in a son of man, in whom there is no help.

In May of 2007, I was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma. I was staged at IV-B, the worst stage of Hodgkin's Lymphoma. After 6 months of chemotherapy, followed by nearly 2 months of radiation, the cancer was declared to be "in remission." Due to the size and spreading of the cancer before the treatment, or the biopsy procedure performed to gain evidence of my having cancer, my left phrenic nerve was severed. The phrenic nerve is the nerve that supplies movement to the diaphragm. The left side of my diaphragm was paralyzed and could no longer contract or relax, preventing my left lung from expanding and deflating during inhalation and expiration of breaths. Once again the doctors said that I would never be able to run long distance. By the Grace of God, up until very recently I was running upwards of 8-12 miles a day.

2 Corinthians 12:7 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.”

I believe in my heart that God has a reason for everything that happens in our life, good or bad. God permits us to go through many trials that we may look to Him for healing and comfort. We are to glorify His name through the healing, no matter how he wills it.

John 11:4 When Jesus heard that, he said, “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.”

From verification through another biopsy, the cancer has returned. The doctors are telling me that my only option for survival is high dose chemotherapy with a bone marrow transplant. I followed the physicians' advise, and a year ago I paid a visit to a cancer hospital in Houston, TX. They are well known all over the world as the “Cancer Center.” My visit there was not a pleasant one. The physicians told me that if I did not do the treatment that I would surely die, and that there was no hope without it. I found one of the physicians, the stem cell transplant specialist, to be scornful and not open to any other means of fight the cancer. The chapel inside the hospital was very open to all religions, from Muslims to Buddhists, and was extremely ecumenical with every manner of religious symbol displayed. A decision to receive treatment there did not seem right according to my beliefs. We should remember the message shown in 1 Kings 11:1-9 and King Solomon's downfall from building temples for all the foreign gods of his many wives, and departing from only the worship of the one true God.

Psalm 1:1 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful.

In March before I went to Texas, a PET-CT scan showed a lymph node with a diameter of only 2 inches in my upper chest. However, I showed no signs or symptoms related to Hodgkin's Lymphoma. I felt I was in no need of a physician at that time, and I prayed that God would let me know when it is in fact time to seek the help of a physician.

Matthew 9:12 But when Jesus heard that, He said unto them, "They that are well have no need of a physician, but they that are sick."

Given my situation I can't help but think of the story of Job. God even said that Job was a "perfect and upright" man. God believed in Job so strongly that he was willing to let Satan test Job's faith by afflicting him with a horrible disease. Job 2:8 related how Job used pieces of broken pottery to scrape the boils that covered his entire body. His own wife and friends did not even recognize him because he was so diseased. Even after his wife left him, and his three friends accused him of committing a horrible sin to bring about such a horrible state, he never lost faith in God. Though Satan tried Job's faith in hopes of making him blame and curse God for his disease, he never once lost faith in God. **Job 2:10 says, "In all this did not Job sin with his lips."** Job remembered all the blessings that God had given him. Blessings are gifts from God, not comforts we have earned, and we should prepare ourselves spiritually for the days of testing that surely will come to each and every one of us. If it is the Lord who blesses us, then He has the right to withdraw His blessings. We do not merit His goodness, so what right do we have to complain when he withholds it?

Job 1:21-22 The Lord gave, and Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this, Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

I feel God has a reason for allowing me to have this cancer. I know He has a plan for my life. I don't believe God would put me through so many trials if He did not. I consider this disease a blessing in hopes of sharing with others what God has done in my life, and what He has blessed me with. He has gotten me through so much already. I pray that He allows me to use this disease to witness to others showing that God does answer prayers. At one point recently I was training to run in a marathon in the near future. I love to run, and I thank God for allowing me to continue to run considering everything that has happened to me. I feel God had allowed me the ability to continue to run to glorify Him through my running, and as a witness to others. I plan to show others that even with this pestilence, I will finish the race.

Psalm 91:1-3 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: My God; in him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence (disease).

1 Corinthians 9:26-27 Therefore I run in such a way as not without aim; I box in such a way as not beating the air; But I discipline my body and make it my slave. So that after preaching to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

There is much debate in healthcare regarding quality of life versus quantity of life. What makes it such a debate is the fear and worry about the quantity of life we will receive, and how medicine may provide for the length of life. Christ Jesus was very specific regarding the quantity of life and any worries

we may have regarding it. Worrying and anxiety only rob us of our faith in Christ who told us that he would never leave us or forsake us. He told us in **Matthew 6:27**, “**Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?**” Other translations have this as, “**Which of you by worrying can add one hour to his life.**”

James 1:12 Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life.

So it is not the quantity of life that is important, but rather the quality of life. For the Christian, quality of life does not mean quality of possessions, quality of emotions, or quality of achievement in the secular world, but rather quality of how we serve God. We should inspect our lives and see if we are serving our Lord and Savior, or rather if we are serving ourselves.

As I said, I love to run. I believe the Apostle Paul was also a runner. He uses analogies regarding running and the “good race” in many of his letters. That may have been why he spent so much of his ministry evangelizing to the gentile Greeks, because of their love of athletic competition. I can just see Paul showing up at a Greek Olympic event. There would be little short, bowlegged, knobby kneed, bald headed Paul, walking up to the starting line for the marathon. He would have been wearing an old faded running tunic, pulled up between his knees, so he wouldn’t trip over it, *Tarsus Running Club, We Run for Jesus*, across the back. His worn out pair of knock-off brand running sandals, instead of a swoosh on their side, his with a little dove. The other tall, slim, bronzed-skinned, perfect body-mass index, runners snickering at the sight of Paul; with Paul kind of strutting up to the line thinking, “I’ll show you a living sacrifice.” The race starts, and Paul is soon left behind. The runners look back, and there is Paul, still running, doing his best. The other runners turn as they approach the finish line, and

do a Reggie Bush style backwards run at the end to cross the finish line. There they can still barely make out Paul, still coming, still persevering, still running as the best witness for Christ he can be to finish the race. Paul understood that he had already run the good race, and he had finished first, because Christ had won it for him. On the cross, when Christ cried, “It is finished,” the race for life was won for not only Paul, but for everyone who would “**believe with his heart and confess with his mouth**” that Christ died for our sins. In the Greek, “It is finished” is the word *tetelestai*. It means paid in full and was stamped on all promissory notes. Christ has paid it all, and finished the race for us. All that is left for us to do to receive the gift of eternal life is believe that Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, died and rose again in payment for our sins.

Last month a PET-CT scan revealed that the once 2 inches diameter lymph node is now 5 inches in diameter. Increased hyper-metabolic activity and size has also been seen in lymph nodes in my neck and two lymph nodes below my diaphragm; one lymph node, anterior to my liver, and one adjacent to my adrenals gland, which sits on top of my left kidney. I believe it is now time to seek the help of physicians because I am now sick. I again have symptoms of Hodgkin’s Lymphoma. It is now planned to begin high dose chemotherapy and stem cell transplant therapy in Birmingham, AL. God will work through the physicians to perform the healing. People make the mistake of calling God the “Great Physician.” Physicians are only mentioned a few times in the Bible. Never once is God referred to in Bible as the “Great Physician”, He is the “Great Healer,” as He does not just cure disease, but rather makes us whole. He should not be put on the same level as men. **Exodus 15:26 ...for I, the LORD, am your healer.**

There is nothing that cannot be overcome through God. We should all be thankful for what God has done in our lives. Tell the Lord we are thankful for what he did on the cross, and how much we love Him everyday. He is responsible for every breath we take into our bodies. ***BE THANKFUL!!!*** Thank you for this opportunity to speak, and may I close with **3rd John 2: Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.**

Post-script:

In the fall of 2010 Cory began his treatment for cancer at the University of Alabama Birmingham Medical Center where he received high dose chemotherapy and had his stem cells harvested. After several cycles of chemotherapy, the site of his treatment was moved to Methodist Hospital in San Antonio, Texas. In April of 2011 he received his last chemotherapy regiment for 6 days followed by an autologous stem cell transplant. While in the hospital he would be so sick that he would request that the lights be turned off, it be made quiet, and the temperature turned down. Even in this condition Cory was presented with opportunities to witness to hospital staff and glorify God and tell them how much his Lord and Savior meant to him. He returned home the Monday after Easter with the doctors once again scratching their heads with how well he was. Within 2 weeks of returning home his white blood cell count was normal and he had returned to the active life style that he was accustomed to. Cory and his fiancée were waiting for the results of a test scheduled for June to set a wedding date. On May 20, 2011 Cory was involved in an automobile accident while riding his motorcycle. He died from injuries sustained in the accident on May 21,

2011. He was 25 years old. A friend of his told us at the funeral, “It was not enough to be Cory’s friend, we all wanted to be like Cory.” He never ceased thanking God for all the blessings he had received and for the opportunity to serve his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.