

How One Word Can Give You Divine Direction This Year

A new word for a new year. A word I knew—last September—would be my focus for 2018.

Last year, my one word was “hope.” Holding on to hope carried me through a difficult period. Hope held fear at bay when hubby was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Hope carried me—and us—through months of chemotherapy and radiation and more chemotherapy. And hope strengthened us as we sat with the doctor to hear his prognosis at the completion of the treatment protocol.

My one word for 2018 is “gratitude.” I became convinced of it after Hurricane Irma and before we learned the results of my husband’s last PET scan. Regardless of the test results, I knew my one word for the new year had to be gratitude.

Here’s why.

I’m learning a thankful perspective has nothing to do with whether I get what I want. What I’m wishing for. What I’m hoping and praying for. A thankful perspective has everything to do with what I already have.

Someone once asked me, “If God never answered another prayer with ‘yes,’ would you still be grateful?” Still love Him? Still serve Him?

If He never again provided physical healing. Or financial provision. Or restored another broken relationship.

What if He never again answered yes?

Would that be my cue to say no to Him? To tell Him I won’t follow Him if He doesn’t give me what I want? That I won’t live for Him if He doesn’t provide what I think I need?

Or will I say yes, regardless of the number of times He says no?

Will I say thank You, even when my heart is breaking?

As we waited for my husband's PET scan results this past October, I knew I had to make a decision. To choose gratitude regardless of whether the cancer was still present. To hold on to thankfulness, no matter what.

Because whatever happens, this life is temporary. It's a stopover—a glorified bus station—on the way to my eternal destination.

That's the real reason I choose to be grateful. Because the most important thing God ever did for me—the one thing that outshines all else—is that I've been given the gift of eternal life. Nothing else I could ask for could ever compare. And added to my joy is that I know my husband has that same assurance.

The PET scan results would test my resolve. What if the cancer still hid in hubby's body?

The news was good—the cancer appeared to be gone. And we are grateful.

Still, there will be more hurricanes. And more PET scans. And the results won't always be what I want. But for this new year, gratitude follows hope. I choose to cultivate an attitude of gratitude. To focus on what I've been given, even temporarily, rather than what I don't have.

I choose to focus on gratitude in difficult circumstances, knowing the Lord will work in me and through me by His Holy Spirit, regardless of my situation. Because one thing will never belong to the God of the universe, the One who calls me His child because of His Son, Jesus.

And that alone is reason enough to *always* be grateful.

Have you selected your one word for 2018? Leave a comment to share it! {eoa}

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