

Like Brittany Maynard, 13-year-old Cancer Patient Has a Video Message for Friends

At 29 years old, Brittany Maynard has received national attention for her choice to die on Nov. 1 under her own terms, and recently released a new video sharing her thoughts with her friends.

Thirteen-year-old Ethan Hallmark of Midlothian, Texas, was also diagnosed with terminal cancer and decided to film a video for his friends, but this one shares a very different message.

Ethan was diagnosed with stage-4 neuroblastoma, an aggressive form of pediatric cancer, at age 9. Following a four-year fight, Ethan finally succumbed to his illness on Sept. 26, 2014, but not before leaving a lasting legacy and an important message.

Ethan's courage and faith in the face of difficulty is shown in the new "I Am Second" documentary, *Many are the Wonders, The Second Story of Ethan Hallmark* ([link](#)).

"You guys made a huge impact on this journey. I can't imagine it without you. You stood by me in the hardest parts and there's not a minute I've been in treatment without your support," Ethan said while reading a letter to his friends in a YouTube film. "At times it felt like God was far away but He was right there in my friends ... Keep putting your faith in God and always remember He is with you even in the depths of suffering. He's good. Love you guys."

Ethan's courageous battle with cancer was an inspiration to his family, friends and community as he showed how a young man in the midst of pain, suffering and imminent death could still

find joy and hope in life.

Many are the Wonders captures a unique glimpse into the lives of the Hallmark family and their entire community of Midlothian as they face and overcome the darkest moments of the disease together with a united and inspirational hope.

“Obviously I want to beat this disease but I’m not going to be that sad if I don’t,” said Ethan in the film. “Of course I don’t want to die. Who does? But it’s not really my plan ... even though my cancer’s been a lot of bad stuff, it’s been a lot of good stuff, too. I met friends I would have never met. I’ve grown closer to God; my family has. I wouldn’t trade my relationship with God for anything.””

Ethan’s mother, Rachel Hallmark, has chronicled the family’s struggle in an online blog. Her most recent post addressed dying with dignity in response to the discussion happening over the last few weeks surrounding Maynard’s decision ().

“Thirteen years old, and my son was not like mainstream America. He knew suffering was as much of a part of life as happiness was,” wrote Rachel. “Suffering exists all over this world in far greater forms than cancer. Taking a pill to give yourself an early demise isn’t the solution whether you are facing cancer, poverty, warfare, abuse, or any of the endless other forms of suffering. With fearless bravery, he [Ethan] accepted that life wasn’t always easy, that sometimes we have to face giants we’d prefer not to.”

Maynard has brought to light questions about death and pain as an advocate for access to death with dignity. In *Many are the Wonders* Ethan and his parents, Rachel and Matt, directly address many of these life questions that are currently being discussed as well as the raw questions about our humanity and the suffering and sorrow all people face.

“You have these moments where you ask God, ‘Why? Why my son? How can a loving and omnipotent God allow a kid who is nine

years old to go through this suffering?'" said Ethan's dad, Matt. "God answered me in that moment. It was a moment that was crystal clear."

Many are the Wonders can be viewed [here](#).

"I Am Second" is a storytelling movement that intimately reveals the raw struggles, transformations and triumphs of people from all walks of life. As the creator of over 100 films since 2008, "I Am Second" has impacted millions of people around the world through authentic stories well told. The website and its Spanish counterpart, , feature stories of hope and transformation.