

Magic Johnson Praises God for Divine Health Decades After HIV Diagnosis

This week, NBA legend Magic Johnson commemorated 30 years since his retirement from professional basketball following his diagnosis with HIV.

“God has really blessed me!” tweeted the 62-year-old former Los Angeles Lakers point guard. “Today marks 30 years living with HIV, so the message resonated with me in such a tremendous way. I thank the Lord for keeping me, giving me strength, and guiding me for 62 years but especially the last 30.”

At the point of Johnson’s retirement in 1991—an exit that came as a shock, leaving those gathered for his erstwhile press conference “motionless, stunned, numb”—he was one of the highest performing athletes in the NBA, with 11 All-Star declarations, three league MVP awards and five championship titles.

Johnson played in the 1992 Olympics and won a gold medal with the U.S. “Dream Team.” He briefly came back to the Lakers in 1995, but played in only 32 games.

Johnson stated at the time of his public disclosure in 1991 that he would become a spokesperson about HIV.

He told reporters he wanted to ensure young people understand “that safe sex is the way to go. We sometimes think only gay people can get it, that it’s not going to happen to me,” adding, “And here I am saying that it can happen to anybody, even me, Magic Johnson.”

The athlete’s comments this week were inspired by a sermon

titled “Living Through the Affliction” by his pastor, Bishop Charles Blake of West Angeles Church of God in Christ in LA.

In 2019, Johnson stepped down from his role as president of operations for the Lakers. He and his wife, Cookie, now spend time serving in their church.

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