

North Carolina Pastor Defies Death, Walks Again After Flesh-Eating Infection

A pastor in North Carolina is defying the odds—and inspiring thousands—after surviving a life-threatening infection that cost him multiple limbs but not his faith.

According to WBTV, Steve Mathews of United Baptist Church is now walking again with prosthetics and has returned to preaching following a harrowing medical journey.

A Life-Threatening Infection

Mathews' ordeal began with what seemed like a minor issue—a swollen arm. But his condition quickly spiraled into something far more dangerous.

As reported by WBTV, his symptoms rapidly escalated to include chills, vomiting and confusion. He was rushed to the hospital and eventually airlifted for emergency care, where doctors diagnosed him with a flesh-eating bacterial infection that led to septic shock.

Medical professionals gave him only a 20% chance of survival.

Despite aggressive treatment, the infection spread throughout Mathews' body, forcing doctors to take drastic measures.

According to WBTV, surgeons amputated his right arm above the elbow, both legs and later portions of fingers on his remaining hand in order to stop the infection.

He also faced a cascade of complications, including blood clots, kidney failure and persistent fevers—making his survival even more remarkable.

A Devastating Realization

On New Year's Eve, Mathews regained consciousness and came to terms with the reality of what had happened.

He described the moment as "devastating," according to WBTV, as he realized the extent of his amputations.

Yet even in that moment of overwhelming loss, his faith remained intact. Mathews soon shifted his focus toward what he believed God was still doing in his life.

"I was lying there weeping at the state I was in. It was just such a blow," he said. "I wasn't down in it for very long before God reminded me that He's got me."

Faith, Family and the Power of Prayer

Mathews' wife, Dawn, played a critical role during the crisis—making urgent medical decisions that ultimately saved his life.

As reported by WBTV, she authorized the necessary amputations and rallied a global network of prayer support as her husband fought to survive.

The family credits a combination of faith, swift medical intervention and widespread prayer for his recovery.

A Long Road to Recovery

After weeks of intensive care, Mathews began the challenging process of rehabilitation.

He was fitted with prosthetic legs and an arm and underwent extensive therapy to regain mobility. WBTV noted that early intervention and multiple surgeries were key factors in saving

his life, though the infection itself was largely unpredictable.

Today, Mathews is not only walking again—he is back in the pulpit, sharing his testimony of God’s saving power and encouraging others.



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Back to Preaching, Back to Purpose

Mathews has returned to ministry with a renewed sense of calling, telling others that the strength they see in him does not come from himself, but from God.

Community members have rallied around the family, raising tens of thousands of dollars to help with medical expenses, according to WBTV.

His story has become a powerful testimony of perseverance, faith and hope in the face of unimaginable hardship.

A Living Testimony of Restoration

While the physical losses Mathews endured are profound, his story stands as a reminder that God’s work is not limited by circumstances.

Scripture declares in Joel 2:25 that the Lord can “restore the years the locust has eaten,” and Mathew’s life is becoming a modern reflection of that promise.

Though the enemy sought to destroy, what has emerged is a testimony of resilience and redemption. God is still in the business of healing—not always in the ways we expect, but always with purpose.

Mathews' journey is a powerful witness that even after devastating loss, restoration is possible.

Strength can rise from weakness.

Hope can overcome despair.

And through it all, God continues to move, heal and perform miracles—bringing beauty from ashes and purpose from pain.

Abby Trivett is a writer and editor for Charisma Media and has a passion for sharing the gospel through the written word. She holds two degrees from Regent University, a B.A. in Communication with a concentration in Journalism and a Master of Arts in Journalism. She is the author of the upcoming book, *The Power of Suddenly: Discover How God Can Change Everything in a Moment*. For interviews and media inquiries, please contact media@.