

Stephen Strang: After 5 Years, What God Taught Me About Fear, Faith and Cancer

I never thought I'd have cancer, but five and a half years ago I heard what strikes fear in so many men: I had prostate cancer. It was stage 1, and moving to stage 2. It's not really dangerous until stage 3, but by the time it metastasizes at stage 4, it's too late.

It was quite a journey for six months of asking God "why me" and fearing the worst while still believing God would show me the right treatment for me. I learned prostate cancer is slow-growing and one of the easiest cancers to treat, but there may be bad complications. Through a series of what I saw as miracles, I decided to try a fairly new treatment out of the country called high-intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU) treatment. It was five years ago today (Jan. 24, 2014) that I was treated.

Since then, I've been cancer-free with no bad symptoms. I write about it today to give glory to God and hopefully to help others who are dealing with cancer or any other major medical issue. My advice: believe God for the best path to cure, take control of your own health rather than passively doing whatever medical personal or insurance companies tell you, and believe that God will work all things together for good.

When I was diagnosed, I had to deal with my own emotions about this unexpected news. While I had many people in my circle of friends praying, I chose not to make my diagnosis public until after it was over. Then I wrote an article in Charisma (in addition to an article online, available [here](#)) to praise God. I posted it on several prostate cancer social media sites and

got very good feedback.

In the world of cancer treatment, five years of being cancer-free is considered a milestone. So when this anniversary rolled around, I wanted to give God glory and share what I learned. Dr. Steve Greene, the publisher of Charisma, interviewed me on the "Strang Report" podcast about my ordeal. In the interview attached below, I share openly and honestly my experiences to inspire others. Many people have either experienced or seen a loved one experience a cancer diagnosis. If you're one of those people, I hope my story will help you take charge of your health and give you hope for a bright future ahead.

With all my research I came to the conclusion that I could have gone about three years before the cancer would have metastasized, then about two years until it would have killed me. That is my own speculation, but this much is certain: the cancer would have killed me eventually unless I died of something else first. By about now, I likely would have died. But we serve a God of miracles, and today I'm not only still alive, but healthier than ever.

I first discovered I had prostate cancer because I have regular doctor check-ups. At those check-ups, I am given the PSA (prostate-specific antigen) test. The test helps determine whether you may have prostate cancer, and every man should have it done. My PSA test numbers showed there might be a problem. I had a biopsy and 7 of 12 samples had cancer. I learned that 22 percent of all men will hear this diagnosis. Many more who have this disease die of something else and never know they had cancer because they never had it checked.

This was an emotional shock for me: I walked into the doctor's office thinking I'd be fine, and I walked out a cancer patient. At first, I couldn't believe it. After all, I was in good shape. I felt healthy. I did not feel sick at all.

I found out there are actually seven different things you can do to treat prostate cancer—and none of them involve chemotherapy. After researching my options, I ended up not choosing radiation or surgery, two of the most popular choices. In my experience, a lot of people just do whatever their insurance company or doctor recommends. At the risk of sounding cynical, every doctor I met when I was weighing options pushed the procedure that made them money and criticized the other methods. But I felt it was important to take charge of my own health.

I had to move from fear to faith. For me, it was about believing God that I would find the right treatment, meet the right doctor and experience the right outcome. I know God heals through medical science as well as faith. I also knew people who believed they would be healed, and they weren't—with no clear reason why. But I chose to put all my faith in God and believe He would guide me to the right treatment option. Eventually, He led me to HIFU. Five years later, I'm proud that I can say I'm cancer-free and I praise God that I'm still alive to serve Him.

Today, my ordeal with cancer feels almost like an unpleasant dream. It happened, but somehow it doesn't seem real. Yet God used this surreal, difficult season to teach me three important lessons.

First, I learned that life is not forever. Being diagnosed with any kind of cancer or terminal disease will forever affect how you look at life. I had to grapple with the fact that I might die, and I needed to have things in order. I became more sober about my mortality. You need to be ready to meet your Creator at any time. Because of that, I leaned into the Lord more, asking Him for guidance about my decisions. Which treatment should I get? Which doctor should I trust? Through that process, I believe God deepened my faith and matured my character.

Second, I became more compassionate to other people struggling with cancer or chronic illnesses. If I learn that a friend or an employee at my company is dealing with cancer, I take the opportunity to share my story and pray with them.

Third, my brush with death here made me more thankful for Christ's gift of eternal life. My wife and I have already chosen the Scripture we want on our tombstone: "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23b). I want anyone who walks by my grave one day to encounter the gospel.

If my story has inspired you in any way, please share it and this episode of the podcast with your friends on social media. One of them may be struggling with cancer, and this story may be exactly what they need. You can also help us get the word out about the show by going on iTunes and rating and reviewing the "Strang Report" there.