

# Still Standing Despite Disease and Death

Mary Pappas wasn't sure she'd have a shot at a normal life. Diagnosed with a rare form of cancer of the thymus gland at the age of 23, she then battled cancer no less than six times—plus suffered a miscarriage—and lived to tell about all of it.

In her new book, *Courage, Hope and Healing*, Pappas writes of the first tumor doctors found when she was a young newlywed, which turned out to be just one of many. She endured radiation, chemotherapy, experimental treatment and surgery after surgery.

“You learn who you are and who Christ is when you're right in the middle of your needs—when you are weak and God is strong,” she says.

Pappas says she learned to rely on this truth again when she had her miscarriage. It was devastating, as she believed God had promised her a child.

“I thought, ‘Lord, You blew it.’ I said, ‘I'm not getting up off this floor until You tell me something,’” she says.

God did speak, promising restoration and a double blessing. A year later, she gave birth to healthy twin boys.

“He makes a way when there seems to be no way,” she says. “Even though we go through really hard things in life, God sees the big picture that we don't see.”

For Pappas, who is finally cancer-free after 30 years, God has not only restored life, but also is using her to speak into the lives of others. Today, she is an advocate for cancer patients and survivors, using her story to offer encouragement

at churches, conferences and retreats, saying God used her to help those who suffer with sickness or loss even when she was in the middle of her own cancer battles.

“You never know when you’re an answer to someone’s prayers,” she says. “I want people to know that they are valuable. Their life can make a difference.” –*Felicia Abraham*

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