



Today I am celebrating a moment of joy in my life ... my mother celebrates 97 years of life! I am very blessed to have shared many moments of her life, and still have her close to me to continue the sharing.

This month our family has also been given a jolt involving a serious cancer diagnosis for one of our loved ones. As I pray and walk through this very difficult time, I am reminded of the many in our faith family who have been in my shoes with cancer and its devastating pain and disruption to our life journey. October is being recognized as Breast Cancer Awareness month, and as I celebrate quietly my 6th year of being cancer free after my own bout with breast cancer, I am acutely aware of the many other types of cancer that both the men and the women, the young and the older members of our congregation have been dealing with in recent years and are dealing with it now.

Cancer is not just the flu, or a cold, or a scratch or minor injury. It is a diagnosis that has far reaching impact on everyone who is involved in the care and support of the person with the diagnosis. The care-giving needs, the financial needs, the education and treatment needs are very complex and have a long lasting effect on everyone.

This month is a month of cancer awareness, and not just breast cancer. We are a society of "do it later" or "when I get around to it" folk. I pray that we step out of that frame of mind long enough to take charge of our life in a way that is God pleasing. For many, it is already a diagnosis, and we need to be very much in prayer and support for those who are journeying through it, but I urge each of you to not stop working toward healthy life style, healthy habits and healthy spiritual life that will be of help to you as you live your earthly journey.

Look around you. Encourage each other! Bring healthy coffee hour snack food. Remember to drink plenty of water each day. Pack healthy lunches for your children and yourself. Watch your salt intake. Find ways to get 15 minutes of good exercise in at least twice a day - even armchair aerobics are a start! Let's start today to present a new image of healthy America, and show all our friends and family that we care about the body given as a gift from God. What a wonderful legacy that will be to pass down to the generations to come! Start now!

In living our health, may we be encouraged with these words, ¹³*Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹⁴As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, (1 Peter 1:13-15). I firmly believe that *He who began a good work in you will carry it to completion.* (Philippians 1:6)*

I pray for each of you, and I ask for you to pray for me and my family, too. We are blessed in the Lord, and I feel His strength through your prayers. Celebrate your life in Christ!

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