

HEARTBEATS – Staying Connected

6/11/2021

Dear Friends in Christ,

When I was twelve, I had a tumor on the base of my brain. As a result of that tumor, I have to take a medication twice a day in order to stay alive. In fact, I am the longest surviving person in the United States with this condition. But that's primarily because shortly after I developed this ailment, there weren't good medications for it. The medication taken by all of us who have this condition (and there aren't many), I tested for the Food and Drug Administration before it was approved.

Over the years, on three different occasions, someone who had the gift of healing laid hands on me to heal me of this medical condition. All three times, the healing failed and I continue to have the disorder. All three times when didn't succeed I was told, "It must be because you don't have enough faith."

Fortunately, I had learned about the apostle Paul and that he had a condition which he called a "thorn in his side." Some have speculated that Paul had a stutter or epilepsy. We don't know for certain. But, three times he prayed to have it removed and all three times this "thorn" remained. So, whenever I was told that I didn't have enough faith to be healed, I was able to say, "Well, I'm in good company, because Paul also prayed to be healed three times and never was. I guess he didn't have enough faith either."

Being healed must be a wonderful thing to have happen to you. Many of us, though, have sought special healing for something that plagues us. If that healing doesn't happen, however, we may question our own faith or God's love for us. For some, especially when a message is given like, "You don't have enough faith," a moment of crisis arises. Some will even abandon the faith they had previously carried.

What I have found, though, at least in my life is that my faith is stronger even though these faith healing attempts were unsuccessful. As I said, I have to take a medication for this condition twice a day. And what I have found is that this medication reminds me that, just as I need it to live, I also

need God to live. So, twice a day, I have a special reminder of my need for God in my life.

When we pray for healing and God seems to say, “No,” it’s easy to lose faith. What we forget, however, is that God may have some other reason for leaving us with this problem or condition. There may be something greater that is being accomplished by not being healed than if the healing had occurred. So, rather than losing faith in these moments, we would do well to take inventory and try to see what is the good that God is bring out of the situation. We may find that greater blessing that God is giving us when we put our trust in God and seek to find God’s will in what is happening.

In Christ's love,
Pastor Jeffrey