

When Marie asked me to speak at this Mother's Day luncheon, my immediate reaction was that I don't do public speaking, let alone speak about my faith or relationship with my Heavenly Father. My faith and relationship with my Heavenly Father has always been something that has been very private with me. And, I have always been of the opinion that public speaking and sharing of this information is not my spiritual gift and that that's okay. However, I think that God has other plans for me and after I share my story with you, I think that you will understand why. So, please bear with me as I share for the first time.

I am married and have one daughter who is 10 years old. My husband travels frequently for his job so I am typically a single mom without the worry of a paycheck! I love my daughter and husband very much and couldn't imagine life without the two of them. My husband has always traveled so my daughter and I have become very close. I have pretty much done everything for her. She is extremely active in that she is a competitive figure skater, gymnast, plays the piano, is in the school choir, our church's M&M program and is an excellent student. For those of you who have children, I know that you can relate to the demands of taking your children to all these places. In addition, I teach at a Christian preschool, a job that I love and spend many extra hours at home working on the crafts that they are going to do at school. I also work as an office manager three nights a week at the gym where my daughter does gymnastics.

I, unfortunately, failed to do my annual gynecological exams for the past 5 years or so. I had never had an abnormal period, missed period, late period, etc., until January of this year. In January, I had 2 abnormal bleeding incidents when I thought, "Ya know, I think it is time to go get an exam. I turned 40 in November and I thought this must be what that early menopause is." I'm sure that you can see where I am heading in this story. On January 31, 2005, I went to a 9:00 a.m. Dr.'s appointment and ended up in the emergency room at Trident Medical Center. I was told that I had cervical cancer. I'm not going to bombard you with the details. Let's just say that this is where I realized just how much faith I have and just how much my Heavenly Father loves and cares for me.

My husband was to fly out Sunday night as usual but in God's infinite plan, his Monday morning meeting was cancelled so he was able to stay home Sunday night. He was set to fly out Monday at around 11:00 a.m. – something very rare for him. He always leaves on the first flight Monday morning if not Sunday night. So luckily or as I see it as God's plan – I was able to call him and he met me at the Dr.'s office. We immediately went to the Emergency Room. My first reaction to my Husband after asking him to pray together several times was, "Well, you know if I am going to die, that's not a bad deal for me. I get to go live with my Heavenly Father. However, it is you and Darbie that I have to worry about." My Husband's reply was, "You can't have it both ways. If you have faith that God will take you with him, than you have to have faith that God will take care of Darbie and I." It was then that I had a sense of calm and immediately began praying for God to fill me with his Spirit. I prayed that over and over and over again as I lay in the emergency room clinging to my Husband's right hand with

my left. I think the Lord was getting tired of hearing my prayer because it was then that I heard “Be still and know that I am God.” I looked at my Husband and said, “Did you say something?” Obviously, he said “No.” I realized that was the Holy Spirit talking to me. I told my Husband what I heard and that maybe my lesson is going to be that I need to be still long enough to know what the Lord is saying to me. I believe that there are no coincidences, they are only Godincidences. Everything the Lord does he does for a reason, his reason. And so I was . . . still. And as I continue to lay there, I heard “I’m holding your hand.” I opened my eyes and realized once again it wasn’t my Husband speaking to me but the Holy Spirit. I carefully moved my hands from under the covers and even though I couldn’t see it – I could feel it and I knew the Lord’s hand was in mine. My right hand was in the exact position of my left hand that was clinging to my Husbands. The final thing I heard was “Hold strong to your faith.” That was something I would need to do over the next few weeks.

Obviously, the next 56 hours were filled with lots of events. But I can assure you that my Heavenly Father was with me the entire time. I can assure you that he took every ounce of pain that was meant for me. I typically bruise very easily. One shot I received the nurse kept apologizing for having to give it to me. Not only did I not feel the pain, there was not even a mark left by the needle. When I had to drink this mixture for the catscan – the hospital mixture is very different from the mixture you get as an outpatient – the nurse once again was apologizing. I didn’t think it was bad. Of course, every time throughout this journey that I have had to give blood, get shots, etc., I would turn my face away from the procedure and continually pray, “Lord, fill me with your Spirit.” I wanted his constant reassurance and to feel his closeness. I received that and so much more. He literally took all the pain that was meant for me.

I remember asking my Dr. as I awoke from the anesthesia in the recovery room that first day if he was a Christian. He was. I then asked if God was in the operating room with us. He was. My Dr. later asked if I remember talking to him in the recovery room. I said yes and that was the end of the conversation. There was an unspoken understanding as to who was in charge.

That brings me back to the point of where I know that I am meant to speak with you all today. The morning after I was admitted to the hospital, my Pastor and friends came to visit. We were talking and I told them of the Holy Spirit talking to me and telling me to “Be still and know that he is God” and I said, maybe this is God’s way of telling me that I shouldn’t be so quiet about my faith. Maybe it’s not all right for me to say that that is not my spiritual gift. So, now you see why I know that I am supposed to be here today.

In addition, I immediately wanted to start a journal. My Husband and I were at the store looking and the second journal I picked up the first page read, “Be still, and know that I am God.” Once again, I realized that God was going to be with me every step of the way. That was no coincidence but a Godincidence.

To let you know where I am in the cancer treatment today, I am happy to tell you that the cancer is gone. On January 31, 2005, I was diagnosed with cancer. I had three rounds of chemotherapy and on March 21, 2005, I had a radical hysterectomy. My Heavenly Father enabled my Dr. to remove wide margins around the cancer and the test results came back clear. I could probably talk for hours about the many miracles and Godincidences throughout this journey, but most importantly I want to assure you that my Heavenly Father has been with me every step of the way. My constant prayer has been and continues to be, "Lord, fill me with your Spirit." And fill me with his Spirit he did. Monday, will be 7 weeks since I had the surgery and I couldn't feel better. I was able to work the entire time I was taking the chemotherapy treatments. And believe it or not, my arm never bruised nor unless I really pointed it out could you even see the needle where the medication would flow for 2-3 hours.

And now, in keeping with the theme of this Mother's Day Luncheon, I want to add one more "Bee" to your list: "Bee still!" Sometimes, God needs you to just be still and know that he is in charge. Sometimes, God needs you to just be still and listen to the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, God needs you to just be still and praise Him. Sometimes, God needs you to just be still and learn what his plan is just for you. But most importantly, the psalmist in Psalms 46:10 says we will know God and his sovereignty when we are "still."

I don't know what God's plan is in my life at this time. I am, however, trying very hard to change my life so that I do take "still time" out for my Heavenly Father and me. I'm anxious to know what God's plan is for me. But I know that in the stillness of His time, he will make His plan clear to me. It is just up to me to "Be Still." I do know that I don't ever want to lose the everyday closeness that I have developed with my Heavenly Father. I know I had or I guess I really continue to have a very serious condition as they don't consider you cured of cancer for 5 years but believe it or not, I cannot remember a happier time in my life. I feel great, I have a fantastic relationship with my husband and my daughter and Husband have bonded in an amazing way throughout this journey. My Husband has learned that he can care for my daughter and she has learned that Mommy's way sometimes isn't always the best!

In closing, I want to encourage each of you to have your annual gynecological exams. But, most importantly, I want to encourage each of you to "Be still and know that he is God."

I want to thank you for praying for me throughout this journey and ask that you keep me in your prayers. I also want to thank you for inviting me to speak and to thank you for being a part of God's plan for me!