

This story starts on February 2nd 2009, at a dance class when I was stricken with an intestinal pain that made me double over and was so strong that I felt like I would pass out. I sat for about half an hour and was able to drive home at which time I had my wife go to the store for a Laxative to relieve the big gas bubble within my intestine. After a few hours the gas bubble escaped and the pain went away which put me back into normal mode. I kept up the laxative for 5 days and was very fine. Then, on February 16th 2009 I had another attack. I re-started the laxative and made an appointment with a doctor to see what was up. The doctor saw me on February 25th and told me to do an enema and take Miralax for 7 days to clean everything out but, if I was to begin throwing up I needed to go to the hospital for films of my intestine. During this time I was fine in the morning when I got up but as the day progressed I became more and more distressed. I had like a volcano going off in my intestines. The gas was coming back through the intestines to my stomach. Then every night in bed I would pass the gas and I was fine in the morning. Finally on March 4th 2009 I got up and started to throw up Bile and decided to go to the emergency room at Little Company of Mary Hospital. I spent all day and most of the night in the emergency room and about 9pm I was admitted into the hospital for an operation to be done on March 5th 2009 at noon. I was told that I had a complete blockage in my colon and it needed to come out. At noon I went into surgery and was back in my room at 4 pm. The next day on March 6th 2009, a doctor whom I had never seen before, came into my room and informed me that the blockage within my colon was This doctor went on to say that the fatty tissue next to the colon wall was removed and 9 lymph nodes were found to be cancerous and two spots on my liver were biopsied and found to be cancer. At this point he told me that I was a stage 4 Cancer patient and that he wanted to get me started on Chemo as soon as possible.

How did I feel? Well at first I thought someone was playing a joke on me, how could I feel so good and then have this in less than two weeks? After I got over the shock, I still felt that this was not happening and that it was all a mistake. Before I went out and told everyone that it had to be a mistake I wanted to be pain free and to be out of the hospital. I also found a bag hanging from my abdomen area that was attached to what was left of my colon; I was told it was a colostomy. What the hell is a Colostomy? Well as I soon found out, this was to be my only way of going to the restroom. I no longer used my butt and, it all comes out into this bag. Now I felt like a dog with a pooper scooper attached to my skin. All of my nurses were so concerned about this bag that they kept checking it every time they came into my room. I was not passing anything, no gas, no solids no liquids, nothing. I started asking everyone when does this come off and I go back to being a human and not a dog! The answer I received was maybe in a year or maybe never. Okay so now I knew that all this was a joke and a really bad joke at that. Wow!! I went in for surgery and came out with Cancer and a colostomy all in one day at the hospital. Well, the weekend came and went and my surgeon (a very young looking lady) came in on Monday and confirmed that this was not a joke but was really happening and that now my intestines were paralyzed and that I would not be given food until the bag started passing gas and my gut started making noise. There I was in the hospital with a bag on my side, a very large scare on my stomach and chest, a doctor talking about chemo, no food or water until my bag

started to get stuff in it. I also noticed that I had this tube stuck in my nose and went all the way into my stomach. I asked the Doc when is this thing coming out? Again, I received the answer of not until your bag starts doing something.

The days turned into weeks and after two weeks I started seeing things happen in the bag. Wow! The tube came out and, they started giving me water and lots of liquids for food. After a day of that I started throwing up again and in the middle of the night they came in and forced that tube back into my nose and down into my stomach. They kept telling me to swallow that tube and I just kept throwing it up, so in comes this expert nurse and she has me eat ice chips to get the tube started and it worked. Down it went! I do not recommend putting a tube in your nose down to your stomach. Now another few days went by and they decide to take out this tube again and put me back on the liquid diet. This time I get past the liquid and down to real food. They release me and I get to go home, at home I eat and guess what? I throw up again and I end up back into the emergency room with my surgeon asking me what happened? She puts that tube back into my nose and I am put in a room again with no food and no water. Another week goes by and they are all telling me that I need to eat so they put me on a PICC line with intravenous food. This liquid sugar water meant that I had to have my sugar tested every hour-what a pain in the fingers. Okay what in the world is a PICC line? A PICC line is a small tube that they put inside a large vein under your arm and it goes all the way to your heart where the liquid can be pumped through-out your body without destroying your veins.

A week or so later the surgeon came in and told me that she has been praying for me and that something is wrong. My intestines should be working after all this time, so she wants to go back into me and see what is wrong. But, first she sends me to X-Ray for a few shots so she can pick out the best place to cut in. I get into X-Ray and the tech gives me contrast to drink (Two Quart Bottles). I tell her that I can't drink or eat anything. Well, she puts the contrast into a very big syringe and proceeds to pump it through my nose tube right into my stomach. This is another one of those things that I DO NOT RECOMMEND! After all that contrast makes it into my stomach they wait about ten minutes and start taking pictures (x-rays). First it was with x-rays of me laying flat on my back on the Then, on my side, then on the other side, then standing up front and back. All of a sudden I see this bag that is hanging on my side is full and is really getting big (ballooning). The technician sees it also and puts me in the restroom to empty. After it is emptied it is back to the pictures. However, before they can set up for the next series the bag fills up again. I ended up emptying three bags before the x-rays were finished. I finally got back to my room and the surgeon came in and was very happy with the three full bags and, she says out comes the tube and back on liquids. Thereafter, I was given soft foods and finally after three days real food. My system was now working, I was able to go home and this time I stayed home. Before I left the hospital they took out my PICC line and put in a Port-O-Cath which is another type of PICC line. This little device sits under your skin just under your neck and has a tube that goes into your jugular vein. The Port-O-Cath is for chemotherapy infusions. I was to start chemotherapy a week after the insertion which around the 20th of April (about 6 weeks after

surgery). Here is where a difference of opinions from doctor to doctor drives a person crazy. The Port-O-Cath doctor stated that I should wait for at least a week before using the device because of infection. I did not want to go back into the hospital with an infection so I made the decision to tell the chemo doctor I needed to wait a week as per the Port-O-Cath doctor advice. This was my first experience with being the leader of my own treatments and cure. The chemo nurse told me that I was being very silly that she had given chemo on the same day as the install of a Port-O-Cath before with no problems. I just told her not with me and we waited the week. One week later I was sitting in chemo and getting my first dose of chemo. Chemo is a group of drugs that when put all together kills cancer along with every other healthy cell in your body. I like to call it poison to the body so why do we do it? To try to get back to our regular lives (which will never be the same again) and start living life again. The chemo nurse listed all the side effects that I would suffer (which were many) and in my mind I thought I am stronger than these other persons and I can do this better than other persons in the world. Chemo is everything you have ever heard about, but the experience is worse than they tell you because it is happening to you. After my first chemo I had more side effects than the nurse told me about. I had the numb fingers, toes, mouth and throat. I could not touch anything cold or drink anything cold without having my throat close up or my hands get stuck in one position after picking up something cold. I know that people wear gloves to walk in the snow but to get a drink out of the refrigerator? Well, I was then wearing big thick gloves just to reach into the refrigerator and forget the freezer. The big side effect I had that I was not told about was the pain (big Pain) in my mouth and neck whenever I took my first bite of food. It would put you on the floor it was so bad and then the second bite there was nothing. I mean not even an ouch was felt on the second bite (very strange effect). The side effects lasted about 4 days the first time and things went back to normal. One week after my first chemo treatment my Port-O-Cath started to itch and itch all the time, I just figured that it was healing like most other wounds would heal. The Sunday before my second chemo on Monday, my wife noticed that my Port-O-Cath looked very red and swollen (infected). Back to the hospital emergency room to find out that the Port had gotten infected after just one use. The hospital took the port out and put me on all kinds of meds to kill the infection, I spent 7 days in the hospital to kill the infection. The day I was to leave the hospital they installed another PICC line into my left arm so my chemo could continue. Two weeks after the chemo treatment I was back in the infusion (chemo lounge) room with the chemo nurse and she was very confused about the PICC line. After going through hell the previous week and, not being in good humor that day I told her that it was 100% her fault and I would never forgive her for the pain I went through. She told me that she had been a chemo nurse for over 24 years and never had a port problem. After that and other bad experiences with her care I wonder why she still remains a chemo nurse.

Chemo went on for the next three months one treatment every other week with one week off between. During this time I was working the weeks that I was not having Chemo. I thought I could work after they took the chemo pump off of me on Wednesday but I soon gave up that Idea, it was just too hard and I felt just so bad for the next two days. The Oxiplatin was just too

hard on me for me to go to work on Thursday and Friday of the same week as Chemo. After the three months of Chemo (6 Treatments) I was taken off chemo to allow my body to rest for twelve weeks and, I was set up for the reconnection operation and the Oblation of the cancer tumors in my liver. They first did a PET scan which showed that the two tumors in the Liver had reduced to only a shadow and that was good news. I waited two months to make sure the Avastin had been relieved from my body. I went in for the two surgeries (at the same time) on August 28, 2009 and spent about two hours on the operating table. I woke up in ICU with all kinds of tubes in me in all kinds of places. I guess the biggest line was in my neck where they had what they called the A line which meant they could feed me a pint of blood in seconds if I needed it. Why would I need it? The doctor said that when you operate on the liver there is a possibility of lot of blood loss all at once. I spent three days in ICU and during that time I had an epidural installed during the operation to keep me from having pain. Yes, the same thing women have during child birth. Only my epidural was hooked up for the surgery and remained implanted and delivering the drug ongoing for 3 days and nights so I couldn't sit up or get out of bed. I also had a pain pump which gave me morphine every time I pushed the button or once every two hours if I did not push the button. The Morphine made me sick and I had them remove the Morphine after I left ICU. They gave me some other high end pain killer which I did not take because I just did not like the way it made me feel. After some doing I was put into First Surgical wing of the hospital in a private room. I was on no food or drink until my intestines started working again. Gee, this sounds just like the last time I was in this hospital. After a week they had me eating real food and I was using my rectum again. I had to relearn bathroom skills and how to use certain muscles most people take for granted. I also found where they kept the popsicles at the nurses' station and started helping myself whenever I would go out for a walk around the ward. When I was released they made sure that I had a new PICC line so that the chemo could restart. Oh Goody! I was told I would need another 6 sessions. I restarted Chemo in September but this time without the Oxiplatin. This time I was able to work on the last two days of the week and all of the next week, so I was only off work the three days that the chemo was going into my body. At the 6th session I figured they would pull the PICC line out and I would be free for the rest of my life. When the chemo nurse told me that I had only completed 3 sessions and not 6 I was really confused. Well, a Session is two weeks or so it was what I thought was a session was only one half of a session. The 7th chemo treatment was the worst of my life. As soon as the nurse flushed the PICC line I knew she had done it too fast and it curled up in my vein (in my neck) which hurt like you cannot believe. It was so horrible and it was Christmas Eve so I had to wait till after Christmas to have it looked at (we made an appointment). Three long days I spent in pain and when I went in for the appointment for a look see, they pulled the PICC line out and installed a new one in the other arm. I then had to have the doctor that removed the coiled PICC line call the chemo nurse give her instruction that she needs to go slow when doing the flush of the PICC line. Later at the next chemo (she was the only chemo nurse) again this nurse tells me that she has been doing this work for over 20 years and the doctors know nothing. Well I made sure she never flushed my PICC line fast again and I had no more problems with the PICC line again.

Funny how those doctors who know nothing really helped me not have PICC line pain again. As my sessions passed from week to week I would see the same people in the chemo room and we would talk about everything. One day I talked to one of the ladies taking chemo and found out that she had the same problems that I had and her doctor (not the same chemo doctor as mine) had told her that the tumors in her liver could not be removed. I told her that mine were obliterated and that she should see my liver doctor. I gave the information to her lady friend who had taken her to chemo. The next session I asked about her and I was told that my liver doctor had seen her and that they were going to do the Obliteration on her and that she would be a good candidate for a cure. At my last chemo session on March 3, 2010 I was able to speak to this lady and she was so happy, she told me that I had given her a second outlook on life. I told her that GOD gave her this outlook and all I did was give her some information that GOD had given me a few months before. The last week in March, 2010 I went in for another PET Scan and it turned out to be the best news ever. There was no detectable cancer anywhere in my body. WOW! I went from a stage four colon cancer to being cured in one year!! WOW, God is great, praise the lord and praise Jesus!

In May, 2010 at one of my follow up appointments they found that I had developed a hernia at the colostomy site and I needed another operation to install mesh into the wall of my muscle to keep my colon inside my body. On May 18, 2010 I had my hernia repaired and I am doing very well at this time. It has been 10 weeks since the surgery and I am just starting to get back to being myself with all the activity that I use to do.

My hope is that if this story helps anyone out there, and then praise the Lord for he is great. I have been blessed and I admit that this has been a very hard journey but I could not have made it without GOD and without my wife. If any of you think you can fight Cancer on your own don't even try because you will lose. Cancer is a tough hard battle and without someone in your corner you cannot fight this fight alone. The power of prayer (ask everyone you know or meet because the more prayer the more GOD hears) and a support team is very important for fighting this disease.

Here is what I suggest: Pray all the time. Every day, every evening pray to God that clearing the cancer and living a long a happy life is God's will. Ask others to pray for you. Be sure to have someone at your side at all times to help you fight the battles with the medical personnel when you are too weak to fight. Be always proactive on your care so that you don't go thru the pains I endured at the hands of people who shouldn't be treating cancer patients. Learn everything you can by asking or researching on the internet. You will receive information from friends, relatives and strangers because everyone wants to help you. Remember that everything you read is not always going to be true or helpful. You have to learn to sift through everything you read or hear to know the real truth or to understand what you need to do for yourself to make it through this bumpy life journey. One thing is certain- tough times never last but tough people do last. Think as a Super Man and you will become a Super Man and a John Wayne and whoop the little C's butt!