



Look for God to show Himself in everyday things.

I have almost finished radiotherapy treatment to try and stop the spread of cancer in my throat and neck. Twenty one sessions have gone, twelve are still to go.

I have honestly been frightened by this treatment. The cancer I have been able to cope with. First the voice-box was removed in November 2006. Second further tissues, glands and muscles were cut out of my neck in April 2009. I am ready to die. You don't live with cancer for three years and not think about the end of life as we know it. The Lord Jesus Christ, God the Son, is my Saviour. In fact it was on this very day forty seven years ago that I was born again by the grace of God. Today, I have total confidence in my Father God in heaven. He has blessed and used my earthly life. He has saved me ultimately to be with Him for ever. He will look after my family if He called me away.

But equally honestly I have never liked the sound of this radiotherapy. The predicted side effects were not nice. And I am a coward at heart! Side effects included being unable to swallow, being unable to speak even with my new artificial voice. I was warned of weight loss, having no appetite, being sore, stiff and in sharp pain around my neck and throat. All these things have

happened in some measure, but thank God (via the morphine based drugs provided) not as badly as they apparently could have been.



Worse for me has been the daily experience over seven weeks during the twenty minutes of treatment. To stop me from moving at all in the precisely targeted radiation zone, my face had a head shell moulded. By this I was clamped to the couch under the linear accelerator. I usually breathe through a stoma (hole) in my neck, not through my mouth or nose – which was just as well because the snugly tight fitting mask pushes so hard against my face.

For up to twelve minutes per session, each minute seeming an eternity to me, unable to see, uncomfortably gripped so I cannot move, and totally vulnerable to who knows what, I lie on my back and hold two way conversations with God! The radiographers diligently go about their business seeking to cure my human body. It is under the mask that God 's words and my thoughts, questions and ideas are intermingling. I am confident in my God, whatever the human outcome. On the third day of treatment He graciously gave me a little picture through which I could hang on to His Sovereign control.



In the radiography room three projected laser beams intersect and the point where they cross is the focus of treatment. The radiographers kindly showed me these green and red guiding rays, one from the ceiling and one from each of two side walls. All the hidden wires above the ceiling feed these rays controlling the linear accelerator. On the ceiling surface a cross had been cut out of the tiles so that the ray could beam out from there on to the patient below. In that glimpse, God showed me that these deadly but healing rays I was facing *could only strike my body after they passed through a cross!*

It was as if my God said to me, “Don’t worry my son! You will not like these sessions. You will be vulnerable. There will be resultant pain. Your mind will play tricks with you – imagining suffocation, uncontrollable coughing, neck cramps and so on. But remember that everything that happens to you is under the cross of Jesus! All is in His sight. Life is firmly and purposefully controlled by Him. Life – and even death – are for Jesus’ ultimate praise.

Yes I am still apprehensive – a posh word covering up that I’m really scared! – every time I lay back and they clamp the head shell on me and me to the couch under the linear accelerator. Yet I am also given the grace to believe that my Father God in heaven is in that room – controlling the world and yet caring for me in my radiotherapy treatment.

As I realise the immense and absolute sovereignty of my loving heavenly Father, my life experiences and my troubles and fears seem to shrink to a more reasonable proportionate size. Instead of dominating everything and craving all my attention all of the time, viewed against the Creator of life, history, death, heaven and hell, my light and momentary troubles are precisely that – barely significant and soon over.

It has helped me to visualise the professionally trained radiotherapists as in the hands of and under the supervision of my Sovereign God.

My radiotherapy – while it is to heal my body – is also a spiritual test for me. Satan is wanting to destroy my faith and get me to blame God for what I don't like that is engulfing me. At the same time, and through precisely the same events, my loving God is wanting to build up my faith, urging me to accept that He knows best and His will and way are always the only right and true way. As I journey with God to places I do not want to go, I have this overwhelming and underlying assurance that it will be for my good in the end. I will be a better and stronger Christian for these experiences.

So every remaining session I say to myself, "Who's purpose am I going to further today?" And hopefully I will continue to choose God's way, the best way, the only way. Deep down, I know that He and I are in this thing together!

“For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal”,
2nd Corinthians 4:17-18.

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