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Cancer is called the “silent killer” because it grows and metastasizes in our bodies before any signs or physical evidence can be seen or experienced. Because the cancer is a corruption of our own cells it circumvents the immune system deceiving it into believing it is friendly and part of the family.

Life appears normal until suddenly the hidden damage is revealed and we face the destructive evidence in our own bodies. Present cures require killing both cancerous and good cells in the hope that the body can survive the invasion and recover. The latest experimental cures include methods of alerting the immune system to recognise these wayward cells and destroy them.

A parallel exists between cancer and sin in the life of the Christian in that sin manifests itself as a “silent killer” within the person, which will eventually infect first the local church then the church universal. Just as cancer first impacts one part of the body (the individual believer) it then proceeds to metastasize to the rest of the body. Whatever we do, whether good or bad, secretly or openly will impact the spiritual health of the church. We may not be aware of its existence for a time but just like cancer it will reap its deadly consequences. Likewise, the private devotion of our secret lives will bring life to the whole body. *None of us are an island unto ourselves and we bring either blessings or curses to the whole church.*

There are things we can do to help our own immune system, one of which is to eat “live food” such as vegetables, fruit, and nuts because they contain antioxidants that support our defence system and attack rogue cells. Similarly our spiritual life can be built up with “live food” from God through the Bible, prayer and worship and we need to do this individually as well as corporately. Over cooked vegetables and processed food will do more damage, therefore to remain healthy we must individually develop an appetite for “live food” from God.

In the recent article entitled “The Word Became Flesh” the premise is that God’s purpose for us is to become like his Son. The “silent killer” is aimed at frustrating that divine plan and Satan will do all he can by any method to do that, especially by using *subtle* religious devices. When we studied the Welsh revival of 1904 it was clear that the devil used a devout Christian, Jesse Penn Lewis to convince Evan Roberts that he was in danger of taking glory that belonged to God and encouraged him to withdraw from the revival, which he did. He never spoke publically again and the outward manifestation of that revival died. He himself died as recluse in 1951.

Just as the latest attempts to defeat cancer look to alerting our own immune system so our spiritual immune system is complimented by God’s Holy Spirit as He convicts of sin then provides “Grace to help in time of need.” The cancer of sin has its own ally in Satan who will use his lies and deception to defuse the work of the Spirit. Paul recognises his methods where he states; “We don’t want Satan to win any victory here, and well we know his devices” 2 Corinthians 2:11 (Phillips); and God promises; “He rescues you from every trap.” Psalm 91:3 (TLB); (“Snare of the fowler” (KJV)).

As with cancer, we can’t deal with it on our own. The truth is, we are all cancer patients of sin and it will manifest its addictive nature in us to varying degrees but God has a treatment and cure for sin. Only He can deliver us from the present and ultimate consequences of this cancer.

We have a Deliverer for both the cause and cure of this cancer in Jesus Christ who “Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted” Hebrews 2:18 (NIV). Then again “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses but we have one who was tempted in every way, just as we are – yet without sin so let us approach the throne of grace with confidence so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” Hebrews 5:15 (NIV).

There are aggressive forms of cancer that attack with such force that we appear to have only days to live. The same applies to our spiritual lives but we have this confidence from God that, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will raise up a standard against him." Isaiah 59:19 (KJV). God's grace is at our disposal through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Paul states; "Here is my advice, live your whole life in the Spirit (continually be being filled) and you will not satisfy the desires of the lower nature." Galatians 5 (PHILLIPS)

Cancer support groups help those during the fight and God has also set us in families of believers to stand with us. Sometimes the DNA of sin overcomes us and we fall to the "silent killer" but we can find forgiveness and restoration. Paul also tells us; "Dear brothers, if a Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help him back on the right path, remembering that next time it might be one of you who is in the wrong." Galatians 6:1 (TLB). *We are not to shoot our wounded.*

God is the ultimate realist and has made full provision for dealing with the cancer of sin. His final goal is to turn us into "The Word Becoming Flesh" so that we who are sinners by nature are given a new one when we become sons of God by rebirth. It is only then that Holy Spirit enables new behaviour and character so that collectively as a congregation we become "The Word Made Flesh."

Shalom.

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