

A photograph of a paved path in a park, with trees and grass visible. The path is made of concrete slabs and is surrounded by green grass and several trees. The lighting is soft, suggesting a late afternoon or early morning setting. A large, detailed leaf graphic is overlaid on the bottom right of the image, partially covering the path and grass. The text "THANK GOD FOR CANCER" is written in a white, serif font, centered on the path.

THANK
GOD
FOR CANCER

Death is swallowed up in victory

Death, the King of Terrors, need hold no fears for the Christian believer. Under its dreaded sentence, Law Yok Ming writes of his final battle with man's Enemy Number One in terms which cannot fail to inspire hope in other sufferers of terminal disease.

“Thank God for Cancer” are no mere words of empty bravado, but the victory cry of a soul delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Colossians 1:13), one who has passed from death unto life (John 5:24).

At 53 and with 23 years' unbroken service with oil giant MOBIL, Law Yok Ming had every reason to look forward to a pleasant retirement in two years. Hopeful dreams were cruelly shattered in July 1987 when routine annual medical examination revealed extensive cancer arising from the thymus.

In his hour of shock and despair, God sent a messenger of Good News in His servant, Dr Lim Yew Cheng, a friend and a Christian doctor. “With Christ an endless hope; without Christ a hopeless end” sums up the Gospel message presented with the Word of God. In a moment, by faith, Law Yok Ming received new life from God. “Faith

cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Romans 10:17). Days were no more clouded with the gloom of impending death, but shone with the bright hope of imminent union with his Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Comforted and assured by the Word of God, Law Yok Ming saw death as a defeated foe. In Christ he was confident that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8). Therefore, he was moved to put pen to paper and leave some precious thoughts, as from one for whom “to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21), and “to be with Christ... is far better” (Philippians 1:23).

“Thank God for Cancer” is the message from one for whom Heaven’s glory was drawing nearer by the day.

Dr Tow Siang Hwa

THANK GOD FOR CANCER

CANCER! This disease is dreaded by all and suffered by many. I am its latest victim. Cancer is synonymous with suffering, despair and death.

Physically I am afraid, but spiritually I am assured and at peace. I thank God that because of my condition I have come to know the Lord and to experience the joy and comfort in Him. Best of all, because of my disease, my whole family has also come to accept Jesus Christ as Saviour. We are indeed grateful to God for His salvation so rich and free. As the father of the family, I feel a great burden being lifted, for now I rest in the sure knowledge that in the Lord we will eventually be united eternally.

The hospital specialist had given up. As far as my disease was concerned, there was no hope of cure. My only hope is to commit myself to the Lord and cast myself on His mercy. If it is His will, He will heal me. My prayer is that He will use me for His glory within the time that He plans for me to be on this earth.

For more than 21 years I had passed my annual/biennial medical check-ups. In this last one at the age of 53 years, I had visions of retiring in two years' time to enjoy the fruits of my labour. However, my plan was not God's plan. The check-up stunned me: I had cancer! What a shock and a cruel blow. All sorts of questions flooded my mind. Why cancer? Why me? Why now? Why and more whys arose, but no answers. It seemed my world had suddenly collapsed about me.

From my early childhood I had been a God-fearing person, but somehow I had always regarded God as someone too high and mighty to be approached directly. I knew something of Christianity, but it is one religion which appeared to be in great conflict within itself due to its many divisions and denominations. What is the truth? This was the question which I sought urgently to answer. My condition was critical, and it seemed to me that I must find the life after death: this was my immediate and most pressing need.

I had some rudimentary knowledge of the Bible, of Jesus Christ, and so on. But my biggest

problem was to know which church was the right one. I recalled that in July 1986 my wife and I had attended Calvary Pandan Bible-Presbyterian Church to witness a baptismal service. The Sanctuary struck me as very peaceful and simple (in decor), a conducive place for prayer and meditation. It seemed to me that I might as well start with this church (of the many available in Singapore).

In order to learn more of the Christian faith, I enrolled in the Basic Bible Knowledge Class. Over the course of six months I sought to know the doctrine of the church, whether it was Biblical; the quality of its leadership, whether the leaders were spiritual people, with a firm grasp of doctrine; how the leaders relate to the congregation, whether they were considerate; the composition of the congregation, whether they were warm and friendly, supportive and encouraging; whether the people were ready to accept us, and how we would fit in.

The six-month period of the Basic Bible Knowledge Class would also allow the church to know more about me and my family, before

we were baptised and accepted as members of the church. This seemed a sound way of testing my faith and trust in the Lord, and our place in the church, for in this matter, once committed we must be steadfast to the very end, and our faith must continually increase.

After attending Calvary Pandan for some time, my wife and I were fully convinced of the doctrine of the church and we were ready to receive Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord in holy baptism. To me, this was an important step to prepare me mentally and spiritually for my chemotherapy treatment.

A ROUGH TIME AHEAD

At the hospital, my doctor (the oncologist) warned me to be prepared for a rough time during the course of chemotherapy. However, he assured me that the drug was the latest, the most powerful and the most expensive. I had been told that normally side effects are felt two hours after the injection. However, my “rough time” came within 45 minutes. It was rougher than I expected. By God’s grace and my unceasing

prayers, I survived the first night's ordeal. In my distress, I prayed to the Lord to sustain me through the treatment and if at all possible, to give me a cure.

To cut a long story short, more chemo injections were administered with the aim of destroying the cancer cells, especially those that might be floating in the blood stream. During the time in hospital, the members and leaders from Calvary Pandan visited and prayed with me. This gave much needed support and encouragement during my rough times. For all their tokens of love my family and I are forever grateful.

What were the prospects of cure with my chemo treatment? After the third course, a CT scan showed no improvement at all. Oh what a disappointment it was! But I was reminded, man's disappointment is God's appointment. Of my joyous appointment with the Lord I am fully assured.

THE ROAD TO HEAVEN

While in hospital, and at home, I spent

most of my waking hours reading the Word of God, and in prayer. Since my conversion I realised that I had a lot to catch up. As a newborn babe in Christ, I wanted to “*grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*” (2 Peter 3:18). My constant prayer was that I might be baptised in church with my whole family. My wife and four children (aged between 12 and 21) had all come to a full and joyous trust in the Lord. On 31 December 1987, my eldest daughter having returned from Australia, the Lord enabled me to lead my family to Calvary Pandan and together we confessed the Lord in baptism before the whole assembly. I consider the step of baptism to be an important part of one’s faith in the Lord. It is a commitment to live a new life “*wellpleasing in His sight*” (Hebrews 13:21). In addition, it is only after baptism that we may properly be admitted to the Lord’s Table.

In early 1988, I underwent five weeks of radiation treatment. Thereafter I had another CT scan to determine the progress. The result gave the oncologist and me a greater shock than the first. The two spots in the liver had

increased to four! What now must we do? The oncologist advised more chemotherapy, but the decision was up to me.

In times like this, I looked to the Lord. Is He not the Great Physician? He can heal me according to His will. I decided to commit my ways to Him and not to try any “miraculous” and “spiritual” healing (even though well-meaning friends had advised, as a “last resort”). For me, my trust and all my confidence is in God, and in Him alone.

In my condition there are ups and downs, maybe more downs than ups. As the condition advances, the bodily pain increases. For this my doctor prescribes pain killers. In the days remaining, I adhere to the following regime of life:

- *Living for Jesus everyday*
- *Enjoying the company of family and friends*
- *Studying God's Word with the help of Matthew Henry's Commentary*
- *Praying and interceding for others*
- *Admiring the beauty of God's creation*

I pray that my testimony will encourage someone with terminal illness. If you have not received Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord, do so now without delay. Accept Him into your heart and life, and secure for your soul a place in Heaven. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away (James 4:14). So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom (Psalm 90:12).

MY FINAL JOURNEY

In this last battle, cancer is gaining the upper hand. I see my body in retreat, losing ground by the day. But my spirits are high for my Risen Lord is ever near to lift me up. In Him I can say, "*Death is swallowed up in victory? O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? ...Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (1 Corinthians 15:54-57)

Daily I prepare for my final journey. In this no one can accompany me. I must travel alone, and yet not alone, for the Lord

promises to be with me through the valley of the shadow of death (Psalm 23:4). Days of waiting for His call are sometimes long and trying as the cancer eats into my body. But I thank God, His grace is sufficient for me. He sends His servants the Pastor, Elders and Deacons and Members of Calvary Pandan to pray and sing with me.

Christians should not call it funeral. The word is morbid, sad and worldly. “Home going” is more appropriate. The Word of God assures me that it will be a glad (and not sad) event, for to be *absent from the body is to be present with the Lord* (2 Corinthians 5:8). In the spirit, therefore, I long for Home and Heaven.

EPILOGUE

Law Yok Ming penned “My Final Journey” on 27 August 1988. Some seven weeks later, on 18 October 1988, his “earthly house” was dissolved and his soul was ushered into the presence of the Saviour. In Christ “*death is swallowed up in victory*” (1 Corinthians 15:54).

Dear reader, the sure promise and certain prospect of victory over death, over sin and the grave, is for all who believe in Jesus, the Risen Saviour. His offer is open to you today. He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

You too can have victory over death.

Put your trust in Jesus today.

*If you have been blessed by this tract,
please share your testimony by writing to us:*

Calvary Pandan

Bible-Presbyterian Church

201 Pandan Gardens, Singapore 609337

Tel: 6560 3885 Fax: 6566 3806

Email: calbp@pacific.net.sg

Website: calvarypandan.org

Worship services

Mandarin 8.00am - 9.30am

English 10.30am - 12.15pm

Sunset Gospel Hour 6.00pm - 7.30pm



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