Day 159, To My Wife

July 5, 2014 By Joseph Burke

There are times in life when many aspects of our lives are tried by fire to withstand the test of time. Our bodies may be put “through the ringer” physically and our minds can be pushed to their limits of break. But it’s in these trials, we find true strength of the inner spirit, unconditional love from God the Father, and true love in every sense from those closest to us. I realize this story may not/will not apply to everyone that reads this post, as we’ve all come from many differing backgrounds and roads of life. I am thankful most for Jesus Christ and His unconditional love, and thankful for a loving wife who has endured so much with me over the past few years with love, compassion and kindness.

As I approach the end of my treatment with just 8 days remaining, I reflect on the true face of love in the eyes of my beloved wife. Not only has she seen my best moments, but has been there with me each step of the way to wrap her arms around me at my worst. While being on liver treatment, I’ve endured a plethora of harsh side effects, ER visits and long days lying on the couch in pain. From her hands of compassion, she’s helped me back each time to regain my strength and physicality again. She does come from a nursing background and is a Registered Nurse here in Central Florida, just an extra blessing and nod from the Big Man upstairs; *I must’ve done something right*. Even beyond these past 6 months and coping with my vast array of hemophilia related injuries and disease related episodes, she’s even helped administer my own factor VIII product intravenously on multiple occasions. From her eyes, from her hands and from her heart, she radiates unconditional love and joy, a true genuine side of who she is as a woman. A real companion is one that will face adversity head on without question and prepare for the next mountain to climb. A rarity this day and age, true love does and will stand the test of time, even beyond the grave.

I come from an “old school” mentality where we give those we love praise while they’re here, not when they’re gone. My father once preached in church, “Give them roses while they’re alive, not when they’re dead.” Having almost completed Sovaldi and Ribavirin liver treatment, the past 6 months have been flooded with attacks on my mind and body. One thing has remained constant at the center of these storms, God’s Grace and my wife’s unconditional dedication. The past 6 months especially have been very trying on us, and my fits of riba-rage, mood swings, brain fog, lost in space and blah attitude I’m sure have not been easy for her. We’ve had clashing moments, and we quickly realized it wasn’t me, but the medication talking. Like I said, she’s truly seen my best and worst of times.

As I face the next chapter of my life, having slayed my dragon, and in just 8 short days am done with my treatment, I've been given a second chance at life not to become selfish but to give all that I am to God, my wife, my church and friends. This is a letter of new beginnings, of a fresh start on something that is already fantastic. God has given me a new life, both spiritually and physically, and I plan to do amazing things for His glory. I honor my wife today, the true rock in my house, the companion who needs to be recognized for the angel she truly is. True love is rare, and once found, will shake us to our core as a man or woman; if we even find it. Such is the same for my wife and how I feel about her. God gave me her blessing of love to not only take care of me, but remind me I'm worthy enough to achieve my dream despite limitations. This morning in church, we clasped hands and in our moment of worship stopped to embrace and thank God for our love and marriage. It's a humbling feeling to have found your soul mate, it's even a greater feeling knowing you will spend eternity with her one day. It says in **Mark 10:9** "*Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.*" Thanks Alexandra for being there, like I know you will be, forever and always.

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