Walking Through Hep C with Hope

December 23, 2014 By Connie M. Welch

Walking through any chronic illness we learn many lessons. I learned how walking through hep C brought hope and help in places I never expected.

Of all the phases of hepatitis C, for me the first phase, receiving the diagnosis was the hardest. I remember the shock and the feeling of "this can't be happening to me," roller coaster emotions. I felt like I stood at the opening of a very dark place. There was no going back. I had no choice. I had to go through it. Can you relate to being diagnosed with hep C?

The unknown before me was like a vast sea with waves of fear that rolled and tried to take me under. My one stronghold, my anchor, was Jesus Christ. Facing your own morality is not easy. For me, it wasn't the fear of the hereafter or even the end, it was the between.

Throughout my entire journey and beyond with hep C, I've walked in faith with Christ, and He has provided a peace and comfort that goes deeper than circumstances. Christ held me together at my core. He never let go. Every day walking through the dark valley with hep C and treatment, I relied on His word, His strength and in turn He gave me His peace that surpasses all understanding. I did not know what the outcome of my treatment would hold but I held onto who did.

I kept a hep C treatment journal to log what I experienced every day. Here is an excerpt from Day 11 of my treatment, April 20th, 2012:

Today is Day 11 on treatment for hepatitis C. Each day is a walk in faith with the shepherd. In between the ups and downs, twists and turns of this treatment, His assuring presence has not left me. It's amazing that even when I am sleeping I know He is watching over me. It's not something that can be properly put into words but I feel it from the depth of my soul.

The mornings always bring a challenge for the day as I put one foot in front of the other and just keep moving. The fog is heavier in the morning with my thinking as slow as my body. But I am reminded each day the eyes of faith can see what my physical eyes can never see. Each day walking with the shepherd leads me further up the mountain and no matter what is around the next turn, He is there with me. He quiet's the storms, He parts the waters and He takes my hand. For me that is more than enough. I could not be in safer hands.

I am reminded in Psalm 23:4 "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and staff they comfort me." There are three vital elements of this message:

1. *Walk through means you are passing through.*

2. *I will fear no evil, (is an intentional choice statement); a declaration of faith.*
3. *Because of the presence of the shepherd, I have no reason to fear. He not only protects me but comforts me. You are with me, is literal. He is not distant but right there beside me every step of the way.*

Psalm 138:7 is another great message, "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life."Today I may be moving slow, but I'm moving. I don't have to shuffle along with my head down. When I rise to take the next step, He comes by my side. He holds His hand out to me and lifts me up. The next part is so great. He doesn't let go. He holds on. And so do I.

Are you walking through the valley with hep C? I'd love to hear your thoughts.

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