

The Exchanger

THE EXCHANGER IS
THE MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER
OF
FELLOWSHIP
BIBLE CHURCH
WHITE ROCK

The Mission of
FBCWR:

*Connecting People to
God's Life-Changing
Power*

*We've Got
Connections!*

O LORD, my
strength and my
stronghold, And my
refuge in the day of
distress.

Jeremiah 16:19

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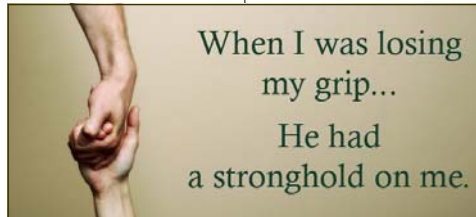
Plucked from Pity

*Excerpted from Joe Fornear's untitled book-in-progress on his battle and healing
from 4th stage metastatic melanoma cancer.*

One of the most formidable struggles I had was with self-absorption. I've had several other cancer patients tell me this too. They were all women though, so this is embarrassing. But I understand why self-focus took over. I needed to be in tune with my body to try to stay ahead of the cancer and pain. Routine tasks were problematic. Riding in a

car hurt. When Terri hit a bump I thought she could have dodged, I would let her know about it. I had little meat on my bones, so the PET scan table was like a slab of concrete. I had to lay still for a 35 minute session, and then again for 20 minutes. They warned me, if I moved, the pictures would blur. Once during a scan, I was so uncomfortable, I thought, heck with it, and I shifted my body. They discarded that scan and I had to do it all over. And then there was the needles. Since I had the lymph nodes removed from under my left arm, they would not stick it for fear of swelling or infection. So they only stuck my right arm, which began to rebel. The veins appeared ready, but would collapse away from the needle. It was common for me to be stuck eight or ten times, by several different nurses, until one succeeded. Twice med students couldn't locate major arteries, once for a "central line" in my neck for the Interleukin-2, and the other for a PICC line under my right arm for the chemo. In both instances when the student failed, the teacher thought the problem was a lack of force. Arteries have their own special set of nerves. Errant needle jabs felt like touching the spark plug of a running lawnmower. All this to explain why I felt deserving of extra comfort. At first it felt good to let sadness reign and cry real good for myself. Let it out Joe, let it

out. I would rehash all the things I couldn't do. No basketball. No fishing. But I realized I had become addicted to self-pity, and it had become a dank dungeon. I longed to step outside my little world. It was a foolish comfort, like bemoaning being in a ditch, yet shoveling more dirt out of the hole to display how deep I was.



When I was losing
my grip...
He had
a stronghold on me.

I believe the Lord redirected me in an unexpected way, through watching the entire DVD series, Band of Brothers, about Easy Company, the guys in

the 101st Airborne during the big war. They fought from Normandy deep into Germany. It was a wake up call for me. I wasn't freezing in a ditch in snowy woods on Christmas Eve being shot at all night long by huge German guns and holding exploded buddies in my arms, trying to figure out what to say as they died. I wasn't abandoned to waste away by the fleeing German army, like the caged up Jewish prisoners at Landsberg Concentration Camp. I had 100 times the support and 1000 times the comfort. The grit and sacrifice of those guys left me feeling sheepish. I remember my dad floored me once, when I asked how he had ended up in the army. I said, "So you were drafted, right?" No, he told me he signed up with the 101st Airborne on the day he graduated from high school. He would have joined sooner had he been allowed. He and his buddies walked straight to the Army recruiting center as soon as school let out. Then there was me, Mr. Softy. So I decided to toughen up. Again I found the Lord to be my Stronghold. He pulled me up out of the miry clay of self-pity when I had gotten myself bogged down.

-Joe Fornear