

“Blessings arrive in unexpected packages – in my case, cancer.

Those of us with potentially fatal diseases – and there are millions in America today – find ourselves in the odd position of coping with our mortality while trying to fathom God’s will. Although it would be the height of presumption to declare with confidence What It All Means, Scripture provides powerful hints and consolations.

The first is that we shouldn’t spend too much time trying to answer the why questions: Why me? Why must people suffer? Why can’t someone else get sick? We can’t answer such things, and the questions themselves often are designed more to express our anguish than to solicit an answer.

I don’t know why I have cancer, and I don’t much care. It is what it is – a plain and indisputable fact. Yet even while staring into a mirror darkly, great and stunning truths begin to take shape. Our maladies define a central feature of our existence: We are fallen. We are imperfect. Our bodies give out.

But despite this – because of it – God offers the possibility of salvation and grace. We don’t know how the narrative of our lives will end, but we get to choose how to use the interval between now and the moment we meet our Creator face-to-face.

Second, we need to get past the anxiety. The mere thought of dying can send adrenaline flooding through your system. A dizzy, unfocused panic seizes you. Your hearth thumps; your head swims. You think of nothingness and swoon. You fear partings; you worry about the impact on family and friends. You fidget and get nowhere.

To regain footing, remember that we were born not into death, but into life – and that the journey continues after we have finished our days on this earth. We accept this on faith, but that faith is nourished by a conviction that stirs even within many nonbelieving hearts – an intuition that the gift of life, once given, cannot be taken away. Those who have been stricken enjoy the special privilege of being able to fight with their might, main, and faith to live – fully, richly, exuberantly – no matter how their days may be numbered.”

- Tony Snow, former Press Secretary for George Bush, as written in Christianity Today.