



Toni Lynn Barton
May 27, 1965 - December 30, 2012
Resident of Newark

Entered into His kingdom on December 30, 2012 in Newark, CA at the age of 47. Devoted wife of 20 years to Phillip Barton. Loving mother to Bryan Barton and Christopher Barton. Beloved daughter of Joanne Roderick/Granman. Cherished sister of Wendy Lopez and her husband Carlos, and Jodi Fadeff and her husband Dean. Caring aunt to many beautiful nieces and nephews.

Born May 27, 1965 in San Leandro, CA, her faith and many friends saw her through an inspiring battle with cancer.

A Memorial Service will be held for Toni on Saturday, January 12, 12pm at the Neighborhood Church, 38325 Cedar Blvd., Newark, CA 94560. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in memory of Toni to the charity of your choice.



From: Phil Barton [mailto:wolfcal@ptbarton.com]

Sent: Sunday, December 09, 2012 7:34 PM

Subject: Toni update

My apologies for sending this out in a group email but all of you know most of the situation we are now trying to deal with...

Last night Toni woke up and everything was spinning and making her sick. This lasted all night and worried us greatly. In the morning Chris and Sonya came over to watch the boys (who are unaware of what is happening). I took Toni to Urgent care where they ran blood tests and gave her fluids for dehydration and anti-nausea medicine. We finally got her back home and she has been able to sleep peacefully. She still has some vision problems and can't keep much down. Her blood test showed her liver is having a lot of problems.

We know you guys are out there praying for us and we can feel it, so Thank You! Whoever prayed that Toni would be able to keep a Popsicle down...your prayer was just answered (it might have been mine). Apparently we have an army out there that loves us and wants to do anything and everything for us...overwhelming.

Tomorrow we will talk to her oncologist to get a better understanding of what we are dealing with. I'll keep you informed as appropriate. Thank you all for your love and support.

Blessings,

Phil

From: Phil Barton [mailto:wolfcal@ptbarton.com]

Sent: Monday, December 10, 2012 10:11 PM

Subject: RE: Toni update #2

As more people become involved in this I'm expanding the distribution list to keep you all informed.

Today was a challenging day, Toni slept well last night. She continues to experience dizziness and nausea and cannot keep down much food. Her mood is amazingly resolved and, to me, spiritual considering all that she is going through.

I talk to her oncologist who confirmed our fears on how bad her liver is doing and he recommended engaging hospice immediately to help out and guide us through our future. Toni's sisters Wendy and Jodi came over to visit and help out. Toni definitely had more energy when they were around.

We all listened to the hospice nurse when she came over to advise us. I had a million questions, imagine that, and I didn't always get the type of information I was looking for. I have been struggling with when and how to tell the boys. She advised us to tell them now and I confirmed with Toni that telling Bryan was the right thing to do first.

I have been praying for guidance on this and it felt a little like God was holding out on me. Finally when I picked him up from Grandma's house after school I took him to Coyote Hills and taught him how to drive my car in the parking lot. He was very afraid at first and then got more confident and relaxed and amazed by what he was doing. After he parked the car I finally told him about Toni and it hurt badly; we both cried a lot. I told him I didn't want to have to lie to him and I needed his help to find a way to tell Christopher. We talked about how we needed to help both Toni and Christopher and I started to see my son turn into a man before my eyes.

Then he did something that amazes me and I will smile about forever. He pointed to a bench on the top of the hill and asked if we could go up there to pray. Man, he is so much older than I am "spiritually". We climbed the hill and got down on our knees and prayed while overlooking the SF Bay. It was just beautiful. He prayed like an angel. We cried and hugged some more and went home and he talked with Toni while I distracted Christopher...God showed up after all!

Daphne, the best neighbor in the whole wide world, brought us dinner and Sonya came over to check on Toni and the boys. Later her friend Kim came by and visited with Toni. They prayed and Toni's energy really returned and they had a great visit.

I still have no idea or desire to tell Christopher but he knows something is going on so it will have to be soon. Last night I was lying in bed thinking of all the people who are praying and caring for us and it just took my fears and anxiety away. Thank you all for that.

Blessings,

Phil

From: Phil Barton [mailto:wolfcal@ptbarton.com]

Sent: Tuesday, December 11, 2012 11:53 PM

Subject: RE: Toni update #3

All,

Thank you for all your kind words and prayers as this distribution list continues to greatly expand.

From a control freak perspective, today was a total disaster. From a father and a husband's perspective it was quite a blessing.

The good news is that Toni really had a good day today. She was able to eat and keep things down for the first time in days. She got out of bed and moved around much better than the last couple of days. The dizziness she has been experiencing seems to be less each day. She had many calls and visitors that kept her going and her spirits high. It also wore her out but hopefully in a good way.

But what about me?...Doorbells, phone calls, text messages, emails, meetings with hospice and mega tears all day long. UNCLE! (As the violin plays in the background)

My achievement today was that I was able to tell little Christopher about his mom's condition. It didn't happen in quite as dramatic fashion as Bryan (see previous email) but I was able to trust where the Lord led me and again, he didn't let me down.

Through all the chaos of the day a moment just presented itself where Christopher and I were home alone and Toni was in bed. I took Christopher in our office and had a man to man conversation with him. The tears came hard but so did some answers to questions I couldn't answer before. Then he went and jumped in bed with mom and cried and hugged it out with her as dad stood in the hallway and cried like a little girl. (Someone is going to have to come and collect my man card soon) Next thing I know Toni got Christopher to laugh talking about what life was going to be like in heaven. Finally, Toni asked Christopher if he had any questions for her and he told her that he didn't but did have two comments. 1, when Toni gets to heaven he wants her to tell PopPop (Grandpa Gene) hello and that he misses him and 2, to say hello to God for him. Later Bryan came home and they both hugged and cried together but Bryan is now watching after his younger brother in this. I think we are going to be ok. Later, I just had to take little Christopher out and get a new Lego kit. I think at that point I would have gotten him a Rolex if he asked for one.

I received this bible verse today from our neighbor Daphne (who made us dinner again...angel!) and it has stuck with me all day.

"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from

us...Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day." 2 Cor 4: 7, 16

This really does feel like some twisted version of "It's a Wonderful Life". All of these wonderful blessings are coming through the most trying of circumstances. If anyone offered them to me I wouldn't except under any circumstances but after having to live through them I would never give them up for easier terms. God is at work here, which is one of the reasons why I'm sharing all this detail.

Now to get really corny on you: Both my sons asked for one thing when I told them about their mom's condition. They want her with us for Christmas! **So I'm asking you to help make that happen through prayer.**

Now that both my boys are aware of the situation it is ok to call the house or come by to see Toni. I can't guarantee she will be available because she needs a lot of rest these days but seeing and talking to people when she is up for it keeps her going. Please call before coming over so we don't get overwhelmed.

Blessings,

Phil

From: Phil Barton [mailto:wolfcal@ptbarton.com]

Sent: Friday, December 14, 2012 12:13 AM

Subject: FW: Toni update #4

I was hoping to stop writing these emails after I got past the challenges the Lord was walking me through in telling my son's that their mom, Toni, was losing her battle with cancer, but God seems to be doing something with these emails. Apparently they have gone greatly past my expanding distribution list and now we have people praying all over the country for us. This whole week has been so humbling but in a very encouraging way. For those of you forwarding these emails to others and asking for prayers for us...a heartfelt thank you! I read the attached email to Toni today and we both cried and our hearts became full. Norma Orozco, Jo Ann & Dan and your prayer team...Thank you for praying for us even though we don't know you.

Our family website: www.ptbarton.com

Our church website: <http://www.cbnc.net/>

Toni Update: Today is the best day she has had in a long while. Her dizziness is mostly gone and she is hungry and able to eat again. Due to her liver failing she has a condition where her belly fills slowly with liquid and causes much pain, so yesterday she had 14 lbs. of fluid drained from her abdomen. She is feeling so much better (my apologies if this is TMI). Toni was visited by her women's group (Antoinette, Daphne, JoJo and Valerie) who came over to our house and later her sisters came over and hung out with her while I went into work for a bit and then Costco. (Costco at Christmas time will test your faith!)

Later her high school friends (Kim and Jalana) came over to visit with her and pray. Then she joined our Bible Study group for a while before finally tiring out. These details are important because Toni hasn't been able to do this for weeks but all of a sudden today something was different. I chose to believe it has something to do with all you people out there praying for her!

About a week ago Nick Rodrigues from our church sent me a link for Bethel Healing ministries. They have online healings via Skype. I've learned that God can come at you many different ways if you are looking for him. Nick...today we gave it a shot and I still don't know quite what happened but something did seem to happen. Thank you to Shawn and Eric (the man with the laugh we will never forget) who prayed over Toni while both myself and Toni's friend Valerie participated. Is it just a coincidence that Toni had such a good day today? Here's their link in case anyone wants to check them out – <http://www.ibethel.org/how-to-skype-with-healing-rooms> (I still don't know what to make of the experience but it was positive and spiritual)

What God really did for us today:

For the following story I just had to throw my "Man Card" into the shredder: (too many tears of joy)

Assurance of Victory

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. 1Cor 10:13

Above is a memory verse I had to memorize when I started Bible Study...I hate memory verses. I thought they were a tool that Pastor Joel was trying to use to torment me, but because of the events of the last 24 hours I can't get this verse out of my head.

It all started when the Hospice nurse came over and we had a very frank discussion about what we were facing in the days and weeks ahead with Toni's condition. Although the word "tempted" referenced in the verse above isn't exactly right, I quickly knew I was facing a situation "beyond what I thought I could bear". That is when God decided to send me an angel (**Lisa Costa**) and her picture is attached to this email. You see her husband Tom and I have known each other since we were three years old. They live in Texas and we live in California. They have three beautiful daughters and are an amazing Christian family. Lisa is a nurse with hospice experience who, before I even knew I was in trouble, offered to leave her family at Christmas time and come out and help see us through this. I had to refuse the offer but she wouldn't take no for an answer. She said being able to offer this service would be a beautiful thing for her and provide a wonderful example for her daughters. WOW, who does that? How can you be that unselfish in today's world? How much more does God want to humble a guy like me?

Lisa is the kind of person that would hate that I just told you about this, but I really had no choice. You need to know about her. **Pastor Ernest Jones** leads her church and I copied him on this email so he can share some of this with his congregation if he chooses to. They are so blessed to have the Costa family in their congregation.

Lisa is coming to live with us this Sunday! ("...he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it".)

Please pray for her and her family as well this Christmas while she/they sacrifice for my family

Blessings,

Phil

p.s. Not all the people on this distribution list are people of faith, but you still love and care for my wife. Thank you for that. I was once like you and I can't really explain how I got here but there is no way I would ever go back. I hope one day you can allow Jesus I shot at changing your world like he did for me and my family.

Email Attachments:

Tom and Lisa Costa



From: Norma Orozco [<mailto:norozco@sjgov.org>]

Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2012 9:54 AM

Subject: Toni update #3

Good Morning to All:

Below is the latest update from Phil (Toni's husband) which was forwarded to me by my dear friend, Robin (Toni's aunt).

Please take the time to read his update and be filled by the Holy Spirit who absolutely has poured himself out upon Phil to encourage us today. God is so abundantly generous, that he is showering us with peace by allowing us to hear His words through the faith and experience of his servant Phil.

I am overwhelmed by what I hear and feel from this message. Let us pray, pray, pray and then pray some more.

Love,
Norma.

From: USJoDan@aol.com<<mailto:USJoDan@aol.com>>

[\[mailto:USJoDan@aol.com\]](mailto:USJoDan@aol.com)<[mailto:\[mailto:USJoDan@aol.com\]](mailto:[mailto:USJoDan@aol.com])>

Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2012 10:00 AM

To: Norma Orozco

Subject: Re: Toni update #3

Cannot get over the strength that this family has and the loving way that they are all dealing with the impossible. Norma again, thank you for sharing with us and we will keep all of this family in our prayers
God Bless, Jo Ann & Dan

From: Phil Barton [mailto:wolfcal@ptbarton.com]
Sent: Monday, December 17, 2012 12:17 AM
Subject: FW: Toni update #5

“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” (James 1:2)

I heard that verse referenced this morning at church and it spoke volumes to me so I thought I would share it with you. Is it possible to have too many hugs from people who care for you? NOPE! I found that out at church today.

Toni Update: On Saturday we had our largest group of visitors yet to see Toni. She did well throughout the day and had such wonderful visits. It was so comforting to see. We also found out that Toni went beyond her limits a little which led to a rough Saturday night and very little energy on Sunday, so we need to figure out a balance that works best for her. I guess I’m now her agent because I have created a booking calendar to help manage when people come to see her.

Daphne McIntosh (daphne_mc@sbcglobal.net), our food control angel, is now helping to coordinate all the food support we have been receiving from so many wonderful people. Daphne does sign language and children’s ministries at our church. She also lives across the street from us and has such a wonderful family. I wish I had a picture of her to share. Her heart is just SO BIG it makes you warm inside just being around her.

We officially have added a new member to our family. **Lisa Costa** arrived safely from Texas (see Toni update #4) and already it just feels so right having her here. Having a real nurse live in the house will be such a comfort for Toni and our family.

I understand that we are global now with prayer groups in India, Africa, Canada, and Europe and of course the US praying for my wife and our family this Christmas. Amazing...humbling...comforting (and for those who know me..."Awesome!!!") Thank you all for caring and sharing our story with others. The emails we have been receiving have touched our hearts greatly.

Blessings,

Phil

p.s. A special thank you to team Boike and my boss at work...Thank you for the things you have done and for caring so much about my family.

From: Phil Barton [mailto:wolfcal@ptbarton.com]
Sent: Friday, December 21, 2012 12:26 AM
Subject: FW: Toni update #6

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your path straight” – Proverbs 3:5-6

This is the only verse of the bible I can really say I have memorized into my DNA. Us control freaks have such a hard time with the word "trust". I'm better than I use to be, but I am still not where I HOPE to be.

Toni Update: After being on a tremendous spiritual high from the prayer chain response and related activities, we encountered a night where Toni struggled with a lot of pain and her condition started to accelerate into a negative direction. The "make it to Christmas" prayer seemed to be in great jeopardy. Toni stopped eating for a couple of days and her body continued to shut down. As a result, I prepped the boys that mom might not be able to make it to Christmas (am I not trusting the Lord in doing this?). It has been a rough and scary couple of days.

Then today happened... At 4:30am this morning Toni somehow got out of her hospital bed and found her way to the kitchen looking for popsicles to eat. Both Lisa and I couldn't figure out how she got there based on the last two days. She hasn't been able to walk by herself.

So there I am at 4:30 in the morning feeding my wife Jell-O and watching Willie Wonka and the Chocolate factory and loving every minute of it. She wanted to eat for the first time in two days. She wasn't in pain and she was giving me this smile that just melts my heart. I wanted to wake the kids so they could see but we just enjoyed the moment instead. Later she had a good many visits throughout the day and held up pretty well. Maybe Christmas is still possible...I don't know, but every day brings new challenges and such unexpected precious moments.

I want to thank everyone who participated in the prayer chain. It was such a strong response of faith and support. Lisa, Daphne, Chris C., the food angels, and so many others are being guided and inspired to look after us. I will say it again...humbling!

God is with us. He is watching and has been helping my family every step of the way even though we didn't always know it. I trust in that!

Blessings,
Phil

From: Phil Barton [mailto:wolfcal@ptbarton.com]
Sent: Monday, December 24, 2012 3:55 PM
Subject: FW: Toni update #7

"What do you get the girl who is about to get everything?" – Lisa Costa

I wanted to share that quote above from Lisa (Our angel nurse from Texas), because she hit me with it when I was struggling with the thought of not being able to get a gift for my wife this Christmas. Lisa's quote put everything into perspective and my anxiety just melted away.

Toni Update: Toni has been unconscious for the last two days. She is not in pain and is sleeping like an angel. We had family Christmas parties on both Saturday and Sunday, so although she wasn't awake she got a lot of hugs and kisses and prayers and stories. It was really a beautiful thing to behold.

Christopher is really hoping that mom wakes up on Christmas so he can talk to her and show her stuff. This morning he hit me with the attached note to Santa that brought out the waterworks so I

thought I would share. I'm coming to the belief that certain types of crying are so very good for the soul.

I have been told that I'm doing really well through all of this. God's grace is all around our household these days so things are not as tough as people are probably imagining. Seems like we have unlimited love, hugs, caring, food, friends and to some extent joy! Toni is in God's hands through this and they are very strong hands indeed. I have been so blessed by the Costa family for sharing Lisa with us to care for Toni in our time of need. Please keep them in your prayers this Christmas. They are very special people.

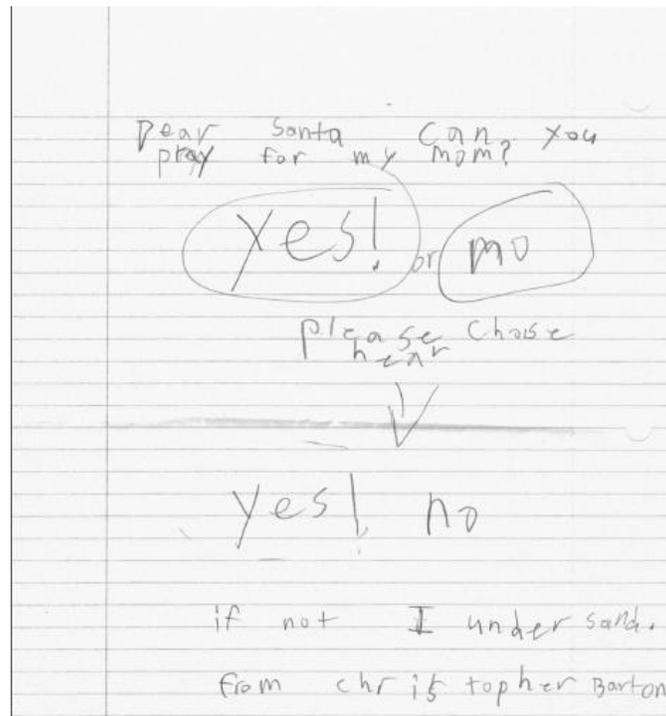
A friend of mine sent me the following which I found very comforting. My house is surrounded by many little birds these days. Thank you anonymous!

You are a little bird, hanging on a big branch in the midst of a severe storm. I wondered how you hang on during such windy and turbulent times. But I heard that God made you in such a perfect way that you allow Him to help you, and you have your eyes fixed on the rainbow ahead, not the downpour of now. God bless you little bird, for I feel like an ostrich with my head in the sand, afraid of tomorrow. For God knows the plans he has for you, plans to bless you and give you life and a future.

Blessings,

Phil

Attachment: Christopher's letter to Santa



From: Phil Barton [mailto:wolfcal@ptbarton.com]

Sent: Tuesday, December 25, 2012 10:44 PM

Subject: FW: Toni update #8 (Christmas Edition)

Merry Christmas to all of our friends and family that have been praying so hard for my wife and family.

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” John 13:34-35

So many “disciples” have been witnessed through our story that it is hard not to be encouraged this Christmas. People of faith living what they believe and drawing others by the light they cast through their actions. Well done people!

Toni Update: Toni is still here! We have not had the Christmas day I feared and I thank you all for that. Whether you believe in the power of prayer or not, and I do, we have been witnessing something very special. Our boys celebrated Christmas with their mom and not without her. She did not fully wake on Christmas but the boys were able to tell her what they got and kiss and hug her. We hoped she would respond with just a simple “Merry Christmas” but that was not to be. Toni had some special visitors today. She was prayed for, sang to, hugged and kissed and cried upon. She held out for Christmas like she hoped she could and our family and friends are so very thankful.

In the coming days we will be facing some challenges that no one looks forward to, so I’m asking for your continued prayers and support. This holiday season has been such a blessing in so many ways. Toni will live because Jesus lives. I’ve investigated and have found profound truth in this. Without this “absolute truth” our circumstance would be too painful to contemplate. I wish you all unlimited joy and happiness in His name. Amen!

Blessings,

Phil

From: Phil Barton [mailto:wolfcal@ptbarton.com]

Sent: Thursday, December 27, 2012 9:10 PM

Subject: FW: Toni update #9

Toni Update: A belated “Merry Christmas” from Toni Barton. It happened last night (Dec. 26th). The boys were getting ready for bed. Bryan and I were saying goodnight to Toni. Bryan kissed her and said his usual “night mom” and she immediately opened her eyes and said “goodnight” to him. I told her “Merry Christmas” and she looked at me and said “Merry Christmas”. We hollered for Christopher and he ran into the room and kissed her and she kissed him back. Then she went back to sleep and hasn’t been fully awake since. It was so awesome I almost wet myself. She hasn’t been conscience in days and then bam here she is for 12 amazing seconds. On a scale of 1 to 10 it was definitely a “17” moment!

Funny how God works sometimes...I was so disappointed we couldn’t get her to wake up and say “Merry Christmas” on Christmas day. I thought God could have at least produced that and then He goes ahead and makes me feel guilty for doubting Him.

Toni is still sleeping peacefully and is not in pain. She hasn’t eaten or drank any water for about 5 days. Having visitors is not a problem these days because we don’t have to worry about tiring her out.

We will be sending Lisa back home to Texas on Sunday December 30th. It will be good to know that she is back with her family.

I had intended not to send any further updates until this story comes to its conclusion, but if God keeps providing moments like the one described above then I will just have to share them. Here's hoping for a lot more email updates ☺

Blessings,

Phil

From: Phil Barton [mailto:wolfcal@ptbarton.com]

Sent: Monday, December 31, 2012 2:09 AM

Subject: FW: Toni update #10 (Final Update)

"I can do everything through him who gives me strength" – Philippians 4:13

Toni Update: My beautiful wife passed away today (12/30/12) at 1:05 pm...on my birthday. As sad as that statement sounds, I want you to know that it was the most beautiful thing I have ever witnessed in my life.

I took Lisa and the boys to church this morning because today was the day Lisa would be returning home to Texas. My heart was heavy because I would be proceeding without Lisa's helping hand for the first time since Toni's condition had required such serious care. I felt God challenging me with something I wasn't fully prepared for, but my faith and friends would help me get through it.

When we got back from church we noticed Toni was laboring in her breathing. Lisa told me this could be a sign that the end was near so I had each of the boys sit with their mom to express their feelings to her. Our wonderful neighbor Virginia watched Toni while I took the boys and drove Lisa to the airport. Lisa so wanted to see this thing through to the end that it pained her to leave at this time. She seems to have created so many "BFF's" that the separation sadness went way beyond just me and my boys.

When we got home, Toni was really laboring but had an expression of a wonderful peace on her face. Her eye brows were moving like she was seeing such wondrous things. I was sitting alone with her crying and asking how this whole thing was going to end. Then came a knock on the door...enter Antoinette Rodrigues her close friend from church, then came Daphne and Valerie with her daughter Meghan and James Jenkins and his daughter Jaleesa and John, Daphne's husband, then Pastor Joel. They all came within minutes of each other and suddenly Toni's hospital bed is surrounded by her closest church friends kneeling and praying and singing for her. I was at the end of the hospital bed looking down on my wife and crying and smiling because everyone looked like angels to me at that moment administering to my wife. It was glorious and beautiful and a ton of other adjectives I could probably plug in. I was thinking how this would be such a wonderful time for Toni to go when she actually stopped breathing which brought me to my knees. And then she took another breath and I think we all stopped breathing. She took a few more breaths so very far apart and then she was gone at 1:05 pm PST. Such Amazing Grace!

The boys came in to see the body and then we went into the office together and cried it out and made manly agreements with each other. They are hurting but they are also going to be ok. We have one more angel looking over our family today.

As I was thinking about sending out this last email I recalled a document I started creating when Toni was originally diagnosed (see attached). This incredible journey of cancer and faith started July 23, 2010. You have all been a witness to the ending part of this story but the many blessings we have received along the way is what changed us so significantly. We have faith, we believe in the promise of Jesus Christ and we believe there is a bigger purpose to this life than ourselves. This was not always the case. How lucky we are my wife got cancer and Jesus was there to save us!

Valerie told me after Toni passed that we now share the same birthday. Big Smile...Yes we now do! Something to celebrate going forward...

Blessings,

Phil

Attachments:

Barton Family 2011



The Beginning:

Friday - July 23, 2010 We heard the news today oh boy...Toni went in this morning for a CT scan after having blood tests run yesterday and an ultrasound. She has been having pain in her lower chest for several weeks and lately has been experiencing shoulder pain. The original diagnosis from Dr. Kehl was a pulled stomach muscle, but the pain has persisted and not gone away and thus additional tests.

We got a call this afternoon from Dr. Bi and both Toni and I picked up the phone at the same time. Toni spoke and I remained silent. "I think I have some bad news for you...", did he really say those words? He went on to explain that the CT scan showed many lesions on Toni's Liver and her blood markers for cancer were extremely high. I could hear her voice start to shudder as I felt my heart sink.

As soon as we hung up the phone, I rushed to her and motioned her to step outside into our back

yard with me so we could talk without our sons noticing. We sat on our garden swing and held each other tight as tears filled our eyes. I felt so close to her at that moment and so helpless at the same time. We had just been told we had a free pass to the front of the line for the scariest roller coaster in the world. We were both just numb but we agreed not to tell anyone until we knew the results of all the procedures they were scheduling for her on Monday morning.

Later that day we identified a signal phrase we would use to indicate that one of us was experiencing an emotional moment which required instant relief from the other. "What time is it?" was the phrase we decided on.

I need to determine someone I can talk to and when to do it. There is a volcano of tears and uncontrolled emotion building inside of me and I pity the person who I must pull into this. "Character is everything..." a quote from Glen Beck which I truly believe in and a strong character on both our parts will be required as we go forward. I will be there for Toni and my children and comfort them!

Note to self: Toni must see the web video from Randy Pausch if the news goes where we fear.

Saturday September 5 Toni started Chemo on Monday of this week but my experiences with God started to happen before that. A couple of weeks ago at 2 AM in the morning I was lying in bed while Toni was struggling through another night of rough sleep. The weight of the world was on top of me and I was also probably on the verge of an anxiety attack. The words of the song "Jesus take the wheel" came into my mind and at that moment I made a conscience decision to ask the Lord for help and put all of my problems and concerns in His hands. At that exact moment I felt something physical. I felt my problems being lifted off of me and a pleasing sense of calm come over me. The old Phil would have questioned this and explained it away. The new Phil is more than willing to go with it. The Lord laid me down in green pastures and I slept so peaceful for the first time in weeks. When I awoke I remembered everything from the previous night and I haven't been the same since. Praise Jesus!