



It bugs me that in the midst of our modern culture, striving for personal independence is now a norm. It seems like most people take pleasure when they can say, "Look what I did by myself." At a young age, we teach our kids to be independent and work towards being productive individuals in our society. Can we really live an independent life? I have thought about this many times as Karen and I have battled her ovarian cancer for almost two years. What we have learned is that God uses other believers in the body of Christ to minister the Spirit's exhortation and encouragement. We

have received so many calls, emails, text messages and cards from God's people in order to encourage us. In essence, they are an extension of the Holy Spirit's ministry to us as we face the greatest challenge in 43 years of marriage.

*"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching."* Hebrews 10:24-25

Treating the ups and downs of cancer can be exhausting and produces a life full of weekly drama. Since the last update in July, it has been fairly calm. As I said last month, Karen was blessed to have been chosen for an immunotherapy clinical trial at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. The premise of the trial is to see if the combination of a chemo pill called Azacitidine (which has successfully treated Leukemia) will work in concert with an immunotherapy drug called Keytruda (which has successfully treated lung cancer) to bring ovarian cancer into submission. With this in mind, Karen has been taking three oral chemo pills daily and a Keytruda infusion every 28 days. She has had two treatments in July. When she first started, she was very sick. Praise to God that her body is adjusting much better now and her side effects are minimal. We were told by the oncologists that we will not know if this dual combination of treatments is actually going to work until after the fourth cycle, which will be on September 3. We will have a "tell all" CT scan at Mayo Clinic sometime in September or early October and there we will see its success or failure.

Now what? We are crucially connected and dependent on each of you as our brothers and sisters within the Body of Christ. There is not an independent bone in our body, so we need you to hold us up in the power of prayer before a mighty God. Paul said it himself in Galatians 6:2, *"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."*

God blessed us in His Word the other morning and I wanted to share it with you . . .

*"My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken. One thing God has spoken, two things have I heard: that you, O God, are strong, and that you, O Lord, are loving."* Psalm 62: 1-2,11-12

*Standing on the Rock,  
Pat and Karen Phinney*