

August 6, 2013

The Older I Get, The Litter I Understand

I understand very little of the changes that are happening at an ever-increasing rate in our society. It is very difficult for me to understand how a person's career can be ruined if they use the N word on social media, but it's perfectly okay to use Jesus Christ as a swear word, and damn God in movies, cable TV, etc.

I don't understand how the greatest, most free country in history could have twice elected a leader who is acting more like Castro, Chavez, or Mugabe, than a Washington or Reagan.

I don't understand how a free press – and a congress - could let a US President ignore the constitution, and not call him into accountability.

I don't understand why our leader calls himself a Christian when his actions prove that he is not a Christian.

I don't understand why he has aligned himself with the Muslim Brotherhood.

I don't understand why I understand less all the time!

My Condition:

Everyone on my mailing list knows that I have been battling melanoma for 4 ½ years. I have had eleven surgeries, one of which was not related to the melanoma. There have been 3 rounds of radiation, one of which was for prostate cancer - successful. I also had shingles three years ago. It was caught early and stopped, but it still itches.

Melanoma is a somewhat mysterious disease to say the least. When it becomes metastatic, it often kills very quickly, but it sometimes is not very aggressive. If mine was aggressive, I would probably already have gone to my reward. In view of what I don't understand about today's world, that is not so bad to contemplate.

It has been almost two years since my last major melanoma surgery. The surgeon took a section of my skull out and found melanoma cells on my brain. That was the first time human eyes had seen my brain to prove that I had one. Statistically, I had 4-9 months left on this planet. A couple of months later a CT scan revealed three melanoma nodules in my left lung. IL 2 chemo followed which was harder to endure than any of the surgeries. The next scan showed that two of the lung nodules had gone away, and the surgeon gave me a brand-new skull.

That is where we are now. There are still cells on my brain, and one nodule – not a tumor - in my lung. One of my well-meaning close friends has told some of you that my cancer is spreading. As far as medical science can tell, that is not true. I am

undergoing some more treatment now, but I am enjoying normal activities. I spent week before last playing golf in Pebble Beach with seven friends. We are all older than dirt, and my host said that “we are into bad golf and good friends”. It was the fourth annual “poor Gene’s last golf trip”. I am looking forward to the tenth annual in six more years. However, if God decides I’ve been here long enough – that’s His business!

When you hang around waiting rooms like the one on the second floor of the Winship Cancer Institute of Emory, you meet lots of folks with cancer. I met a man yesterday who was diagnosed with lymph nodes melanoma twenty-three years ago. He comes in for a checkup every six months, but is cancer free.

Most people think I am strange, and some of you will think I am even stranger when you read what I am closing with.

Melanoma is the second-best thing that ever happened to me. This post Christian America is so materialistic and full of diversions that I had begun to take God for granted. It was a wonderful wake up call. I am closer to God, and thus closer to my family and friends than I have ever been. My strongest desire is to see every member of my family and all of my friends have a personal relationship with our Creator. I don’t take any of you for granted anymore!

If anyone is still reading, you might be wondering what the best thing that ever happened to me was. That’s easy; it was coming into personal relationship with Jesus Christ at the age of forty-one.

Pray for our nation!