

The Providence of



by
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Proverbs 3:5-6 5. Trust in the Lord and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Psalms 23:4 Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

*A personal story of
heart surgery, life and faith*



On April 7, 2016 I had triple bypass surgery performed on my heart. I had no idea that at that time, I would have to have major surgery. I believe that GOD had prepared me many years earlier for that surgery. Here's my story.....



Over 30 years ago, I started walking around in my community for exercise. I increased the number of miles I'd walk in a day, from 1 to 2, then 3, 6, and eventually 7 miles a day. Walking became a part of my life. I became known in my neighborhood as "the man who does all the walking". I also had a small gym in my house.

About two years ago I joined S.W.L.A. gym on Opelousas Street. After working out there, in two years my weight strength lifting average grew to about 29 million pounds, an average of about 1,208,334 pounds a month. I was doing about 800 stomach crunches a day. I was working very hard to develop a 'six pack'. People would compliment me on my firm commitment to body building in and outside the gym. Now about my faith in Christ Jesus: many years ago, my friend, Archie Moore told me something that helped to increase my faith.



Now Archie was a sick man who would drive to and from a Houston hospital for treatment each week , yet he would come to church on Sundays happy and always exhibiting a great sense of humor.

I asked him how he could be so happy after all he'd been through. He said it was his faith in GOD. I said, "Archie, I do not know if I could go through that. I have never been through any major sickness". He said, "Bro. Stevens, your faith will enable you to make it."

I began to think about my faith, wondering if I would have enough to face life's most difficult challenges in the future. I was already trusting GOD.

Then I realized that there are some things in life that God will let us handle for ourselves. GOD will not come and cut our grass, cook our food, go to a forty-hour work week and give us the money. But if we have the faith to trust in him to handle what we cannot handle, then he will fix the problem.

From that time on, I began to build my faith by trusting in GOD more and more. Consequently, life's problems got easier and easier to bear. Then I began to trust GOD for **everything**. My relationship with him grew stronger. I thank GOD for his faithfulness.



Then there came a point in my life, when all seemed well, that I began to suffer with acid reflux and a heart problem at the same time. I had gone in for a check-up at Dr. Turner's office in January of 2016 and things looked okay at the time. I had been going to a gastroenterologist who informed me that I had a hiatal-hernia that was pushing my upper stomach into my chest cavity and the only relief was surgery or change in diet. So I went down in prayer, asking GOD to help me make the right decision as to whether or not surgery was the answer.

Now that the providence of GOD was with my physical and spiritual life, it was time for me to face a great test of faith.

One day as I was walking in my neighborhood, the HOLY SPIRIT spoke to me in a loud voice and said, "When you get home, call Doctor Turner's office". Dr. Turner is my cardiologist. I walked about another ten steps then turned around and went back home to call his office.

Dr. Turner's nurse listened to me as I explained my symptoms and asked if I would like to take a nuclear stress test.

I said yes so she scheduled the test for April 6, 2016 at 10 a.m. On that day, when I started taking the test, my chest began to pain me.



The nurse finished the test and told me to go back to the waiting room, but not to leave.

After a while she came back and told me that I wouldn't be able to go home and that I needed to go to Dr. Turner's office immediately. The test had revealed that I had a serious blockage affecting my heart. About an hour later I went to his office and he said that my main artery going to the left side of my heart was 90% obstructed. There was also an artery on the right side of the heart that was beginning to clog. He said that there was one of two things he could do. One was to put in a stent which he would not recommend, or he could do a triple by-pass by taking some arteries from my left leg to use to replace the damaged arteries to my heart. This procedure, he explained, would call for him to cut into my chest, take my heart out, and place it in a bowl of cold liquid, while he removed the arteries from my leg and replaced the damaged ones to the heart. I concluded right away that he could do the by-pass surgery as soon as possible. He said, "Let me check with the surgeon." When he returned, he said that the surgery could be performed the next day. I agreed right then and there to let them perform the surgery.

I was admitted to St. Patrick Hospital that same evening and they prepared me for surgery for the next day.



I told GOD that he could have my problem because it was too big for me to handle. I said, "LORD, you have a big one now, its all yours! That very day of my surgery, I put all my faith and trust in GOD. I had no fear of death. As they were transporting me to the room where the surgery would be performed, I heard someone say goodbye. But I remember saying, "No, not goodbye, because I will see you in recovery".

When I awakened in recovery, the doctors told me that I was going to recover very well because of my excellent health. I was told that the heart surgeon said I was one of the first persons on which he performed this type of surgery, where the person had no fat in his chest, and whose muscles, blood vessels and arteries were so strong and healthy.

Approximately seven days after the surgery, I went home.

A physical therapist came to my home to give me physical therapy. He concluded that I did not need any therapy because my legs were so strong.

Three months after my surgery I received outpatient cardiac rehabilitation at St. Patrick Hospital for six weeks. I thank GOD that as of now, my strength is much better. I feel great, I am looking healthier, and I am performing tasks well. I give GOD all the praise and glory!!!



In summarizing my experience, I can see now why I was doing my best to keep my body in good health by walking, and going to the gym, and why my spiritual faith was increased as I began trusting God more and more in different areas of my life.

The doctor gave me a good report concerning my body and now I can give a good report concerning my faith. I never had any fear of death, because God had already spoken to me, and told me to go to the doctor. I knew that GOD was not going to let me die at that time. I told GOD that I had a problem that was too big for me and it was **all** his.

Now I can say for myself that GOD truly is a healer and a provider. I have been through a test of faith. I trusted him and I know that there will be more tests of faith that are waiting for me. I hope to face the next test by totally relying on GOD even from the very start. I thank GOD for this great and difficult test of faith. He already knew my faith, but I needed to know the strength of my faith for myself. Knowing that the providence of GOD was guiding me, helped me to better see GOD's plan for my life. Because of this experience and many more, for the rest of my life I will continue to be a witness for him and will continue to love family, friends, and all of mankind.

Isaiah 41:10 Fear thou not: for I am with thee: be not dismayed:
for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee: yea, I will help thee:
yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Psalms 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help
in trouble.



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Lake Charles, LA