

In September 2015, I was diagnosed to have Stage three and half Lung cancer. By the beginning of 2018, it has progressed to Stage four, meaning I was a terminally ill patient.

In 2017, my younger brother who lives in the US announced his daughter was to get married in 2018. He said his early announcement meant we could make necessary arrangement and 'warned' that all his siblings without exception should come. Our family of origin is a closely knitted one and we siblings are most loving to each other. Although we are now scattered around the globe, our relationship is still close. This is what makes me proud and thankful. So, I was truly looking forward to attending this wedding and to reunite with my beloved family members. My younger brother announced that the date of the wedding was 13th October.

As I just said, my health experienced great changes in the beginning of 2018. Cancer cells began to spread, pleural effusion was continual, leading to necessity of pleurodesis. This might be a small operation but my weight dropped sharply, my appetite gone and I was weak and frail. I became a palliative care patient. I was somewhat depressed. Would I still be able to go to the wedding by the end of the year?

It was quite a miracle and by the grace of God that by April/May, I was getting better. My weight climbed from 39kg to over 40kg. My 4th brother and younger sister were concerned with me and came from the US to visit me in May. We talked about the wedding in October. I wanted to go but I was afraid of flying alone, without any one beside me. My husband is chronically ill with unstable blood pressure and blood sugar. He was in and out of hospital a few times and would not be well enough to travel with me. He however encouraged me to go saying that when our sons were married, my siblings brought their entire families to travel long distance to congratulate us. My brother also strongly encouraged me to go, suggesting that I could ask for wheelchair assistance and fly business class. I thought I should stop protesting because my condition really needed me to spend big. My brother then started to search on the internet for a ticket. I wanted to stay for just a week, attend the wedding and return home. However, discounted tickets have conditions and restrictions such as making stop overs. Minimum stay is two weeks. To find a return ticket with the right dates to go and return was not easy. Finally, he found me a ticket with China Airlines. The whole trip would be 24 hours with a 6-hour stopover in Taipei. I thought 6 hours in a business class lounge shouldn't be too bad. There's food to eat, books to read, television to watch, and may be a little nap. Time will pass. So, a ticket was bought and travel insurance arranged.

There is another reason why I wanted to go and see my family. In the second year of my lung cancer, in October 2017, my 3rd brother in the US was also diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. He was fighting it vigorously, seeking both Western and Chinese treatment simultaneously. We cheered him on. The result was inconsistent. He had ups and downs. Pancreatic cancer is particularly malicious. Our father died just over half a year of being diagnosed of it. We were uneasy. I was also anxious because my 3rd brother was not a Christian yet. I felt the urge to bring the Gospel to him. Of the 7 of us, only my 3rd

and 4th brothers were not Christian. I loved them both, prayed for them constantly for God's mercy. In the past my 3rd brother had been to church every Sunday for worship for over a decade but regrettably he had not made his commitment. Then he stopped going because of some other reasons. Now he was sick, would he change his attitude, I asked God. When I decided I would make the trip to the US, I told all my good friends and brothers and sisters at church, that I would go to bring the Gospel to my two brothers and asked them to pray for their salvation, that God would give me the opportunity, wisdom, the right words, and that the Holy Spirit would work to soften their hearts.

In July, my 3rd brother suddenly announced that his daughter Reva's wedding was to be two weeks after my younger brother's daughter's wedding. The news was sudden and came with a sense of urgency. Yes, his cancer cells have spread and chemotherapy did not seem to work. He looked so weak in the photo. I was worried and anxious. His daughter's wedding was 26th October and I checked my ticket, the return date was 25th October!

I felt really uneasy in my heart, should I extend my return ticket? The longer I stayed in the US, the higher the risk it was for me. Although I had bought travel insurance, I could not be sure if I might have a bad turn. I did not want to be hospitalized in the US and one could never be sure if travel insurance would cover the phenomenal medical bills. However, to leave just one day before the wedding, that would be quite embarrassing too.

Again, I sought my 4th brother's opinion. He felt it was quite reasonable for me to extend my stay. I therefore asked him to arrange. (I have been pestering my brothers since I was little.) Unfortunately the return date of my ticket with China Airlines was the last day the schedule had a 6-hour stopover in Taipei. From 26th October onward, the stopover was 16 hours, making the entire trip 40 hours. I was stunned. To be alone for 40 hours scared me. If I did not go, I would offend my 3rd brother. My 4th brother understood my difficulty. He suggested that I forfeit the return sector and buy a single ticket that would give me a direct flight. He showed me details of costs and timetables of all the available flights from the more expensive direct flights to the cheaper flights with stopovers. Then he said, the third alternative was to stick to the original schedule and give up going to Reva's wedding.

Oh my goodness! What should I do? I am not miserly but I do like to be careful with money. I would never dream of tearing up half of an expensive ticket but I was really scared of taking a 40-hour trip. Since that day I had been praying for this continuously, asking for God's guidance, if I should change to extend my stay. My husband did not have an opinion and left it to me to decide. My two sons were not enthusiastic and strongly recommended me not to change. They argued that my family should know about my condition and that the wedding was not known at the time when I bought my ticket. I could not make a decision and since there was time, I just waited upon the Lord and prayed.

August came and it was time for RSVP. I could not wait any further. God had not spoken. What should I do? I checked my own condition. I was no longer seeing the doctor every three months, it was every four weeks. Although I felt fine, I was not very sure. So I knew how I should decide. I said to God, "O God, I have decided not to extend my stay. If you allow it, please give me peace in my heart." I believed I based my decision on it being the simplest, the least time consuming and the most economical.

Once I have decided, I began to write to notify Reva, my 3rd brother and my family. I had to write this email in English because Reva does not read Chinese. English is not my mother tongue and this gave me added difficulty. I had to think of using my limited vocabulary to express the negative response, for grammar and proper sentence construction. I still remember that on that afternoon, I was sitting in front of my computer in my study, focusing on how to draft this letter to minimise its hurtful impact.

I gave them first my heartfelt congratulations and then told them my husband's health condition and mine. I explained to them the situation I might face and it was after a series of consideration that I regrettably decided not to extend my stay and I asked them for their understanding and forgiveness. (I was truly regretful.) I went over and over again to check my words carefully, correcting and editing where I felt it was not good enough until I reached almost to the end of the letter. Before I could breathe a sigh of relief, suddenly, I heard someone ask me, "If Reva's wedding was not in October but next year, would you go?" "Of course I would" was my reply without a second thought. I turned my head to see who was talking into my ear. I was shocked to see there was no body there. The words I heard were very clear! I can still recall today. I felt strange, confused and shocked and I stopped typing to wonder what had just happened. I became sure that God had spoken to me. He had spoken! I was both shaken and overjoyed. God had spoken and this had made things much easier for me. ***(This is my 1st Encounter.)***

My subsequent thinking was totally different. The email was discarded (although it is still in Draft in my computer). If Reva's wedding was not in October but on another date or in the following year, and if situation allowed, I would definitely go. Was I or was I not inconsistent in showing my favour? If I decided to go, and the two weddings were close, it was natural to forfeit the return ticket and buy another one. This also would have saved me a one-way ticket. It was clear. God had spoken. I felt confident enough to prepare for my journey. Because I did not want to forfeit a return trip, I did not buy a new ticket but had chosen to have the 40 hour long return flight. (Note: While I was in the US, my elder son came back to keep company with his father and to care for him. Thank you son and Heavenly Father.)

The truth is, I do have cousins in Taiwan but we seldom connected with one another except the time we went for our honeymoon, or when we went a few times with our mother to visit her brother. My 4th brother suggested to call my cousin but I was hesitant. In my uncle's house, my eldest cousin was the only one I knew well, a loving, generous, caring and capable person. I felt embarrassed because we have not connected for such a long time and it was rather imposing on her to help me spend the 16 hours in Taiwan. However, my 4th brother had studied in Taiwan University, and he knew my uncle well and when he volunteered to mentioned to my eldest cousin, just as I thought, my eldest cousin would not mind at all. Eventually, my eldest cousin and her sister came to the airport to fetch me, early in the morning, to catch up with me, to go eating and see places. I even had a two-hour nap in their home, the 16 hours passed easily and pleasantly. I was very grateful to my two cousins who showed me such warm hospitality. To keep me company all these hours must have exhausted them too.

Now, let me talk about what happened in the US. There were two free weeks between the two weddings. My 4th brother had searched for programmes and activities to entertain guests who had travelled from overseas. I was from Australia and my 2nd sister from Hong Kong. However, the planning

was also constrained because not every tour or cruise departs every day nor could we go for the entire two weeks. The bride's parents would have their families and other overseas guests and some of them had not left. Then there were the two cancer patients especially my 3rd brother who was skinny and weak and he could not travel far. The idea was to have a few days of get-together to refresh our relationship, to reminisce childhood fun and to remember our parents. I have said before that it was because of study, work, marriage, and other reasons that we were scattered around the globe. I have gone to Australia for 41 years. My 3rd and 4th brothers went to the US for further study and my younger brother and sister followed suit and that was a few decades ago already. They might be living in the US but they were not near each other. Siblings 3rd, 6th & 7th lived closer to one another but it is still about half an hour on the highway from each other, and 4th lived in Los Angeles. To see the others would mean a car trip of 6-7 hours or an hour's flight for him.

I think everyone knew that this had to be the last time the six siblings could ever be together. (My eldest sister passed away many years ago). We were thankful to my three brothers' wives to 'free' their husbands to come with us. 4th brother found a large luxury two-storey holiday house in Bodega Bay, bright and airy, with ocean view, and this is where the six of us spent four days and three nights of unforgettable moments together.

By then, I had spent more than half of my trip there. When I first arrived, due to jetlag and time difference, I was tired and dazed. I was still confused the following days. There were times to meet with friends and relatives over meals, for activities that came with the joy and excitement of the wedding. Every time slot was filled. I had not been able to speak to them about the Gospel, there were always groups of people around. My 3rd brother was very frail and skinny. If I had not seen his photo, I would not have recognised him. He was stooping, his steps were unsteady, and he needed a walking stick. He was a very different brother to the one that I knew before, one who was confident and full of smiles. My heart was heavy. I was sad. He was beaten! I was even more burdened and I prayed silently for the right moment.

We finally arrived at the holiday house. We settled our things, found our rooms and wandered around for a little while, the first day was over. The next morning when I arrived at the kitchen I discovered that some had finished breakfast and some were eating. In one glance, I saw 3rd brother on the balcony wrapped in a blanket lying on a lounge sun bathing. He was alone, he was alone! I said to myself, "O God, is this the moment?" Immediately a voice replied, "If this is not the time, then when is?" (This is my **2nd Encounter**.) Of course it was. This was a perfect moment God had prepared for me. I hesitated for a moment, my heart was unsure and I truly did not know how to begin. He had heard the Gospel numerous times and I did not have confidence. Could I miss this opportunity ever? My heart was pounding, I must try. I told my siblings who were in the kitchen not to come out to the balcony to disturb us but to pray for us. I plugged up my courage and kept praying for God's help. I pulled a chair and sat next to 3rd brother and started chatting. Before I could get into my main point, my 4th brother came to the balcony. "O God, two together?" I asked nervously. I had not prepared for this psychologically. I was to speak one to one. This was a moment I did not have time to think. I only needed to include 4th brother in my conversation naturally. Just as I was getting to the point, the wind was whipped up. We continued to sit there for a little while but 3rd brother did not like the cold air and got up to go inside. I wouldn't give up and followed him. His bedroom was behind the balcony. 4th brother also followed us. The two brothers sat down and I positioned myself on the edge of the fire

so that I could face 3rd brother directly. I began to ask him questions on the end of life: Do you know where we go when we die? Do you know if we are all sinners? He listened attentively and asked me some questions. I said I could not give you all the answers and even if I could, you might not agree to them. I said to 3rd brother, don't bother with those questions because you are running out of time. I was so eager for him that I cried and in my choking voice asked him to believe in Jesus. By the mercy of God, 3rd brother decided to turn back to Jesus. When I was going to pray for 3rd brother his prayer of commitment, 4th brother stood up. He came over to give me a hug and said I had spoken well, "But I am sorry I am not ready; however, never say never. You wouldn't know there might be one day that I could suddenly become a Christian. Then I don't need to hear you pray." He left the room. I was sad but also overjoyed. However, my priority now was to pray for 3rd brother for his commitment. I was very emotional. I was full of gratitude to God. It was God's timing, God's work, God's grace. "Thank you God for answering prayers. Thank you God for Your mercy". I was very excited to tell my church, my minister, my friends and other prayer warriors that they could share in the salvation of my brother. As for me, I will continue to pray incessantly for my 4th brother.

Two months after, on Christmas Day, my 3rd brother rested in the Lord.

Happy days always go fast. In the twinkling of an eye, I had been in the US for three weeks. It was the end of my trip, time to leave. My flight was at midnight. I was staying in my sister's home. My sister had poor eyesight and she did not drive at night. My younger brother came over to take me to the airport. The three of us sat in his car. I was in the front and my sister at the back. The car was driving steadily on the 101 Freeway towards San Francisco Airport. We were chatting in the car. The night sky was dark and street lights on the side were fleetingly moving backward. There was a number of cars and we were in the second slow lane. Cars were going orderly. No one honked. I was looking ahead but suddenly my view was blocked and there in front of me was the side of another car blocking the entire windshield. That was so close, so close that I could see clearly both wheels of that car. I have not yet recovered from my nerve and that car had already gone to the lane on my right hand side. I turned my head but from the corner of my eyes I could see that a car was braking very sharply to avoid collision. There was a piercing screeching noise from wheels braking hard and a puff of white smoke and I thought there would be a loud bang but there was none. What happened? I was confused. Was it not a car? Why was it flying in front of my eyes? Did you see it racing in front of us? My brother said it was too late by the time he saw it. It was then that we realised what really had happened. We had escaped death. God had just performed a miracle for us. That was impossible. It was so close to us but there was no collision. It was absolutely unbelievable. The three of us were so thankful to God. When our nerves settled, we realised that if the speed of either car was a bit different, it would be either we t-boned it or it would have t-boned our car. If we crashed into it, my brother and I who were at the front would be killed or seriously injured. If we were t-boned, our car could either flip in the air or flip over, resulting in unimaginable consequences. If it was slight injury which was most unlikely, the delay would cause me to miss my flight. If it was serious injury, I would have to be hospitalized and who knew for how long? I was totally unscathed and arrived safely at the airport. My heart was full of gratitude. O God, who are we? You care so much for us, to watch over us and protect us. ***(This is the 3rd Encounter.)*** This experience still sent me shivers. I felt it was unbelievable. It was impossible that there was no collision. Why was there no collision? The car that crossed our path was so clear in my view that it was like seeing it in the movies. This picture is forever sealed in my head, to remind me,

and to help me to be sure of God's love and to believe that His presence is with me, to prepare me for what lies ahead of me.

Acts 17:28 "For in Him we live and move and have our being."

Psalm 90:12 "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."

I thank God that He has given me time and energy to write this Testimony. All praise and Glory to our Father in heaven. Amen.