

Luke 6:38 - "Give, and it will be given to you; a good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the same measure you use, it will be measured to you."

As we were flying back from Chicago recently, the words of this scripture from Luke 6:38 came to me, words spoken by Jesus in what we know as his Sermon on the Plain. That's P-L-A-I-N, not p-l-a-n-e. God definitely has a sense of humor. Maybe I'll call this my sermon on the p-l-a-n-e.

In any case, this scripture is typically applied to practical circumstances involving stewardship of our resources. It's a great scripture for pastors to use when preaching on tithing. But Jesus intended for His words to apply to every aspect of our lives.

Close to four decades ago, a woman named Dodie Osteen was diagnosed with metastatic cancer of the liver and given only weeks to live. But instead of succumbing to fear, she and her husband, the late Pastor John Osteen, began proclaiming scriptural truth and all of the healing promises in the Bible.

Instead of turning inward and becoming self-protective, Dodie Osteen decided to use her time and energy to pray for others. As she visited the sick in their homes or in the hospital, even when she herself felt poorly, she discovered that offering the love of Jesus through prayer and the gift of presence was reaping a double reward.

As the months progressed, Dodie's body was gradually healed of cancer, with countless other lives positively impacted in the process. And now, some 37 years later, Dodie Osteen remains healthy and vital in the kingdom of God on earth.

I am another living testimony of the power of giving and receiving, of sowing and reaping. Two years ago, I was diagnosed with an aggressive recurrence of endometrial cancer, something that could have rocked my world. But my husband and I were determined to trust and honor God, choosing to continue to pray for others in our hospital healing services and church prayer ministry.

As the weeks went by, the medical prognosis became more and more daunting, necessitating what I was told would be a six-hour surgery, removal of half of my stomach muscles, a bowel resection and subsequent chemo and radiation. Yet as I prayed for others, continual immersion in the word of God and daily proclaiming His healing promises brought not only comfort but confidence. If Jesus said He was my Healer, then I believed He was my Healer.

Two and a half weeks before my scheduled surgery, my husband and I trained a new team for CHP ministry at another hospital. The chaplain there had graciously offered to postpone it to a later date, but I sensed that there would be great blessing in pressing on with our plans. That day, we received a good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over.

The day prior to my operation, I went to visit the chaplain in the hospital where I would have surgery. I went not for prayer, but to offer him the model for our chapel healing prayer ministry. Several months later, that hospital also began offering weekly Christian healing prayer in their chapel. Another good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over.

Imagine my amazement the next day when I awakened in the recovery room after surgery to hear that the operation had taken only a third of the anticipated time, the tumor was easily removed without complication, and no further treatment would be required. This was indeed a good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over.

If you are a patient right now, or the loved one of someone who is suffering, I encourage you to take heart and let the God of hope fill you with His joy and peace. Then offer to pray for someone else. Give them a good measure of the love of God and prepare to be amazed as He keeps His promise to give it back to you - pressed down, shaken together and running over. His love never fails.