
WELCOME TO OUR HOPE PROJECT'S

Tuesday Newsletter

We're so glad you're here!

What we are about.....

HOPE

This newsletter aims to bring hope and joy to your daily life by sharing my family's journey through unexpected challenges. We firmly believe that a positive outlook, faith, and the right circle of friends will help you tackle any obstacle with resilience and a smile. In the upcoming editions, we will candidly share our recent experiences dealing with Parkinson's Disease and Esophageal Cancer.



Meet the Parker Family

From left to right- my wife, hero, and best friend, Trina. My oldest daughter and copywriter, Grace. My youngest daughter and social media coordinator, Anna. I (Nick), the owner, content creator, and editor.

Tough Conversations

January 5, 2023, Another tough night alone..... As fate and providence would have it, just as I did in 2014 (Parkinson's Disease diagnosis) I spent the night alone. At least this time I was comforted in knowing my team (family) was within arms reach. (TMI Warning) my wife had a severe head cold and it is our custom to sleep in a separate part of the house when one of us is ill. I believe it is in the quiet places where God does His deepest work in us. Admittedly my heart was heavy as I

lay in bed feeling so helpless and out of control. I began to speak with God. It wasn't long before the story of Jesus and the children popped into my mind.

"Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to Him and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." Luke 18:15-17

I thought, how in the world is this applicable in this situation? Now I was feeling insulted by God along with the weight of the news of Cancer and just as I was about to shut down, I had a thought. "Childlike faith!" A child will draw closer to a parent when faced with a situation they don't understand. A child does not doubt the parent's love (at least for very long) when a parent answers contrary to the child's wishes. When life deviates from our plan as adults we often become bitter, hold grudges, become fearful, and allow our hearts to become callous toward authority, especially God. I was faced with another opportunity to choose faith or fear, better or bitter, lay down or get up. God spoke again that night through the Bible:

I would have lost heart, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the Lord In the land of the living. Psalm 27:13

These words, written by King David under the pericope or heading "An exuberant declaration of faith", were exactly the adrenaline shot I needed to keep going.

Unlike in 2014, when Trina and I attempted to carry the burden of Parkinson's for nearly two years alone, we decided to let people in early.

Telling our daughters. That evening Trina and I sat down with Grace (23) and Anna (18) in my den and told them, mustering smiles, I had cancer of the esophagus. Grace, the more dramatic one, exclaimed, "Dad, this isn't Parkinson's, Cancer is serious!"

Sounds funny now, but we all knew what she meant. That night we talked, cried, laughed, and prayed together. I don't think I've ever been more proud of my family than that night. I felt as secure and confident as I did with a squad of U.S. Marines.

Telling our parents. Not sure exactly how many days passed before we told our parents, but these were the conversations I dreaded most. Trina's Parents, Hoyt and Marcheta (Keta) Fitzsimmons, we called and told over the phone because Hoyt keeps the family farm in Cleveland, TN a few days a week while Keta stays back in Maryville, TN. To say I have the greatest in-laws in the world would be the understatement of the century. More on that later...

My dad passed in 2022 at 89. My mom, Sylvia Parker, has had a ringside seat to my battle with Parkinson's Disease. Mom was adjusting emotionally to Dad's passing and I just hated to "pile on" the news of my Cancer. However, I needed her faithful prayers to bomb heaven too. After all, it was her prayers that kept me until my wife became my number-one intercessor when we married 31 years ago.

Then there was my younger brother, Ben, and his family, Leanne and Katie. Then came my best friend since birth, Scott Maness, and our "doing life together" friends, the Mapes.



Leanne, Ben & Katie Parker



Pam & Scott Maness



Maury & Christy Mapes

These conversations were the hardest, not because, these folks are fragile but because I know they love me and my family at a level no one else on the planet does and I understood this news would

pierce their hearts....

Coming Next Week

Trust the process, Trust the plan.....

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