

Healing from Anger

Author, teacher and motivational speaker Tony Campolo recalls a memorable incident of God's healing power.

Campolo is professor emeritus of sociology at Eastern University, a former faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania and the founder and president of the Evangelical Association for the Promotion of Education. He has written more than 35 books.

On one occasion, when Campolo was in a church in Oregon, he prayed for a man who had cancer. In the middle of the week, he received a telephone call from the man's wife.

She said, "You prayed for my husband. He had cancer." Campolo thought, "*Had?* Whoa, it's happened."

The woman said, "He died." Campolo felt terrible.

"Don't feel bad," the woman hastened to add. "When he came into church that Sunday, he was filled with anger. He knew he was going to be dead in a short period of time, and he hated God. He was 58 years old, and he wanted to see his children and grandchildren grow up.

"He was angry that this all-powerful God didn't take away his sickness and heal him. He would lie in bed and curse God. The more his anger grew toward God, the more miserable he was to everybody around him. It was an awful thing to be in his presence."

The wife continued: "After you prayed for him, a peace came over him and a joy came into him. The last three days have been the best days of our lives. We've sung. We've laughed. We've read Scripture. We've prayed. Oh, they've been wonderful days. And I called to thank you for laying your hands on him and praying for healing."

Campolo said the wife then said something incredibly profound: "He wasn't cured, but he was healed."

Those of us who work in health care understand the significance of the wife's pronouncement. Spiritual health is all important in the human condition, and can lead to good physical outcomes. We see it often in those we serve.

And oftentimes, the radiance of the spirit seen in us is contagious.

A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones (Proverbs 17:22 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter