

Only the SCARS REMAIN

By Maggie May Quiroz



Maggie Quiroz grew up in Elk, Washington, and attended First Church of the Open Bible in Spokane. She went through Spokane Masters Commission and then moved to Eugene, Oregon, to attend Eugene Bible College. She and Morgan, her husband, serve as youth pastors at San Jose Open Bible in San Jose, California, where she is involved with leading worship and ministering to the youth.

When I was in grade school the boys used to sit on the playground during recess and compare their scars. They carried themselves with such pride as they carefully revealed each tiny scar. It was as if the one who had endured the most pain and had the war wounds to prove it was the better “man.”

When I looked in the mirror this morning and saw my scars, I wondered, *Why would God create scars? He could have easily made us so that when we are injured our skin would heal perfectly and completely.* But He didn't. When God heals us, our scars remain to remind us of that healing. You

see, until December 18, 2006, I had never really had any significant physical wounds. I had never broken a bone or cut myself or been seriously injured in any other way.

But on that December day, all that changed. I sat alone in a doctor's office at 26 years of age when the doctor told me I had breast cancer. I'll never forget hearing the words come out of his mouth. I felt as if someone had punched me in the gut. I was too young...wasn't I?

That day was the beginning of nine months of painful trials. I had been married just over a year. My amazing husband, Morgan, stood by me as I underwent two major surgeries, six months of chemotherapy, and six weeks of radiation therapy - nine months I would not wish upon anyone. It was also nine months that God revealed Himself to me over and over again in so many unique ways.

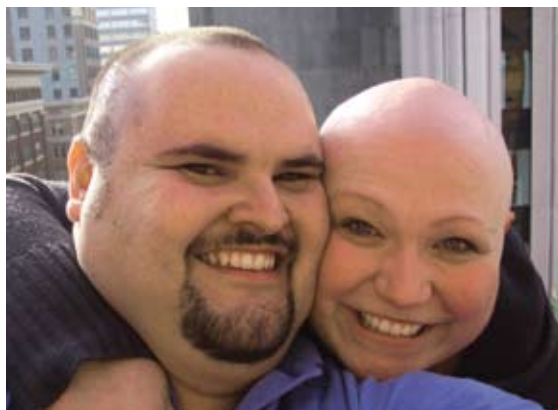
He used the times when my strength was gone to show me how strong He is. He used the times I had to lie alone on the radiation table to show me I wasn't really alone. He used the technician who quietly came in between sessions and wiped the tears from my face to show me His mercy. At one of the darkest points in my whole life, God showed up. He used the most

difficult time in my life to show me *who* He is.

So, when I looked in the mirror this morning and examined my scars, I remembered what He brought me through. I am alive because He wants me to be.

We are to remember our “chains” (Deuteronomy 5:15). It is important for us to remember what we've been through - not to dwell on the negative aspects of our pain, but to focus on the good things God has shown us through His healing.

Most of my scars are visible - but not all of them. If a stranger looked at me today, he or she would never know of the battles I recently fought.



Maggie with her husband, Morgan, after chemotherapy.

They would never know of the emotional battles I have fought throughout my entire life or the spiritual ups and downs that have drawn me closer to God.

What do your scars look like? What has He brought you through? Do you, like me, have physical scars that remind you of what you've been through?

Do you have emotional scars that remind you of where you have been? Do you have spiritual scars that remind you of who you were?

Your scars may be visible only to you, written on your heart, reminding you that God is so much bigger than any pain you'll ever have to endure. You may not always understand your pain, but His scars should remind you that He has a plan for your life and He will be faithful to fulfill it.

I have four permanent tattoos on my body that were not there two years ago. They were not

put there by my choice, but by that of my radiation oncologist, to ensure the beams lined up perfectly every time they gave me a treatment. When I see those tattoos I do not wish them gone. They help me remember *there is no more cancer in my body.*

God has made me promises I will cling to forever. And whenever I face a trial, I try to remember that one day the pain will pass. Only the scars will remain.



Radiation therapy left severe burns on Maggie's neck.

