

Chalet le Chardonnet  
1885 Chesières  
Switzerland

March 28, 1981

Dr. Robert G. Rayburn  
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Dear Bob:

Thank you for your letter of March 5. It was so good to have the news directly from you. Of course, both you and I know that unless the Lord heals us completely that once we have faced the question of cancer we always must also face the possibility of reoccurrence. With modern medicine, and I am sure prayer very much goes hand in hand with it, there is a possibility of the thing being controlled even if the Lord does not heal us completely. And yet, for example, I realize that though I am doing much better than most people do with the chemotherapy, that though it works now in a most satisfactory way, that the balances could shift and then we would have to see. I would not write to anybody else like this but both you and I have faced the thing plus having our faith fixed in the Lord in some sort of stable fashion! I had hoped that your thing was cleared up completely, and when Helen wrote to me I was really so very sorry and I do hope now that this is the end of it - just as I hope that my chemotherapy will continue to keep everything in balance, or even gain ground. I hope for both of us that we will really "beat the whole thing" by meeting the Lord in the air. However, if that is not the case maybe we will both die from 63 other things, or an automobile accident. Living this way has one advantage and that is we have had brought into sharp focus the reality of what is true for everybody from conception onward and that is that we are all mortal in this abnormal world.

In my own case, of course, if I could wave a wand and be rid of the lymphoma I would do it. Yet in my own case, in looking back over the whole two and a half years since I have known I have lymphoma, there has been more that has been positive than negative. That is true on many levels and I am not just thinking of some vague concept of understanding people better, though I guess that is true as well. Rather, in the total complex of everything that has happened I am convinced that there is more positive than negative. I am so glad that though I increasingly am against any form of theological determinism which turns people into a zero and choices into delusions, yet I am also increasingly conscious of

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the fact that Edith and I have been, as it were, carried along on an escalator for the entirety of our lives. I am left in awe and wonder with all this, and I very much feel the escalator is still in operation, not just in this matter of health, but in the battles that beset us on every side.

I wonder if you have read my article "The Dust of Life" in the current (March) issue of Eternity. I think you would enjoy some of the ideas there. The article was not born out of abstract thinking but asking, as I saw the struggles of the younger Christians, what the real balance of life was so as not to have a plastic smile on our face and yet have an affirmation of life rather than a negation of it.

Helen did write me about her cancer and also Bill's problem, and I have answered her.

Thank you for plunking out the letter on the electric portable when it was costly to you. Edith sends her love to LaVerne and to you along with my own,

In the Lamb,



Francis A. Schaeffer

*P.S. It will be good to see  
you soon.  
F.*