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News and Updates

Coming up at the end of the week is a very special podcast with the designer behind *Radiant*, Anna Melcon. Be sure to subscribe at [iTunes](#) or download it from [our site](#).

Question of the week: What shows do you TiVo (or digitally record)? Send your answers to feedback@radiantmag.com. We'll post your answers on our weekly feedback page.

Feature Article



True Story By Priscilla Santos

Elisabeth Burns woke up one day feeling so weak, she couldn't get out of bed. She couldn't even recognize the bald, pale creature who stared back in the mirror. She told her husband that she felt like a drag on society. She had cancer. She felt utterly useless, so

she sat down began to pray, and suddenly she felt God say, "Now I can use you." When she was at her weakest, lowest point, God wanted to glorify Himself through her life.

According to Burns, who is a cancer survivor, suffering is part of life despite what anyone thinks. Problems will come into our lives for a season, but they will pass. That's the way she viewed her situation. Once she realized that, it turned from a "Why me?" situation into something that she knew would serve a great purpose in her life.

And she was right.

Her journey of dealing with cancer inspired most of the lyrics on her first gospel album, *True Story*. Just before she was diagnosed with cancer, she had decided to put out an album with original music, but when cancer came her way, Burns was determined to never forget the feelings, emotions and spiritual times she had experienced. She kept a journal that holds most of the songs in the album. It was as if the cancer brought clarity to her vision in life. She was no longer just a singer, but now she had something to say as well, Burns said.

"The album never would have been written if not for the cancer," Burns said. "I would sing the melody lines to songs while I was getting up in the night at the hospital or lying on a cat scan table. I was determined to allow God to use this in my life to bring hope to others who would be facing their own trials."

When Burns' trial began, she was working at Southeastern University in Lakeland, Fla., as an admission counselor at her alma mater, where she received a degree in Church Music. Her outlook wasn't as optimistic and positive at the beginning. When she first received the news, she was shocked, angry and in denial. And yet, she sensed a peace that could only have come from God; she said it's the only thing that kept her from going absolutely out of her mind. "I know we only made it because He had us in the palm of His hand," Burns said.

Burns went through eight rounds of intense chemotherapy, which lasted six months. One of the things she struggled with the most was losing her long hair, knowing that soon she would be a 23-year-old, bald newlywed. "There was no way I could have been prepared for the experience that chemo was," she said.



Radiant Podcast

07.28.06
Exclusive interview with Centricity Records recording artist Jaime Jamgochian.

This Week

Feedback

Readers share their feedback from last week's stories and question of the week.

When the Saints Go Marching In

By Sara Groves
The Salvation Army, as the largest non-governmental relief agency in the nation, is also a church, and the work they do in our communities is born out of their faith in Christ.

The Dream

By Alisa Gubser
What is the good life? Well, I guess that depends on what's important to you.

Recent Blog Entries

08.08.06
I'll admit—I'm a Dog the Bounty Hunter fan. Tonight's episode is Dog and Beth's wedding ceremony, which they find out just before that Dog's daughter has been killed in Alaska....

08.07.06
Here's an interesting editorial from a paper in Scotland about the new trend of "gold diggers," who think a life of laziness and luxury is the way to...

08.07.06
I'm in the process of reading and reviewing the book *Double Crossed* by Kenneth Briggs about how the Catholic Church has essentially all but ignored their nuns and how the...

With the release of her first album, *True Story*, Burns hopes to give glory to God and to encourage those who are going through similar experiences: "Hey, I made it through with God's help, and you can too!"

The songs on *True Story* explain the feelings Burns experienced during her trial, and yet also reflect the amazing grace, beauty and joy that God gave her. There are songs of pure thankfulness and amazement, and songs that reflect the times when she just wanted to scream out "Why me?" "The album is almost a time capsule that captures those six months and holds them up to the light to examine all the many facets that I dealt with at that time," Burns said.

Currently, the doctors have told her that her prognosis is excellent, and that she has been certifiably cancer-free since Aug. 23, 2005. "But I believe that my healing came from God and that my prognosis is His and perfect," she added.

God often surprises us and works in ways that we would never expect. For Elisabeth Burns, God chose to use her when she couldn't look beautiful and could barely walk to the kitchen. God wasn't searching for her ability or talent. But in the state of her brokenness, she truly captured His attention because there was nothing of her left to get in the way of Him accomplishing all He needed and wanted to do with her.

Her CD is available at www.elisabethburnsmusic.com.

Priscilla Santos is excited for her upcoming senior year at the University of Florida, where she knows God will take her above and beyond.

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