“I went to one doctor to hear about the biopsy reports, she said, ‘This is so rare and so aggressive, there's virtually no data on it.  You have no time.’"

Merilee knew the pain in her lower abdomen meant something was wrong. Now, while sitting in her doctor’s office, the 67 year old grandmother learned it was worse than she imagined: she had a rare, deadly cancer and she would need radical surgery to remove it, along with part of her intestines. She said, “It's life-changing where you'd end up wearing a permanent bag. The cancer was already spreading.  So, they would have – I don't know what they would have done to my body”

While still taking in the diagnosis, Merilee prayed. She recalls, “All I heard was our living God talk to me "Cancer's not yours to embrace, it's not yours to have. Do not take this.  Don't embrace this; it's not yours to take.  You're going to fight for your life."  He kept saying, "You're going to fight for your life."

When she went for a second opinion, the doctor prescribed a rigorous, aggressive regimen of chemo and radiation.  Merilee knew it was time to change her thinking about cancer. She said, “You know, when people say "I have cancer." Well, I don't want to have cancer so I've changed my vocabulary. It's not ours to have.  No disease is for us to have.  He's delivered us.  He finished it at the cross.  He changed the way my, I spoke.  "This is not mine to keep."  That's what he kept telling me.  "This is not yours to embrace, do not take it in.  You're going to fight for your life."

She agreed to begin the treatment. Merilee also clung to God’s promises in the Bible. She posted scriptures all over her house. She recalls, “I printed out four pages of healing and encouraging verses. I know that I was fenced in by massive prayer and I never moved off of the Word. You know, like Matthew 19:26: "What's impossible with man is possible with God” Praying for Merilee were friends and family from all over the world as the chemo and radiation took its toll. She remembers, “I couldn't barely walk after a while. I was so weak. And uh I just barely could just lay here on the couch because I just couldn’t do much. Sometimes when the pain was so-so hard, I vigorously was quoting the scriptures out loud and commanding and putting a demand on the word, contending. All I can tell you is God carries us in the most difficult trials of our life.”

After 7 months of treatment, Merilee went to the doctor for a check-up. She recalls, “And she said, "I want to tell you something.  There's no evidence of any tumor, there's no evidence of all the radiation.  This is an out-of-the-box miracle. This is beyond anything," she said, "I've ever seen in my life.  There's no one – no one can take credit for this except God. She said, ‘If anyone was to examine you without seeing your reports, they would never ever know that you had this and the treatment that you had.’ I was so thrilled to hear that news. Those are words that you never think you're going to hear – and—but God stepped in.  He's faithful.  His word is faithful.  His word is alive.”

Today, over 5 years later, Merilee is still cancer free. She knows it was the power of prayer that carried her through those dark days of chemo and radiation. She believes, “I wouldn't be here without the power of prayer or not – without the word of God that's alive and active.  I wouldn’t be here. Never lose hope. Don't ever give up.   Jesus is faithful.  He's alive and he is real.  I know he saw me through it was a horrible time in my life but God met me. I'm totally healed.  God did a beautiful thing.”