

Martha Rogers

“Nothing else can give you a healthy body, mind, spirit and soul like First Place 4 Health.”

When our youngest son and his new bride brought over their wedding album for us to see, I realized for the first time that I had lost control of my weight. For many years our church had sponsored a First Place 4 Health program, but I didn't want to bother with a regimented program. After weeks of trying to lose with my own plan and not having any success, I decided I needed help. I talked with Carole Lewis, the First Place 4 Health national director, and she convinced me that First Place 4 Health was where I needed to be. I joined in March and by November had lost 44 pounds and reached my goal weight. The regular exercise and healthy eating gave me energy and a new outlook on life. In addition, the Bible study, Scripture reading and memory verses strengthened my relationship with God. I became a leader of a group and shared how God had blessed me through First Place 4 health.

I had no idea God was preparing me for the greatest test of faith and courage I had ever encountered. A little less than a year after I reached my goal, a biopsy revealed a malignant tumor in my breast. Fear, anxiety, despair and helplessness took over my every thought for the first few days after the diagnosis. As I prepared for surgery, I began to think of the Bible verses I had memorized in First Place 4 Health. Jeremiah 29:11 “'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future'”; and Philippians 4:19: “My God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.” My fears and anxiety went away. I knew God would take care of me in any and all circumstances.

After the surgery, the doctors decided no chemo or radiation treatments would be needed. In addition, because of my body's

healthy condition, my recovery took less time than usual. My surgeon and oncologist were quick to credit my good health as the main contributing factor in my recovery. My regular doctor, a Christian, also credits my great faith in God's promises.

Within a few weeks I had recovered completely and was able to return to my teaching job. At the end of the first month, I had resumed my full slate of activities, including leading my First Place 4 Health class. I know the First Place program provided not only for my physical needs through a healthy body, but it also took care of my spiritual needs through the verses I had memorized.

Nothing else can give you a healthy body, mind, spirit and soul like First Place 4 Health. Through the Bible studies I have a much closer relationship with God. I no longer worry about what happens in my life, because I know who is in control. Together, good health and a mind focused on Christ carried me through what could have been a dark time in my life, to become a shining example of God's love and mercy.

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