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Dear brethren in Christ,

Hello! It has been awhile since my last letter and I apologize for the delay. The delay has been somewhat intentional until we could ascertain my wife's medical condition and report to you exactly what is going on. After my gospel meeting in Harrodsburg, KY, in October, our lives have been a whirlwind of medical appointments. Sonia's CT scan in late October confirmed that her cancer returned. It sits near the same area where she had lymph nodes removed last year. This time a tumor is on the outside of her right bronchial stem and also is against her right pulmonary artery and superior vena cava vein. After numerous appointments with doctors and surgeons in the Buffalo and the Syracuse areas, the consensus is that surgery is not and will not be an option due to the precarious location of the tumor. Also, surgery would not be able to remove all the cancer cells. Her oncologist indicated that chemotherapy is not a viable option this time due to the fact that Sonia has had several kinds of chemo the last 6 years and it is unlikely that other kinds of chemo will be effective. The only option she has that can save her is radiation. The radiation specialists at the Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo advised a series of radiation treatments every weekday for 6 weeks. Since we cannot travel to Buffalo that frequently, Sonia now has a new radiation doctor at the new Cancer Center in Syracuse. We are very pleased with the people and the facilities here. At this moment I'm sitting in the waiting area while she is getting a 4D CT scan of her tumor. She will be marked for radiation, and those treatments should begin within the next 2 weeks. The doctors here are deciding on the proper strength radiation to deal with that area without damaging her airways. They are hopeful that the radiation will sterilize the area and kill the cancer. Once again we petition your prayers. This is the fourth time in the last six years that the cancer has returned. We're hopeful that it will be dealt with and that we will not be burdened with it any longer. Currently Sonia has no symptoms from the tumor. She is, as she has always been, very upbeat about her situation. Her positive attitude and strong faith is so encouraging to witness. Through bodily weakness, God has made her, and thus us, stronger in spirit.

There is a lot to learn from all this. My series of lessons on "Dealing with Adversity" is a product of what we have gone through. Those lessons contain a lot of what we've learned, and without those experiences, the material would not exist. And we keep learning more. God, through His Word, has sustained us, encouraged us, and given us hope beyond this physical life and its sufferings. Presenting the material is somewhat difficult emotionally but good for my soul. There are so many others who are going through adversity as well. As I preached the lessons in Harrodsburg, KY, many brethren there opened up to me about their own struggles in the flesh. We all grew closer together that week, loving and supporting one another. That's the way it should be. I've told the brethren here in Canastota, NY, that we must continue to be open to one another about our struggles and trust one another with our emotions. We will grow close and stay close as long as we keep "weeping with those who weep, and rejoicing with those who rejoice."

About the work here in New York: We have new visitors that are attending through the invitation of one of the members. Doug and Christa and their infant daughter have been coming. We hope and pray that this couple will come to the Lord. Our weekly Bible studies at the Wegman's store cafe in Cicero continue. Yesterday an elderly woman saw us studying and came over to ask about what we were doing and praised us for reading our Bibles together. Of course we invited her to join us. Openly studying draws curiosity and sometimes it seems as if some people sit nearby to listen. We always hope to find someone who is searching and wants to join. I begin teaching the teenagers in a class in January and am preparing material for that. Overall things are going well in the work here. Regarding my financial support, Lord willing, my current level of monthly support should cover our needs for the new year. My 2017 insurance premium will not have as much as an increase as I expected. Thank you for your encouragement and your prayers, especially your prayers for Sonia. We love you all!

Your brother in Christ,