The Eunuch
Written by Bill Williamson

(The dictionary puts it like this, ‘a eunuch > noun A man who has been castrated.’ The original Greek word is, eunoukhos, meaning ‘bedroom guard.’ Eunuchs were formerly employed to guard the women’s living areas at an oriental court.)

OK, I confess, ‘I am a Eunuch.’
Silence may be your response, or you might say, ‘What? Think what you are saying? That’s horrible!’

But hold on a minute, how did we move this far along in the story, so fast? Let’s back up a bit.

I was a normal man with all the normal feelings, emotions, and urges that any other man probably has. So, how did I become a ‘Eunuch?’

Like I said, I was normal in every way, growing up with urges that proved that I had ‘testosterone’ working in my body. Unsolicited urges that can be a wonder that comes upon a young boy at nine years old, or so. And, by the way, these urges are not sinful. These too, are from God, a wonderful creation.

However, from that early age we are groomed to believe that this topic of, ‘Testosterone, and the sexual urge it causes,’ is taboo, and should not be discussed at home, nor anywhere else for that matter. Families seem to find it an impossible discussion to have with the new boy wonder.

My life was probably like most other boys that grow up in rural America. It’s okay to talk about chores, fishing, and why my school grades are so bad. And, may even be permissible to have dialogue about the topics’ of, dating, curfews, and driving too fast. And for sure, don’t get caught with those boys who steal gas.

But, nothing should be said about what might occur on those dates, or those late nights when the curfew has been blown past in a flurry of biological urges behind steamy car windows. Consequences are imposed upon all who ignore God’s law of wisdom and restraint. So, not learning in this area of important change in our bodies, can lead to life long regrets, and even hardships for some.

But the purpose of this story is not to labor on teaching and learning deficiencies, but to tell of one experience where God’s own nature and creation have been upset by man-made chemical treatments.

I had experienced God’s wonder in being a father. My two daughters are wonderful evidence of that miracle. Two children seemed enough to my first wife, and I. We discussed what options could be used to solve the ‘problem’ of risking more children.

I want to stop here and point out that ‘more children’ are not a problem in God’s eyes. They
are wonderful blessings that he bestows upon us. It is our own selfishness that places additional kids in the ‘problem column.’

Now, let’s get back to the story.

Our solution came to us quickly, and I was to have a vasectomy to prevent any future use of my God given sperm. And it was very affective, although it did nothing to reduce or eliminate manly urges. The urges went on and continued to present man’s age old dilemma, reckoning with those urges in a Godly manner. I failed in that regard and I am so thankful for a forgiving God who saw me through those years. His patient and steady love eventually led me to victory in rightly responding to those urges.

Some of you, maybe most, will be saying about now, ‘this is awful talk, why do we need to hear about all this?’

Every male on the planet needs to have a discussion about this subject. If you are a wife or mother, your husband, or son, needs to have this discussion with someone who will listen and pray. If you are a male above nine years old, you already know the need for this discussion. I urge you to ask God for the courage to begin the dialogue with someone you can trust.

My freedom, and victory in this area came when I finally mustered enough courage to talk frankly to my wife about the struggle men face with natural production of testosterone in their body, and about the specifics of my own struggle.

Only a week after this frank discussion with my wife, I found another burst of courage to share in ‘men’s bible study’ group one night. I was encouraged, and relieved, to find that every man there related specifically with my plight. There was wonderful prayer for me that night, as there had been from my wife. Freedom sprung upon me like a leopard, and I was thrilled for this new life.

The story goes on, so don’t stop reading here.

Surprises often spring upon us, surprises that can knock us to the floor, or set us back on our rears unable to move or reason for a brief period.

One surprise sprang upon me in a doctor’s office at the Veteran’s Hospital in Phoenix, Arizona seven years ago. A rising PSA count had been discovered in a routine physical examination. It was considered very high, dangerously high, 26.2.

A PSA of 4.0 is considered a relatively safe maximum. Mine had blown the top off this ‘safe high,’ and there was a flurry of professional recommendations coming at me. I submitted to a needle biopsy and waited. It wasn’t long before my wife and I sat in the VA doctor’s office. The doctor was staring at his computer screen when he suddenly swung the swivel chair in our direction.

‘You have cancer in your Prostate,’ he said with the bedside manner of a stone laying on a hot dry hillside.

My thoughts were swirling around in my head.

Maureen jerked her head in my direction with a look of horror on her face. I knew at that moment my greatest task was to remain calm and show no emotion, nor distress. Maureen didn’t need that right now.

Maureen cast her eyes back toward the doctor and said, ‘Is that all you can say?’

The doctor looked at us long and said, ‘In front of me are two very nice people who have a very serious problem.’

I smiled and made light of the diagnosis. Somehow peace seemed to invade my mind, my whole being. I was calm, but it wasn’t made up in pretense. I was truly at peace with what I had heard. It was not what I wanted to hear, but I knew there were things that could be done, and more than that, God was still God. And He had all the answers I needed.
The doctor, in his very coarse way, laid out the options available. I didn’t like any of them and he left out the one I favored most, praying. We left the office with no concrete decision being made, much to the chagrin of the doctor. I knew only that I needed to pray. I needed my friends to pray.

The two-hour car ride home from Phoenix to the mountains where we lived, was a quiet one, with an occasional squeeze of the other’s hand, and long looks. What did all this mean? We processed quietly until Deer Creek Village was just ahead of us.

We did pray, and we enlisted the prayers of many around the world, from every city and village we had lived in, and there were many. Most we knew thought we were praying too long, even my wife questioned why I waited and prayed.

I was having new blood tests nearly every month and we watched the PSA climb to 31, and then 36. Pressure was on from family and friends to do some kind of treatment. I enrolled in a regiment of homeopathic medicines, mostly to quiet the voices, and continued to pray.

Finally there was a blood test result where the PSA dropped. I was elated. It dropped to 30, six points in only a month. Surely God was hearing our prayers and healing was coming. Others thought the homeopathic medicines were working. I wasn’t so sure which it was, but either way God would get the credit in my mind.

We so looked forward to the next PSA result and it was a long month. Finally the result was in our hands. My heart dropped when my eyes fell on the number that was greater than 40. The following month it was 58.57.

My doctor was almost foaming at the mouth with lack of patience with my stalling. I wasn’t stalling, but I was giving God the opportunity to show his hand. What did he want me to do? Something happened within me when I saw the 58.57. At that point, I knew that I knew, I was to move forward with treatment.

By now it had been clearly laid out for me what those treatment steps would be. First I would receive radiation treatments five days a week for seven weeks at a local Nuclear Medicine unit. And then I would begin Hormone Therapy for an undetermined amount of time. Whatever time it would take to bring the PSA back to a ‘non detectible’ level, which would be less than 0.1, or <0.1. My Oncologist believed I would probably be on intermittent Hormone Therapy for the rest of my life. He also stated that I would likely die of something other than Prostate Cancer. He was that sure of my treatment program.

Surgery to remove my Prostate would have been one of my favorite options, but I was informed this was not possible for people with PSA results higher than 10.0.

Visits with an Oncologist were scheduled, and the radiation treatments began.

I want to explain here that symptoms were nonexistent for me. I did not have even one of the many symptoms possible for someone with a PSA as high as mine. My worst experience so far in all of this was the needle biopsy taken from the Prostate. Eight times needles were shot with a thud into my Prostate, each one demanding a reaction to pain that was involuntary. I had never felt anything so uncomfortable, and painful, and I had to endure it eight times. I could not sit up after the ordeal, even though a patient would normally recover very quickly. After a time of recovery I walked out of the facility leaning on my wife’s arm and my face white as can be. It was not a good experience for me.

Other tests and procedures were done including, Bone Scan, MRI, CAT Scan, etc. All tests indicated the cancer had not spread beyond the Prostate, something that is a very high probability when the PSA is as high as mine was.

The Radiation Therapy was not a bad experience even though I was warned that other organs
in the area could be adversely affected. My Thyroid was affected even though it was not in the area. I am on thyroid medication now for life.

The treatments were painless, and the staff personnel at the facility couldn’t have been more marvelous, providing lots of opportunity to laugh and take my mind off the seriousness of my condition. I was actually laying on my back and could even snooze if I really wanted to. However, that option never seemed to appeal to me when a nuclear beam was focused on my most private area at close range. Besides that, the technicians, both female, would come every few minutes and change the angle of the beam to attack the cancer from a different position. Quite a humbling time.

In the beginning of the treatment phase, I was tattooed in three places where the radiation beam positioning could be repeated consistently. They were my first, and last, tattoos, and were only small blue dots. And, yes, there were real and permanent tattoos.

Finally, the Radiation Therapy was over. I was none the worse for the wear except for some local burning of my skin, and a small amount of urine flow issues that required a temporary medication.

I learned later that I could never receive radiation in that area of my body again. Also, surgery could never be done in that radiated area without real danger of uncontrollable bleeding. Options for future Prostate Cancer issues would be very limited.

After radiation, my PSA dropped to 0.6. The radiation had done its job nicely. However, this was not a satisfactory number for my Oncologist. He was after that <0.1 PSA, and we were not there.

The final option was a nine-month period of Hormone Therapy. That is where time release chemical pellets are placed under the skin of the belly, to be slowly released over a three-month period. A new pellet would be injected every three months. The chemical product was Zolodex. Along with this treatment I was given Bicalutimide to be taken daily by mouth, another chemical to aid the Zolodex in reducing, even stopping, Testosterone production. Another nine months of therapy are repeated each time the PSA begins to rise again.

The list of side-affects of this type of therapy is much too long to list here. Suffice to say, ‘hot flashes, loss of body hair, insomnia, dizziness, weight gain, tiredness, bone aches, skin blemishes, and more,’ would go on as long as Hormone Therapy is being applied to my body. And I have now had six years of these chemicals bombarding me nine months at a time. All indications are that I will continue all my days unless God decides something different.

There is one more side affect that comes with Hormone Therapy that lives on forever with no chance of recovery. That is, ‘impotency.’ The therapy reduces testosterone, and of course without testosterone sexual drive and desire vanish from the scene. This probably sounds awful to most readers, but this is the very reason I am telling this story.

There is life without sexual drive and desire. I would not have thought so years ago. For the male this drive is an ever present element of our lives and it is in the background running like a computer hard drive, influencing most thoughts and activities we are engaged in.

I’ve learned that life can be quite pleasant when those influences are curtailed, even eliminated. ‘But, what about your wife, what about that part of your relationship,’ you might ask? Well, ‘what about it?’

Some relationships start with, and rely on, the sex act. A man and woman are drawn together by sexual attraction, and are held together only by the sex act. When the sex act is taken away from the relationship, there is nothing left to keep the pair together. They never developed a friendship, and there is no commitment aside from sex. Love never entered the relationship, only lust.
My wife and I are best friends, and were before we were married. We were content with each other’s company long before any sexual urge entered on the scene. We were inseparable, and it had nothing to do with sex. We loved each other for whom we were in Christ. We loved the character of Jesus Christ that we saw in each other.

Of course there was closeness, even some smooches. But, sex was not part of our relationship until we were married. We were totally committed to each other without sex, and the commitment did not change when sex entered the scene. Much was added to our enjoyment of each other, but our feelings were not contingent upon the sex act.

So, when the urges were gone for me, I was left with the love, caring, and friendship that had always been there. I admired my wife; I loved my wife; I respected my wife. She felt the same about me. None of that changed.

Sometimes we laugh now and say how nice it is not to have to deal with the mental gymnastics that goes along with sex act culture of a marriage. The pressure is off!

Someone may say, ‘what about the cuddling?’

We still cuddle. In fact, I think that aspect of our relationship has improved. We can cuddle now without any expectation that something else has to happen. I believe we are closer in every way. We have always laughed a lot, but more now I think.

Find that hard to believe? Take it from someone who has been walking it out for seven years. There is life without testosterone, in fact a very good life.

Being a eunuch is not so terrible after all.