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Photo by Valerie Baldowski – Pastor David McCoy is once again able to stand and walk normally, thanks to the chiropractic procedure he underwent in July 2008. He now travels extensively as a motivational speaker, trying to help others.



Photo by Valerie Baldowski – David McCoy, pastor of People's Baptist Church in McDonough (left) looks at a diagram of a vertebra in the neck with Dr. Matthew Sweat, the chiropractor who treated him. Last summer, Sweat used a machine to realign McCoy's Atlas vertebra back into place.

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By Valerie Baldowski, vbaldowski@henryherald.com

After being stricken with a debilitating disease, David McCoy began traveling across the country spreading a message of encouragement to others.

McCoy, pastor of People's Baptist Church in McDonough, was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis five years ago. He said he was an athletic person prior to the onset of the disease, and had difficulty dealing with its symptoms.

"I played a lot of golf, and a lot of football," he said. Additionally, McCoy played softball and regularly worked out at a local gym. As the disease began to affect him more and more, he said he realized something was abnormal.

"I would notice something was happening," he said. "My legs would be extremely weak, miserably fatigued. I knew something was wrong, but I didn't know what it was. The thing that drove me nuts was not knowing."

McCoy said he was forced to adjust his gait when walking, because his right leg became an inch shorter than his left leg. Despite walking with a cane, he said he did not lose any time behind the pulpit.

"I refused to let it get the best of me," he said.

The pastor saw several doctors to try to find some relief. Eventually, one of his church's members recommended that he see a chiropractor. McCoy said that, at first, he was skeptical, but when he finally did go in July 2008, the doctor used a machine to realign his Atlas vertebra back into place.

According to Dr. Matthew Sweat, the chiropractor who treated McCoy, the Atlas vertebra is the top bone of the neck, just below the skull, holding the weight of the head.

The results were astonishing, according to McCoy.

"I felt no pain. In fact, I didn't feel anything, but immediately I was helped," he said. "All I know is that I am walking better than I have walked in almost seven years. At one time, I was almost in a wheelchair, but now I feel as if I have a new outlook on life."

Sweat said when he first met McCoy, he noticed his positive attitude in dealing with MS. In retrospect, he said, he is happy he was able to offer a chiropractic solution to help the pastor.

"I thought it was one of the greatest things that's ever happened to me," said Sweat. "I was, frankly, elated, and somewhat surprised myself."

One of the results of the chiropractic treatments was that when the pastor's spine was realigned, both of his legs again became the same length, said Sweat.

Seeing McCoy able to walk down the hall of the chiropractor's office, was exciting, Sweat said. "His story is inspirational. I think his faith and his attitude toward life can be very enlightening to other people."

McCoy now travels extensively as a motivational speaker, telling others diagnosed with MS about alternative treatments, which might help them lead a more normal life.

Some of the churches at which he has spoken, said McCoy, have been in California, Montana, Texas, Florida, North Carolina, and up and down the east coast. "I have always said that God does the healing, but God led me to Dr. Sweat to do the healing," McCoy said. "That was a blessing to me, to put him in my path."

McCoy said his message to others with MS is one of hope. He has received several telephone requests from other church pastors informing him they have a congregation member with MS, and asking him to call.

Looking back, McCoy said he better understands his own journey now: "Multiple Sclerosis is one of the best things that's happened to me, because it's drawn me closer to the Lord."