

Following Christ in Nursing

A look at Jesus in the Gospels



Bible Studies and Resource Guide

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Following Christ in Nursing

5 Bible studies on Jesus in the Gospels

Introduction to Bible Study

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Introduction to Bible Study

People in healthcare face many challenges. We need reminders of why we are doing this work. Where do we turn for encouragement and direction?

God's Word guides us as a "lamp to our feet, a light to our path" (Psalm 119:105). The life of Jesus Christ provides a foundation for ministry in healthcare. But how do we discover the deep treasures in the Bible and allow God's Word to speak to us and change us?

Studying the Bible is more than gaining cognitive information. God's Word is "living and active" (Hebrews 4:12). The intent of this guide is to serve you through questions that help you go deeper to interact with God's Word and respond to his life-giving voice.

Steps of Discovery

Questions in the guide help you to move through a process of discovery. These steps toward discovery can be used any time you read Scripture:

1. Observation

What does the passage say? You will see words such as "identify, describe, list, contrast" that will help you to examine facts in the passage.

2. Interpretation

What does the passage mean? Define words, ask "why" questions, and explore the significance of observations to understand what God is saying. The Holy Spirit will guide you.

3. Application

What does the passage mean to me? Study of God's Word must go beyond information. We need to hear God's Word and obey, allowing Scripture to transform us. Each study guide has questions to guide you into personal application and bring God's perspective into healthcare.

As you spend time in God's Word, listen to the Holy Spirit speaking to you and guiding you in how to respond. Write your responses and prayerfully review them later. Prayer is a conversation with God that is vital throughout the discovery process.

Suggestions for Use

1. For all nurses and students, Bible studies on the life of Jesus Christ can be an important aspect of your spiritual and professional development. Along with your personal study, consider inviting a friend to use the study guide with you. You also are a *vital link* to Christian resources for nurses, healthcare professionals and students. Christ-followers in healthcare can make a difference in the whole-person care of people in our communities.
2. The guide can also be used for mentoring or discipling nursing students and healthcare people in your church and community. This can include people just beginning their journey toward discovering a relationship with Jesus Christ.
3. Ideas for using the guide with a group:
 - Prayerfully anticipate what God is going to teach you and allow the questions to guide you in responding to God's Word personally.
 - Remember that your role as a group leader is to guide others into the text by asking questions. Allow them the joy of discovery rather than giving the answers yourself. Learn to be comfortable with active silence.
 - The questions relate to one idea from the text. Proceed with one question at a time; you don't need to use every question in the guide. Let the discussion flow toward the main points.
 - Be aware of the time and pace of the study so you will have adequate time for application and prayer.

Encouragement

Following Jesus Christ in nursing and healthcare is a privilege. Jesus invites us to come to him and learn from him (Matthew 11:28-30). I pray that interacting with Jesus through passages in this study guide will assist you to...

- deepen your relationship with Jesus Christ as you learn new things about him through time in God's Word and discussions with people.
- discover ways to follow Jesus in nursing and healthcare as you apply God's Word to ministry in healthcare settings, the church and the community.
- respond to God's call to represent Jesus Christ in his mission in our world.

--by **Mary Thompson**, RN, MSN, FCN

Mary Thompson is the former director of Nurses Christian Fellowship.



God's Call to Ministry

Isaiah 61:1-4 and Luke 4:16-21

These passages from the Bible help us see God's compassion for people and serve as a foundation for our call to follow Jesus Christ in caring for people today.

Jesus describes his mission in [Luke 4:18-19](#). It is rooted in God's Word to Isaiah the prophet. Read the following verses and pray that God's Word will speak to you.

Hearing the Word

1. Read [Isaiah 61:1-4](#) and [Luke 4:16-21](#). What types of people are mentioned? Describe ways people today express these characteristics. Give examples from your work in healthcare.
2. From the Isaiah text, describe the different actions of the "anointed and sent" person. How can nurses reflect these characteristics today?
3. In Isaiah 61:3-4, identify results or outcomes of God's ministry among people. Describe what these outcomes could look like today, including examples of "oaks of righteousness."
4. God anoints and sends people to bring his compassion and justice to others. What is your experience of being "anointed and sent?" What steps can you take to enhance your growth in this reality?

Responding to the Word

As followers of Jesus Christ, these verses from Isaiah and Luke can help to shape our mission, calling and priorities in nursing and healthcare. How do you sense God is calling you to respond to His Word in these passages?

Write your response in a prayer. Consider sharing it with a friend.



Becoming Part of Christ's Team

Luke 5:1-11

Simon Peter personally discovered the occupational risk to being around Jesus. What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus as a nurse? How do we allow him to direct our nursing practice?

Hearing the Word

1. Read [Luke 5:1-11](#). Describe the people, setting and events in this story.
2. Trace the progressive involvement of Simon Peter with Jesus. How much commitment was required for Peter to get into the boat and then put down the fishing nets? What may have been some of Peter's thoughts and feelings?
3. Describe the catch of fish. How does Luke record its significance? What effect does the miracle have on Peter? Describe his response in verse 8. Compare with verse 5. What is the difference between "Master" and "Lord?"
4. How did Peter's relationship with Jesus change in this story? Why did he leave everything to follow Jesus? What effect would Peter's action have on his life?
5. Identify what you have learned in these verses about Jesus Christ and how he relates to people. How does Jesus respond to the needs Peter expresses in verse 8?
6. Nursing for us is similar to fishing for Peter. How can you "get into the boat" and allow Jesus to affect your daily work as a nurse? What does "fishing for people" look like in your life?
7. Think about people you know who are on a journey toward discovering who Jesus is. How can you encourage them, like Jesus did with Peter?

Responding to the Word

Talk with the Lord about the things he has shown you during the Bible study and write down what God is saying to you. What actions will you take? Pray for one another in your group about specific applications.



Setting People Free

Luke 13:10-17

Think of a time you saw a patient healed and discovered that not everyone was happy about it. What was most surprising about the situation?

In this Bible story, Jesus encounters pushback when he heals a woman with a deformity.

Hearing the Word

1. Read [Luke 13:10-17](#). Describe what happened as if you were an observer in the room.

Do an assessment on the crippled woman. What are some of the physical, emotional and spiritual needs she may have had? How might she have responded when Jesus noticed her, called her over, spoke to her and touched her?

Describe some ways people today can be “bent over” emotionally and spiritually, as well as physically.

2. Describe the attitudes and behaviors of the synagogue rulers and other opponents of Jesus. What may have been some of their beliefs and values? In what ways were their perspectives “crippling?”

What are examples of traditions and policies that block care for people in healthcare, in our communities, or in our churches?

3. List all the qualities you see in Jesus as you observe what he did and said. What values underlie Jesus’ statements in vs. 15-16? How is his perspective in contrast with the religious leaders?

Based on what you have seen, how can Jesus care for people today who are “bent over” by personal needs and other burdens they are carrying? What are ways Jesus sets people free?

4. Reflect on how Jesus is able to touch our lives today. What may be causing you to feel “bent over” or bound? What are ways Jesus notices, calls, speaks and touches you? How will you respond?
5. Think about Jesus’ values and actions evident in the passage. What difference can it make to know that Jesus Christ can bring healing, advocacy, justice and freedom to people today?

How does Jesus bring his presence to situations where people are not valued or where “traditions” block care for people with needs? How can you advocate for them?

Responding to the Word

Listen to the Holy Spirit guiding you in discovering how Jesus is speaking to you through this passage. What are you learning from Jesus, and how will you respond?

Write down some actions you will take and share with a friend who can pray for you and help you to be accountable to what you are hearing from the Lord.

Reflect on what the Lord has already done in your life to heal, encourage, and set you free. Share this with a friend and praise God for his love for you.



Living with a Full Schedule

Mark 1:35 - 2:17

What does a really busy day look like for you? What helps you cope when there are too many demands on your time? In this story, we see how Jesus demonstrates tireless compassion for people with a variety of serious needs.

Hearing the Word

1. Read [Mark 1:35-2:17](#). What were some of the demands placed on Jesus in his work among people? Describe some of the decisions he faced.

What is the significance of Jesus spending time in prayer (v. 35)? What happens in our lives when we do—or do not—take time for solitude and prayer?

2. Discuss Jesus's attitude and behavior as he related to the man with leprosy (vs. 40-45). What is significant about how Jesus responded to the man? What are ways in which people, including us, may feel like lepers today?
3. Identify the various needs of the paralyzed man (vs. 2:1-12). How did Jesus give the man physical, emotional, and spiritual healing?

How would you describe the friends of this man? What characteristics caught the attention of Jesus?

Like the four friends in the story, how can we bring other people to Jesus, including colleagues and patients in nursing and healthcare?

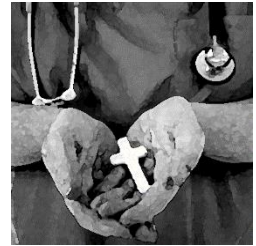
4. What do you observe about Jesus in vs. 2:13-17? Give some examples of "tax collectors and sinners" and "Pharisees" in our communities today. How can we follow the example of Jesus in our relationships with them?

Responding to the Word

How will Jesus' example help you to assess and meet the needs of patients?

Which people do you identify with most in this story: the leper, paralytic, friends, sinners, or Pharisees? How have you experienced similar needs? Ask Jesus to heal your physical, emotional or spiritual needs.

What physical, emotional or spiritual needs would you like Jesus to heal in others? Pray for them and "bring them to Jesus," like the four friends of the paralyzed man. Listen to the Lord's prompting about how he may want you to be involved and list specific actions you can take.



Receiving Forgiveness

Luke 7:36- 50

Think about someone you know who has a difficult time extending forgiveness to others. How is this person's life affected by their unforgiving nature?

In this story, we see how Jesus breaks the stereotypes of who should be forgiven—and why.

Hearing the Word

1. Read [Luke 7:36-50](#). Describe the woman who met Jesus in this story. What was her reputation? What may have motivated her to intrude on the dinner party?

What does her behavior indicate about her? What may have been some of her strengths and needs?

2. How would you characterize Simon, the Pharisee? Paraphrase what he may have been thinking in v. 39. Contrast Simon's relationship with Jesus and the woman's relationship (vs. 44-46). What was the difference between them?

Why do you think Simon invited Jesus to dinner? In what way does Simon's life reflect a need for forgiveness? What may have motivated his critical attitude?

Think about your own response to Jesus Christ. Compare your attitude and behavior to those of Simon and the woman. Talk with the Lord about what you discover.

3. How did Jesus respond when the dinner was interrupted? What does this show us about him? What lesson was Jesus trying to communicate about forgiveness?

How did the woman demonstrate that she had faith? What is the relationship between faith, love and forgiveness?

How did Jesus communicate to the woman (verbally and non-verbally) that she was forgiven?

4. Many of us experience a lack of freedom in expressing love to God and other people. Do you think there is a connection with not being able to accept or appreciate Christ's forgiveness, or perhaps an inability to forgive ourselves? Other reasons?

Responding to the Word

Summarize what you have seen through this passage. What do you want to learn about forgiveness and acceptance from God? What are some ways that Christ's forgiveness can affect your attitudes and behavior as you relate with people?

Forgiveness is a significant emotional and spiritual need. Think about colleagues and patients in your healthcare setting. What are ways people express guilt and the need for forgiveness? How can you encourage them through Jesus' example and his teaching in this passage?

Write some actions you will take as you apply this story from God's Word. If you are studying this passage in a group, the topic of forgiveness may raise issues of emotional pain. Jesus offers healing when his followers love each other and support one another in prayer.