

## Grace Then and Now

by Grace Tazelaar, MS, RN

Sometimes when I look in the mirror, I wonder where the grey hair came from and how I got to be this age. It doesn't seem that long ago that I was a young new nurse graduate who enthusiastically looked forward to my career and life.

Over the years I have experienced abundant blessings and life-defining difficulties that have produced spiritual and emotional growth. But now that I'm retired, I'm reflecting on some of the important things that God is teaching me.

As my sister Terry was dying, she said to me, "Grace, all the things that I thought were so important, aren't."

I'm beginning to understand what she was saying. Most of my life and career have been devoted to healthcare missions, and I often thought that crucial projects and programs required my involvement because only I could do them.

Now this attitude is replaced with a willingness to allow others to take on tasks as I step back to encourage the next generation of missionary nurses and spend more time praying for them. I'm still involved and passionate about the place of health and healing in building God's Kingdom, but I no longer must be the person actively involved on the ground level.

I've always strived to be excellent in what I do. It wasn't good enough to get the job done; I also wanted it done well—to perfection. I gave up much of the perfectionism when I lived in Africa, but I still value and believe that God wants us to do our best.

Now I realize that the focus on the perfect outcome as the goal was probably not necessary. I certainly have made my share of mistakes over the years, and my decisions weren't always the best or wisest. Yet somehow God redeemed these errors and used them to help me grow in my faith and trust more in him.

Perhaps I shouldn't be so focused on making sure that everything is done perfectly, but rather focus on the process that leads to the outcome. I see how God used the processes in my life to develop me spiritually, and I can allow him to do the same in the lives of others. We can trust the outcomes to him, and he receives the glory in the end.

It has been a privilege to be a part of God's Kingdom-building mission through the ministry of [Nurses Christian Fellowship](#). I encourage you to learn more about how you can [get involved in NCF](#) as you serve Christ in nursing.



[Grace Tazelaar](#) is a veteran missionary nurse who offers wisdom from years of experience serving God cross-culturally. Find more resources, best practices, and what you need to know about missionary nursing at [NCF Missions](#).