

## 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 by discussing God's Word with others.
- 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 the world.

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

*Mary Thompson is a former national director of Nurses Christian Fellowship.*