



Nursing As Ministry

Rebecca Meyer, PhD, MSNed, BSN, FCN, RN
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PRAYER

The LORD is my rock, my
fortress and my deliverer;
my God is my rock, in
whom I take refuge, my
shield and the horn of my
salvation, my stronghold.
Psalm 18:2



Learning Objectives



Understand the biblical roots of nursing as a ministry.



Describe what “sacred calling” means to nursing.



Reflect on those “divine appointments” as a professional Christian nurse.



Evaluate your nursing practice related to fulfilling God’s call for your life.

Why Are You Here?





What Does The Term Ministry Mean?

Dictionary: service

Hebrew: to attend to, serve, or wait upon.

Greek: service, attend, help. It can also refer to bringing the Lord's message to His people.

In the New Testament, ministry is understood as service to the Lord and His people.

Jesus showed us how to serve in humility, meeting both spiritual and physical needs.

Biblical Roots of Nursing as Ministry

Hippocratic Oath - Greece

Ancient cultures had medical facilities, many only for elite royalty or the military.

When Jesus came, a new ministry of care towards babies, the sick, the disabled, and the dying started.

Early Christians responded to those sick with the plague when others turned them away.





Priests to Deaconesses

During the Middle Ages, priests (men) continued to minister to both the body and soul - holistically.

The Kaiserswerth deaconesses, the Sisters of Mercy, and daughters of Charity were some of the first female nurses who brought “faith and love into action through service to all” (Widerquist & Davidhizar, 1994, p. 648).



Sisters of Mercy: Careful Nursing

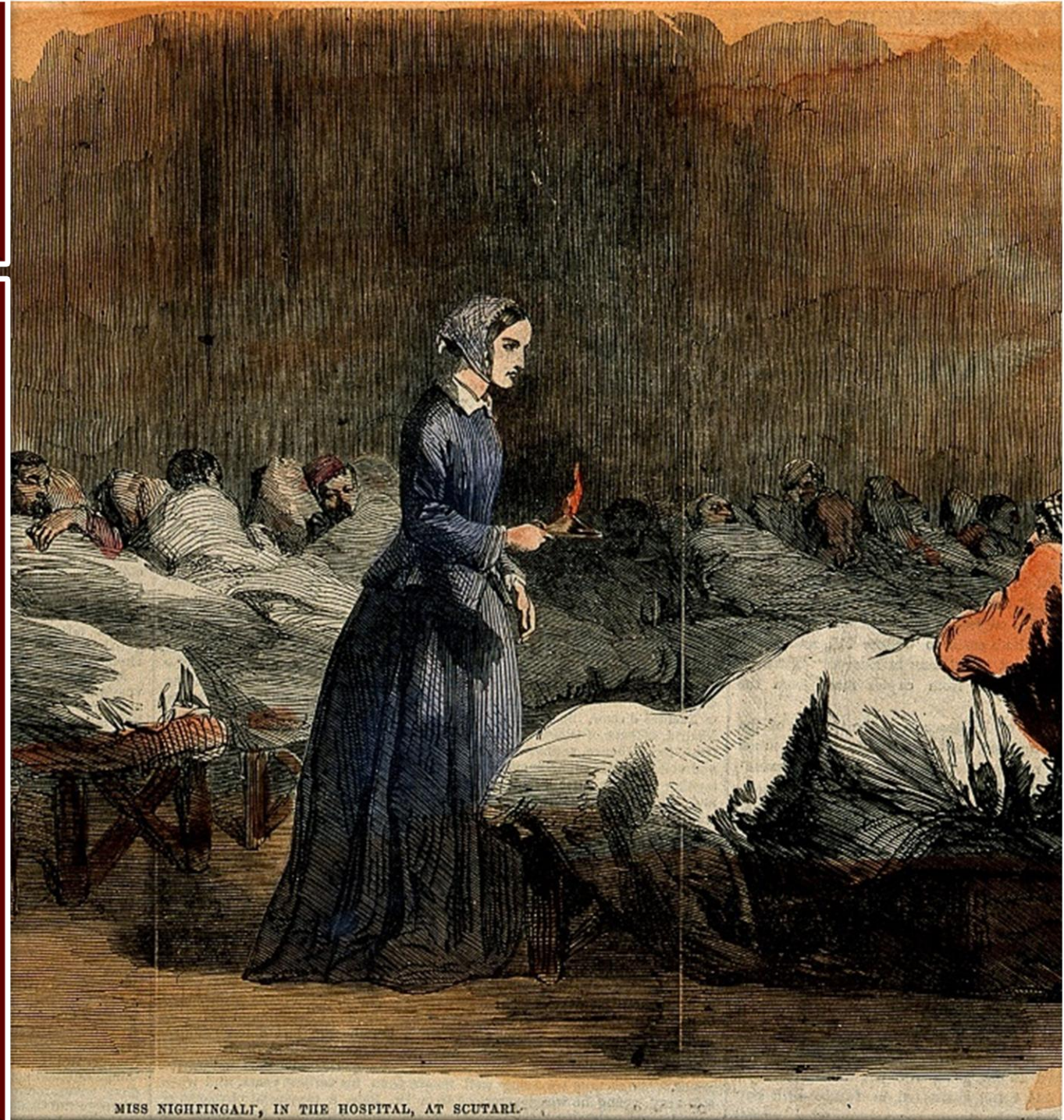
- Inner calm
- Orderly environment
- Comfort
- Altruism
- Development and revision of intervention
- Attitude of disinterested love
- Sharing a common understanding of nursing practice

Kaiserswerth: Florence Nightingale

In 1849, Florence Nightingale observed the hospital system in Europe and then traveled to the Institute of St. Vincent de Paul in Alexandria, Egypt.

Afterward, she studied for 3 months in Kaiserswerth, Germany, at the Institute for Protestant Deaconesses.

She felt that a “good nurse was a person who felt a vocation from God to nurse” (Lundmark, 2007, p. 768).



MISS NIGHTINGALE, IN THE HOSPITAL, AT SCUTARI.

According to Florence

Nursing is separate from medicine.

Nurses should be formally trained.

The disease process is not important to nursing.

Research should be used through observation and empirics to define the nursing discipline.





Nursing As Ministry

Nursing was viewed as a calling, and people were viewed as a combination of mind, body, and soul holistically.

Nursing in China evolved with the influence of Western missionaries.

In India, nurses might be male, with females acting as midwives.

Missionaries from England changed the focus in India.



Saving and Salvation

In the Old Testament, healing, peace, and salvation often go together (Ps. 103: 2-3).

In the New Testament, salvation is deliverance from sickness, demons, death, the evil one, and deliverance from sin.

Healing is inseparable from salvation under the reign of God (E. Anthony Allen).

What Are the Components of Caring?

Compassion

Empathy

Actively listening

Holistic

Kindness

Concern

Dedication

Passion



Origin of Caring

Until nurses experience a spiritual awakening or transformation of the heart, they will not view their practice from a biblical worldview.

It requires practicing the presence of God, seeing others with His eyes, and reflecting His characteristics.

Requires an understanding of Agape love.

Then nurses can be used to advance His kingdom and bring joy to others.



Caritas = Agape

Agape, caritas, selfless love, and love have all been used in nursing.

Agape is the Greek equivalent of *caritas* and for the nurse, means going beyond basic expectations with a good attitude (Arman & Rehnsfeldt, 2006).

Research has shown that **nurses who focus on reducing human suffering through caring relationships improve patient outcomes** (McCance, McKenna, & Boore, 1999) 2005).





Suffering

- Comes from *sofrir*, which means to bear, endure, resist, permit, tolerate, allow to occur, or fail to prevent.
- Definition – pain, misery, anguish, or distress that is caused by injury, illness, or loss.
- Can be physical, spiritual, mental, or emotional.

How Do We Demonstrate Caring?

- Reflecting reverence, respect, and awe towards others.
- Recognizing our patients' suffering.
- Engaging in discovering meaning for and with patients.
- Demonstrating love for those who are vulnerable and whom society would ignore.





God is present in the nurse's practice of caring in the same way He was present when He called out to Moses from the burning bush.



He speaks to us from the whimper of a child, the anxious questions of a pre-op patient, and in the moans of an elder.



This holy ground may be difficult as we face pain, suffering, fear, communication challenges, cultural differences, injustice, challenging working conditions, and more.



However, He gives us His perfect peace (shalom).

A Sacred Calling: Standing on Holy Ground



Shalom

In the Old Testament, health was seen as part of a personal relationship with the Lord, and sickness was both a physical and spiritual problem.

Their understanding of health was connected to the holistic concept of *shalom*, which is often translated as peace.

“...peace, prosperity, rest, safety, security, justice, happiness, health, welfare, wholeness” (Shelly, Miller, & Fenstermacher, 2021, p. 187).

Other countries around the world also promote holistic care, which includes these same concepts.

What ways do nurses promote *shalom*?

The Nurse's Spiritual Posture



How do we “take off our shoes” as we enter holy ground?



Do we have running shoes, that we wear as we rush from task to task without stopping to remember that is a fellow image bearer of the Lord in the bed?



Are we wearing sturdy walking shoes which provide protection against intrusions but also keep us from actually seeing the hurting and suffering.



Are we wearing the sturdy loafers that are well worn and comfortable that allows us to miss the bumps in the road.

Caring for the Spiritual Health Of People

Spirituality is a complex concept,
unique to everyone.

To provide holistic care, the spiritual
needs of each person can be
considered.

Spiritual health is when people find
balance between their values and
beliefs, their relationships with
others, and their satisfaction with
life.



Creative sources – work, artistic pursuits, causes we believe in.

Experiences we have that are valuable, such as love or appreciating nature.

Adapting to a situation, like turning 'lemons into lemonade'.

Meaning can be found in the act of witnessing life events.

Finding Meaning



FICA Spiritual History Tool

F - Faith and Belief

"Do you consider yourself spiritual or religious?" or "Is spirituality something important to you?" or "Do you have spiritual beliefs that help you cope with stress/ difficult times?"

If the patient responds "No," the health care provider might ask, "What gives your life meaning?" Sometimes patients respond with answers such as family, career, or nature.

(The question of meaning should also be asked even if people answer yes to spirituality)

I - Importance

"What importance does your spirituality have in your life? Has your spirituality influenced how you take care of yourself, your health? Does your spirituality influence you in your healthcare decision-making? (e.g. advance directives, treatment, etc.)

FICA Spiritual History Tool

C - Community

"Are you part of a spiritual community? Communities such as churches, temples, and mosques, or a group of like-minded friends, family, or yoga can serve as strong support systems for some patients. Can explore further: Is this of support to you and how? Is there a group of people you really love or who are important to you?"

A - Address in Care

"How would you like me, your healthcare provider, to address these issues in your healthcare?" (With the newer models, including diagnosis of spiritual distress, A also refers to the "Assessment and Plan" of patient's spiritual distress or issues within a treatment or care plan).

Divine Appointments

Sometimes there are meetings or encounters that allow us to minister to others.

It could include unexpected conversations, helping someone, or sharing the gospel with someone.

His timing is not always our timing.

We are blessed to be a blessing.



Micah 6:8

- *He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.*



His Love, Mercy, Forgiveness, & Kindness

Lamentations 3:22-23:

"Because of the LORD's great love, we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness".

Luke 6:36:

"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful".

Colossians 3:12:

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience".

Ephesians 4:32:

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you".



Nurse as Wounded Healer

We are able to use our skills to be fully present with people, non-judgmental, and caring.

We can help restore honor and dignity for the suffering and hurting.

Our own experiences of suffering and pain can become a source of strength, understanding, and empathy when addressing the suffering of others.

In Luke 10, we know from the Good Samaritan story that we must consider everyone as our neighbor – go and do likewise.

Jesus was the ultimate wounded healer.



Let's Talk About the ABC's of Ministry

THIS STRATEGY IS
USED BY
DIFFERENT
ORGANIZATIONS.

A – Access

*All the nations You have made will
come and bow down before You
Lord and will honor Your name
(Psalms 86:9).*

*For the earth will be filled with the
knowledge of the Lord's glory, as
the waters cover the sea.*

(Habakkuk 2:14)





B – BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Your platform is not what you call yourself, but how the community views you.

Establish trust.

Enter the healthcare community with a humble posture.

C – Care for the Needy

Do not just meet physical needs to make disciples

Do both together, with no strings attached

Many times, a spiritual conversation can occur

We can be the hands and feet of Jesus



D – Make Disciples

- The goal of missions is to disciple and teach others to do the same thing.
- *And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also (2 Tim. 2:2)*





HOLISTIC DISCIPLESHIP

“Doing life together”

Concern for every aspect of life.

Teach the gospel, study together, serve together, love God, His word, the world, and people.

It is everyone’s responsibility to build the church (Matthew 16:18).

Need guides who can train trainers, teach teachers, and disciple disciplers (David Sills).

E – Empower the Church

- The passions of the Lord become the passions of the church.
- Continued mentoring.
- Life-on-life teaching.





TOOLS IN THE TOOLBOX

Know the Bible stories.

Stay engaged in spiritual disciplines.

Show His grace and love.

Always remember the potential for cross-cultural context,
no matter where you practice.

Nursing and other healthcare professions can be the bridge.

Fulfilling His Call

The still small voice is calling.

Prayer

Listening

Waiting

Questioning

Preparing

Confirming

For I know the plans I have for you...Jer 29:11



And I heard the voice
of the Lord saying,
“Whom shall I send,
and who will go for
Us?” Then I said,
“Here I am! Send Me”
(Isaiah 6:8)

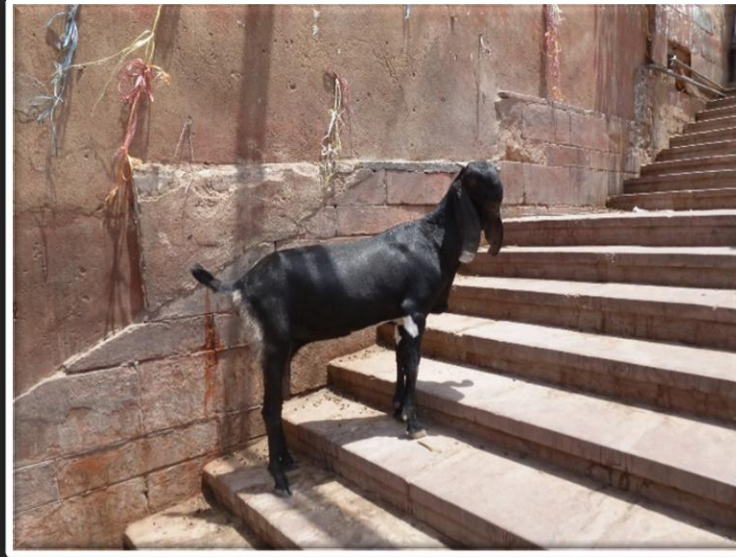




A Day in the Life

Imagine driving in a taxi along a bumpy, dusty road with many potholes and crumbling brick walls on either side. The vehicles drive on the wrong side of the road from our viewpoint, and the drivers use their horns a lot.

Imagine passing a herd of water buffalo walking along the road next to you, with a man in a turban holding a stick to guide them. Imagine goats, pigs, and cows wandering through green fields and crowded streets as you pass.



Imagine bright colors, beautiful people, and the smell of interesting foods cooking. There are bustling markets with a wide variety of wonderful produce, clothing, and other items for sale along the side of the road as you drive by.





You finally arrive at a town where The Name Above All Names has never been heard by most of the people living there, and you are immediately surrounded by laughing children.

They laugh and smile in the midst of their poverty. Some live in shacks made of sticks, cardboard, and plastic salvaged from the dump. You walk down narrow, dusty streets with more children and shy women pouring out of doorways to smile and greet you.





A leader meets you and guides you up steep stairs to a small room where you take off your shoes and are invited to sit. There is a woven mat on the floor, a bed, and a fan in the bare-looking room. You're offered the best seat in the humble home and tea to quench your thirst.

The hospitality is amazing, and the serving attitude is never-ending. Children dressed in rags start pouring into the room, and it quickly fills with laughter and smiles. Parents also come, standing in the back, to see what is happening.





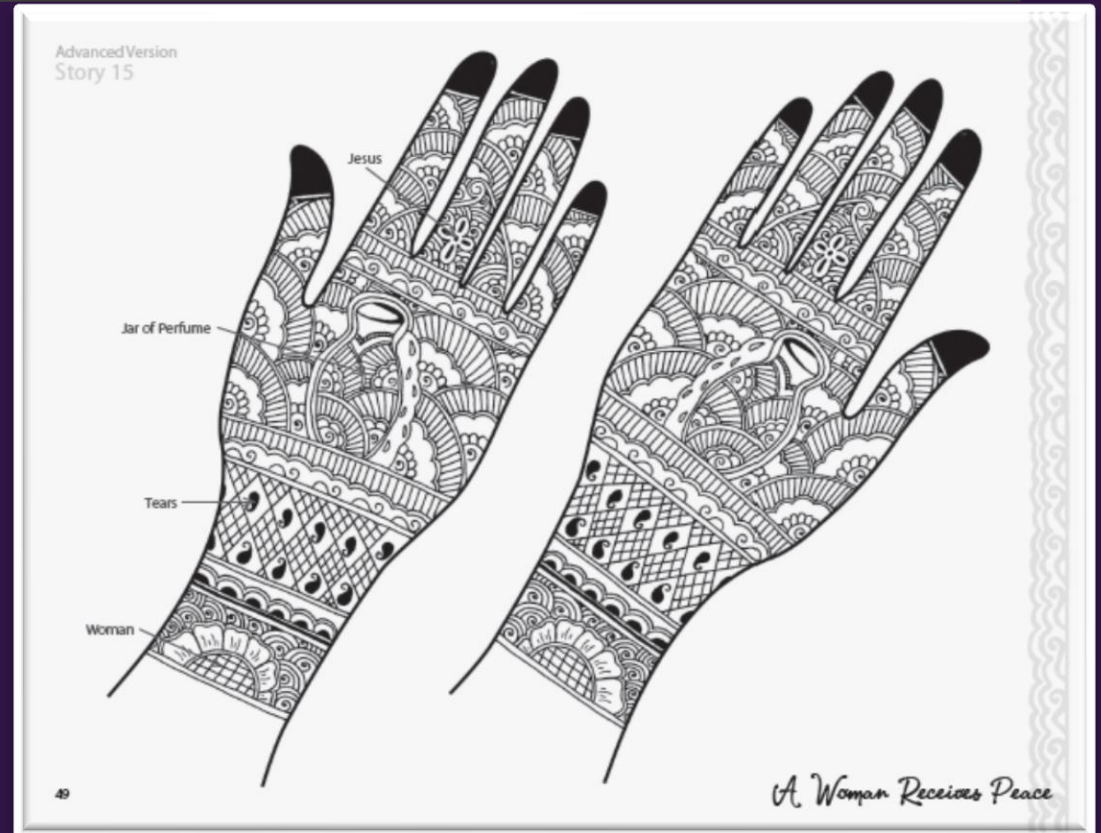
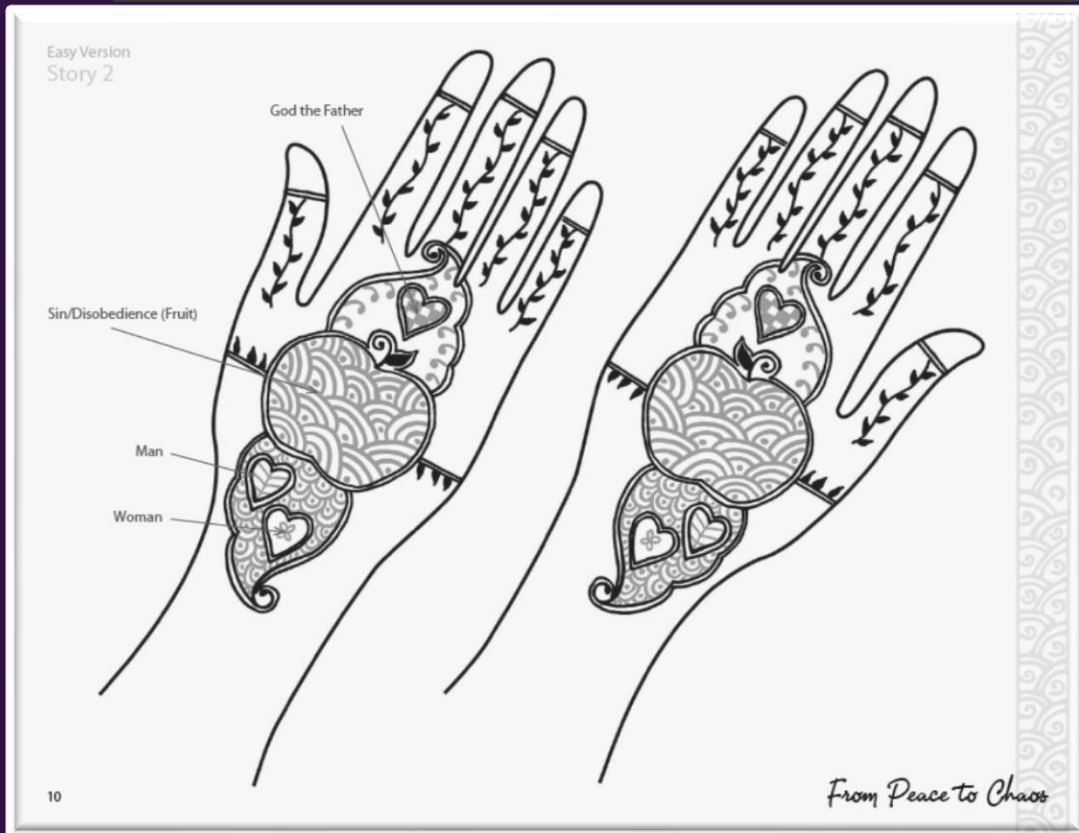
You look around the room and realize that most of those present have never learned about the love of The Father and His Son. They have never heard about the abounding grace we have been freely given.





Pad Project

Henna Storytelling





Sacrifice – Count the Cost

The Father's work is serious business. He doesn't call us to be comfortable. He calls us to trust Him so completely that we are unafraid (Chan, 2008).

What Do We Sacrifice?

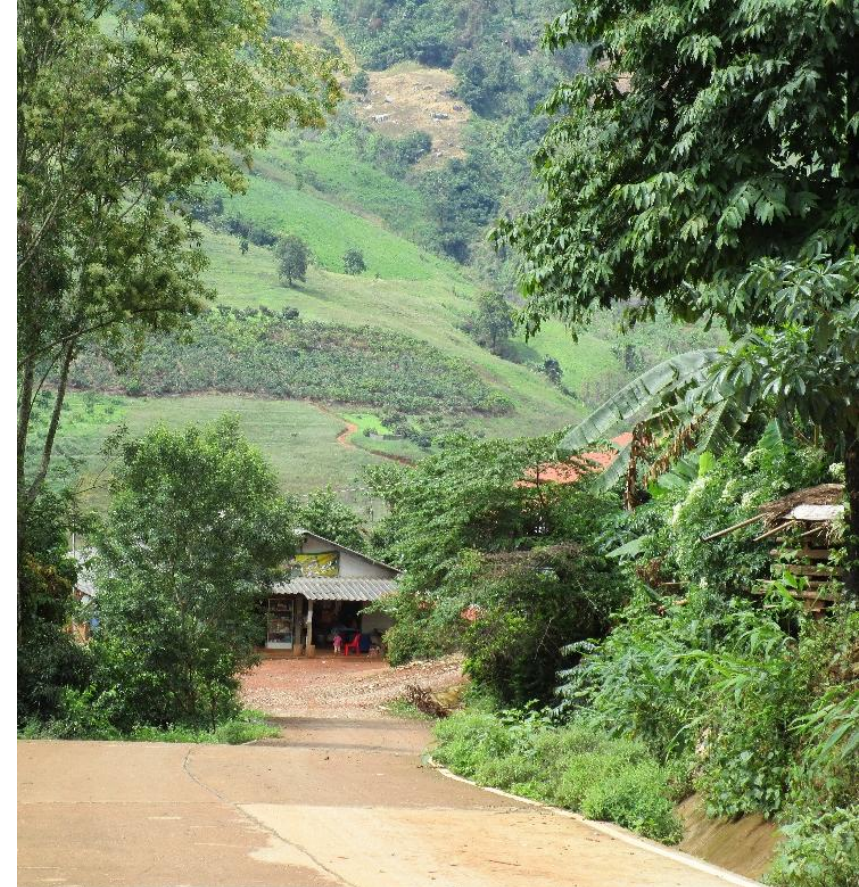
We sometimes go on short term missions and congratulate ourselves because we lived in a hut, ate the food, endured the heat, and used the squatty.



True serving and sacrifice is when the nationals see us as serving and going beyond the norm (Borthwick, 2012).



60% of the world sleeps on the floor or ground and eats with their hands. Our physical comforts make us think we don't need God for everything, and in our busyness, we ignore Him (Poplin, 2008).



Acts 1:8

Caring for the
least of these...



Back to Nursing As A Ministry

Whose needs are you trying to serve? Yours or the community?

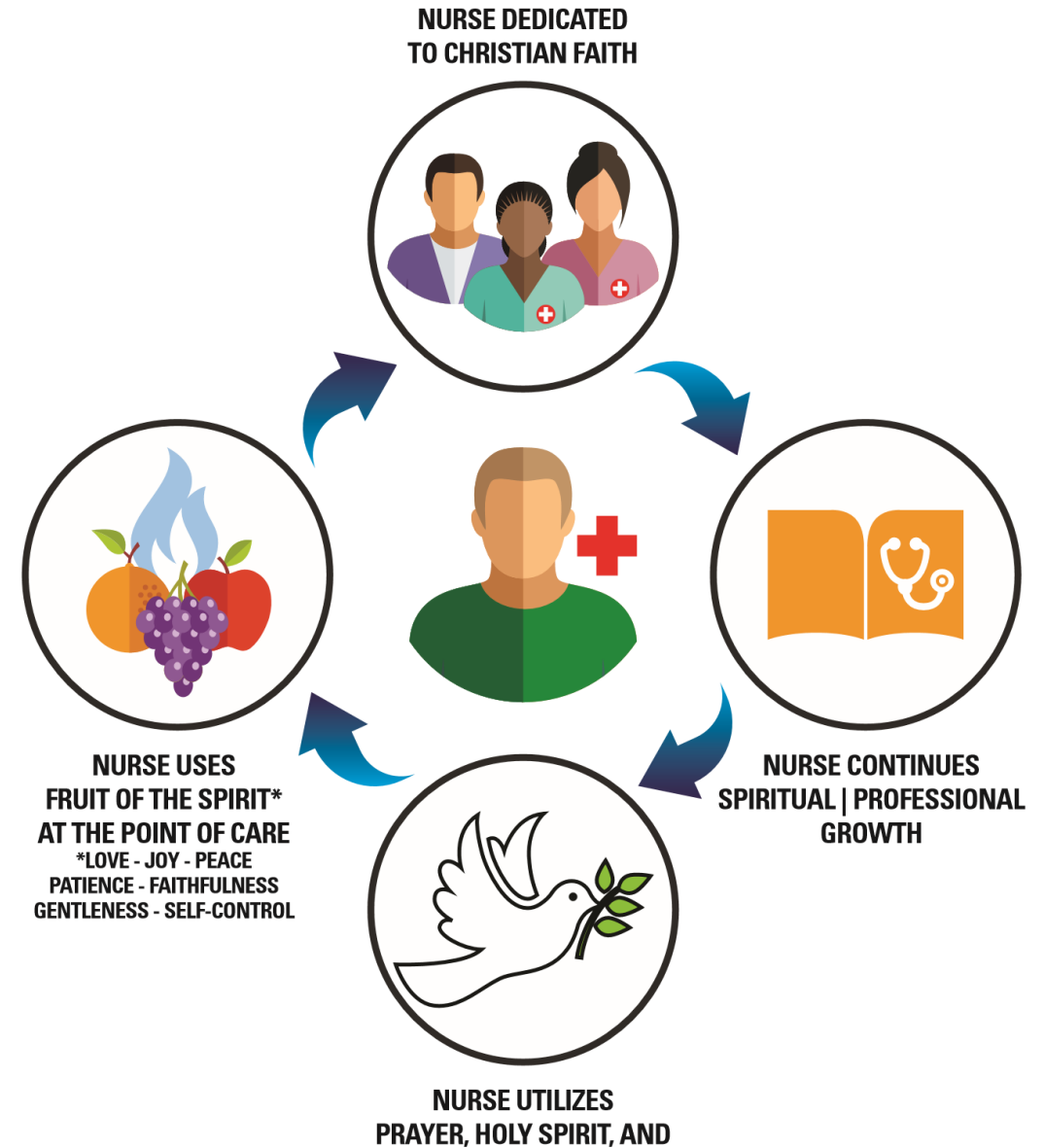
Check with health organizations about services already being provided.

Review national standards for healthcare delivery.

(Seager, 2022)



Agape Model



From the Agape Model

LOVE

JOY

PEACE

PATIENCE

KINDNESS

GOODNESS

FAITHFULNESS

GENTLENESS

SELF-

CONTROL



1 Corinthians 13:4-5, 13

Romans 15:13

John 14:27

Ephesians 4:2

Ephesians 4:31-32

Romans 15:14

Luke 16:10-12

Colossians 3:14

Corinthians 9:24-27



Nursing Today

Nursing has a history – it is different from what it was 100 years ago.

Nurses provided services such as changing dressings and emptying bedpans.

Now, nursing is a science-based practice; we are patient advocates and holistic professionals.

Caring Nurses

Feed the hungry, not only with food but with love and kindness.

Give a drink to the thirsty, not only with water, but with peace, truth, justice, and love.

Clothe the naked, not only with clothing, but with human dignity.

Give shelter to the homeless, not only with a building, but a heart, that covers, and that loves.

Nursing not only the body of the sick and dying, but the mind and spirit as well



Biblical Worldview of Nursing

- People are created.
- God is love.
- God is in control.
- People have inherent dignity and worth.
- Emphasis is on providing comfort in suffering.
- Caring for everyone is expected.





LIVE A WORSHIPFUL LIFE

Romans 12:1 – *Therefore, I urge you brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship.*

“Paul’s point is that a consecrated life is a worshipping life. It is a constant and continuous life of service lived out 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in thanksgiving for all that we enjoy in Christ” (Akin, 2012, p. 64).



Why Serve?

The more we yield to God, the more clearly we will see our purpose and calling.

Serving is sacred work, with power, grace, and humility we can perform small tasks with love.

We are touching the body of Christ when we care for those covered with dirt, maggots, and wounds.

Do I see each person in front of me as a hungry, hurting Jesus?

Do I yield enough so God can use me to give His touch?





Trusting Him

Nursing work is serious business. The Lord doesn't call us to be comfortable. He calls us to trust Him so completely that we are unafraid of whatever comes (Chan, 2008).

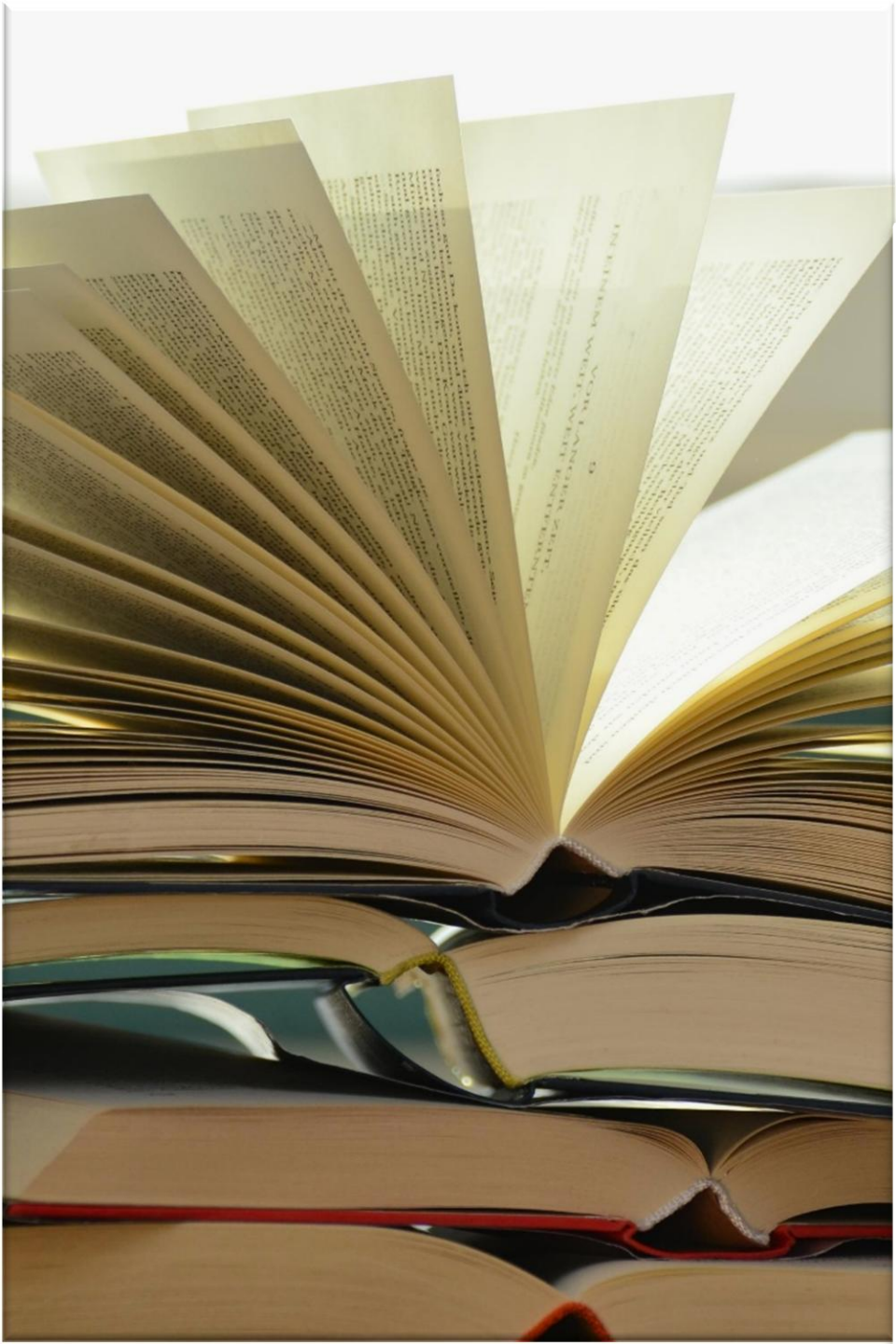
What Questions Do You Have?



Thank you

- Rebecca Meyer
- rmeyer@calbaptist.edu





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