

# ***The Opportunity that being a health care student provides; Part 1***

*(Suitable for use within a group over approximately one hour, or for an individual's personal Bible reading)*

## ***Thinking about life as a student in healthcare***

Being a healthcare student can be a harrowing experience. Studying healthcare is often all consuming, and issues expectations from peers, families, pastors; and demands from teachers, patients, and (perhaps most onerous of them all) demands from ourselves.

1. What kinds of things do females turn to when they are stressed and not surrounded by supportive friends who keep them encouraged and accountable?
2. What kinds of things do males turn to when they are stressed and not surrounded by supportive friends who keep them encouraged and accountable?
3. What consequences could result from dependency on these alternative supports?  
(For example it has been said that 'every man's battle' involves dealing with lustful images and pornography, especially when stressed/lonely. How could this battle diminish satisfaction in marriage? How could it affect a man's ability to lead in the church, in the community of disciples (1 Timothy 3:2)?)

One devastating potential consequence of such dependency on these alternative supports is an individual falling away from walking with God.

4. Can you see this potential danger? Have you seen others in your course drift away from an active relationship with God? Was there an identifiable course for this tragedy?

## ***What does God have to say?***

Read Hebrews 10:23-25.

Hebrews is a letter written to Christians who come from a Jewish background, encouraging them to persevere in following Jesus Christ *despite* being persecuted (or perceiving a threat of persecution). The writer of Hebrews does this by reminding his readers of Jesus identity. Jesus is the exact representation of God, Sustainer of all things (which He does by His powerful word), and He whose death provides purification for sins (Hebrews 1:3). In Hebrews 10:23-25, the writer indicates that since Jesus atoning substitutionary death for our sin gives us a restored relationship with God (Hebrews 10:19-22), it is fitting for us to:

- Hold on to the certain hope of the resurrection and eternity in God's acceptance (verse 23);
- Encourage other Christians to love and to do good deeds (v24); and
- Continue to meet together (v25).

1. Why does the fact that Jesus is faithful provide rationale for Christians to hold on to the hope that one has as a Christian?

Are there any pressures on you as a healthcare student that inhibit your capacity to view Christ as faithful or to hold on to your eternal hope?

“But I just want to have some fun at university, and the world tells me that the only way to enjoy myself is to indulge in sin. I believe that. I don’t want to meet up with Christians, who might judge me rather than showing grace. I’ll settle down and take my Christian faith more seriously later.”

Sometimes we may want an unexamined life, especially when we’re worried that other Christians won’t show us grace (even though they’ve experienced grace themselves from God). Ideally, Christian communities will excel in grace, but also encourage repentance. God’s grace (brought to us through Jesus’ death) is not received by the person who continues in wilful sin without remorse, because God perceives this behaviour as rejecting his offer of it (that is, his offer of grace). This behaviour is like spitting in the life-saver’s face, and even like trampling the Son of God underfoot (10:29). If this is the case, and God will not be mocked, surely this behaviour (deliberately sinning unrepentantly) is a critically dangerous situation (Hebrews 10:26-31). Though it may at times feel uncomfortable to be a part of an accountable community, in the end it is this very thing that can protect us from missing out on God’s grace on account of our own unfettered sinful behaviour.

### ***Putting it into practice***

1. An understandable response to the directive given in Hebrews 10:25, to continue to meet together, could be, ‘But I already have good accountable fellowship at my local church and I’m involved in other ministry activity.’  
Can you give any rationale as to why giving up precious time to continue gathering together with Christians in your specific profession can be valuable?

Consider and discuss the following suggestions as to why meeting together as Christians in healthcare is important (see Leader’s Appendix for more information).

- a. Integration of faith and practice can be thought through in detail (aiding the closing of the sacred/secular divide that creates a disjuncture between one’s spiritual life/activities and one’s occupational life/activities).
  - b. Healthcare-specific issues and challenges to faith can be addressed.
  - c. Fellowship with others facing the same joys and challenges can be experienced, thus forming a united front of Christians in the healthcare setting, and also providing personal encouragement for the Christian working in healthcare.
  - d. Coming together as a visible body of Christians loving one another testifies that we are disciples of Jesus (John 13:35). (This is especially important when one considers that it is very possible that the only Christians that your unbelieving classmates interact with are those that are in your course).
  - e. Healthcare provides a wonderful medium through which cross cultural mission may take place, and it may be amongst other Christian brothers and sisters in healthcare that one is encouraged to consider such.
2. Identify 3 ways that you can spur other Christians on:
    - a. To continue to hold on to the hope they have; and
    - b. Towards love and good deeds (in honour of God).

Consider people you know in your course or in your future profession who have fallen away from an active relationship with God. How can you pray for these people? Spend some time together praying for them now.



# Bible Bites

(Suitable to be completed over approximately 20-25 minutes)

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### What does God have to say?

Read Hebrews 10:23-25:

<sup>23</sup> Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. <sup>25</sup> Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another —and all the more as you see the Day approaching.’

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Can you give any rationale as to why giving up precious time to continue gathering together with Christians in your specific profession can be valuable? (See Comprehensive Study for suggested rationale).
2. Identify 3 ways that you can spur other Christians on:
  - a. To continue to hold on to the hope they have; and
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