

# ***In Healthcare for God's Service-Distinctive in Goals***

*(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***

1. As a health care student, ask yourself:  
What are your goals for the next 2 months; 12 months; 3years; 10 years?  
Consider your life holistically, rather than separating your 'personal life' from 'professional life'.
2. Identify the factors which have influenced your goal setting (as per question 1). Has it been people, experiences, relationships, knowledge?
3. From your observation, what goals/aspirations do your classmates have for their lives? What makes you arrive at such conclusions that these are their goals?
4. Did you identify any differences in the goals held by your Christian and non Christian classmates?  
If differences exist, why do you think this is so? Do you think such a difference is right/wrong; expected/unexpected?

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

Read Philippians 3:7-9; 12-14.

Philippians was written by the Apostle Paul to followers of Jesus in Philippi (Northern Greece) in AD 60-62. In the words immediately preceding our passage Paul refutes a false teaching that is infecting the Philippian church. The false teaching regards the notion that an individual can satisfy God's requirements of humanity (that is, righteousness) – by human effort or genealogy or religious observance. Paul makes it clear that righteousness can only be received from God by faith in Christ. But why is Paul so passionate to press on and strain to gain this righteousness? Because it is the **only**

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

Paul describes knowing Christ Jesus as his treasure (everything else is a loss compared to this (v8)).

1. What is your treasure?
  - Is it approval from classmates/colleagues/tutors/parents?
  - Is it a reputation of being a student who is academically/clinically gifted?
  - Is it being a practitioner who is treating a particular clientele?
  - Is it a particular lifestyle?
  - Is it just becoming or being a health practitioner (for the sake of status)?
2. From Philippians 3, what is it about Jesus Christ that makes Paul desire Christ as His treasure with such fervour? Does Paul see Christ differently or with greater clarity than you do at present?

Paul states that he presses on to take hold of that which Christ Jesus took hold of him. I suspect that he may have had Ephesians 1:3-8 in mind.

Read Ephesians 1:3-8,

<sup>3</sup> Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. <sup>4</sup> For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. <sup>7</sup> In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace <sup>8</sup> that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.'

3. How would you define a successful life?
  - Is success getting above average marks?
  - Is success finishing your requirements to be given the all clear to go through to the next year?
  - Is success nailing the difficult diagnosis, obtaining optimal radiographic healing or seeing more patients in a day than average?
  - Is success being able to tell your classmates you own your own practice?
  - Is success winning the prize Paul speaks of?
4. Would you describe obtaining that for which Christ took hold of Paul (and that for which God has taken hold of you - described in Eph 1:3-8) as a successful life? Would you still describe this life as successful if you didn't obtain any of the alternatives to success just mentioned above?

In Philippians 3:12-14, Paul uses imagery of running a race and the phrases 'pressing on' and 'straining towards' to describe the way he will achieve his goals of knowing Christ, knowing the power of His resurrection and sharing in His sufferings.

5. Do 'pressing on' and 'straining' sound easy or difficult? Think of 3 other adjectives Paul could have alternatively used to describe his pursuit of 'knowing Christ'.
6. How might 'pressing on' to know Christ in His fullness cause you pain and difficulty as a health care student?  
Consider the effect on your priorities and decision making. For example, the effects may include; prayer instead of TV, dirty village instead of clean suburb, humiliation instead of external impressiveness, persecution instead of praise.
7. Finally, think back to the goals you wrote down as wanting to pursue at the start of the study. Are they still the goals you want to commit to pursuing as a health care student and future practitioner, having now seen Paul's goals and treasure with greater clarity?

# Bible Bites

(Suitable to be completed over approximately 20-25 minutes by a group or an individual)

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expected/unexpected?

### What does God have to say?

Read Philippians 3:7-9; 12-14:

<sup>7</sup>But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup>What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup>and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.'

<sup>12</sup>Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. <sup>13</sup>Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.'

Philippians was written by the Apostle Paul to followers of Jesus in Philippi (Northern Greece) in AD 60-62. In the words immediately preceding our passage Paul refutes a false teaching that is infecting the Philippian church. The false teaching regards the notion that an individual can satisfy God's requirements of humanity (that is, righteousness) – by human effort or genealogy or religious observance. Paul makes it clear that righteousness can only be received from God by faith in Christ. But why is Paul so passionate to press on and strain to gain this righteousness? Because it is the **only way** he can gain his treasure.

### Putting it into practice

1. What is your treasure?
  - Is it approval from classmates/colleagues/tutors/parents?
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2. From Philippians 3, what is it about Jesus Christ that makes Paul desire Christ as His treasure with such fervour? Does Paul see Christ differently or with greater clarity than you do at present?
3. Paul states that he presses on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of him. Would you describe obtaining that for which Christ took hold of Paul (and that for which God has taken hold of you - described in Eph 1:3-8) as a successful life? Would you still describe your life as successful if you gained such things, but you needed to sacrifice some (or all) of the security and significance you are destined to gain from your studies?