



Care for the Caregiver Bible Study

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Artwork by Edie West

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Background

Two colleagues and I were fortunate enough to have our research, *Nursing as Caring: The Lived Experiences of Caregivers for their Cognitively Impaired Loved Ones*, published in 2022 via the *International Journal for Human Caring*, which is the official journal of the International Association for Human Caring. The purpose of the research was to explore the lived experiences of caregivers who cared for cognitively impaired loved ones in the home. We found that much of the research available on this subject tended to focus on caregiver ‘burden’ and providing support when taking care of clients with terminal illnesses. However, information specific to caregivers of clients in the home setting was less represented in the literature. The information gained from this research gave us a better understanding of the physical and psychological burdens of caring, particularly for a cognitively impaired loved one in the home. It also provided us with a better grasp of the concerns and needs of caregivers and care receivers in order to improve caregiving for both. What surprised us was that, in addition to the research themes that arose in the study, a relationship also emerged with Boykin and Schoenhofer's (2001) *Nursing as Caring Theory's* five Assumptions, as well as the theory's six C's – the Language of Caring. (SEE article <https://ncfi.org/about-iicn/>)

Upon closer examination of the anecdotal data collected, we noted that, though there was no specific demographic question regarding ‘religious affiliation’ or ‘spirituality’, anecdotal notes indicated that 90% of the respondents voluntarily identified themselves as Christian. This could be a contributing factor to the notable absence in this study of caregivers’ feelings of depression that were found in previous studies. It could also have been a contributing factor for this study, inadvertently underscoring *Nursing as Caring Theory*. Though the theory itself is not a Christian theory, the elements regarding caring and the language of care most certainly harken strongly to Christian beliefs, teachings, and worldview. Boykin and Schoenhofer's theory viewed nursing as a “shared lived experience” in which caring between the caregiver, nurse or client occurred.” The theory worked to conceptualize the focus of nursing as “nurturing persons living caring and growing in caring.” Their theory broke away from the more traditional idea that caring was the result rather than the method (or intent) of the discipline of nursing. The fundamental assumptions of the theory of nursing as caring are that all people are caring, caring is lived by each person moment to moment and is an essential characteristic of being human, caring is a process, and throughout life, each person grows in the capacity to express caring. Knowing the person as one who is living, caring, and growing in caring is foundational to the theory.

What is perhaps even more surprising is that on closer examination, each of the five Assumptions and all six C's – Language of Caring postulated in the theory more directly relate to the inherent truths found in the Word of God. After all, to care either wholly or in any other capacity for another is a facet of love and God is love (1 John 4:8). The truth is the only reason we can care or even know what it means to really care is because God first loved us (John 3: 16, 1 John 4: 10-12 and 16-20). The Theory of Nursing as Caring's crux is that for fulfillment in the practice of nursing, shared relationships must produce ‘caring’ between human beings. It is

these relationships, and the caring produced between them, that foster knowledge of self, others, and growth in the actual act of 'care.' Again, it was God who first desired a relationship with his creation (Revelation 3:20), and it was he who created us for a relationship with him (Genesis 1: 26-27, 2: 18; John: 14: 18) and one another (John 15: 10-17, 1 Thessalonians 4: 9).

The theory of Nursing as Caring is used as a guiding nursing framework in practice, research, education, and leadership. It occurred to me that it might also be a unique and useful framework in a Bible Study designed for nurses, nursing students, or any care providers. With the Bible as the foundational framework for care and caregiving, specific insights into where the Nursing as Care Theory's nurturing, living, and growing care processes and the caring between and relationship elements of the theory that dovetail into God's Word can be more fully identified, explored, and applied to nursing practice. For this study, Boykin and Schoenhofer (2001), Nursing as Caring Theory's five Assumptions as well as the theory's six C's – Language of Caring, are as follows and can be referred to for each of the successive Bible Study lessons 'Reflection' sections:

Theoretical Concepts:

Assumption #1: Persons are Caring by Virtue of their Humanness (or 'Active Personal Engagement Comes as a Cost')

Assumption #2: Wholeness or Fullness of Being is Forever Present (or 'Seeing a Person as Less than Whole Fails to Truly Encounter the Person')

Assumption #3: Without Caring Between Giver and Receiver, Caring in its Fullest Sense Does Not Occur (or 'Expressing Self and Recognition of Other is key')

Assumption #4: Caring Competency is a Lifelong Process that Develops and Shapes How We Care as Caregivers

Assumption #5: Caring Transforms the Nature of Our Human Relationships Through Duties and Opportunities (or 'Caregiving is Important to Both Caregiver and Receiver for Mutual Benefits and Growth')

Six C's - Language of Caring'

1. Competent – Am I Qualified, Capable, Adequate?
2. Commitment – Am I fulfilling an Agreement, Pledge, or Obligation I have made?
3. Comportment – Is my Behavior, Demeanor, or Attitude the right one?
4. Compassion – Do I have Sympathy? Do I desire to help in distress?
5. Conscience– Morality, Integrity, Ethics - are they honorable and right?
6. Confidence – Do I have Faith or Belief in a principle or action? Is it. Right, Proper, and/or Effective? Am I fostering Intimacy or Trust?

Introduction:

The first assumption in Boykin and Schoenhofer's (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory is 'Persons are caring by virtue of their humanness.' If we define caring as 'showing concern for or kindness to others' (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/caring>) the Bible is replete with examples of caregivers, inclusive of Ruth (Bible: Book of Ruth) who showed unwavering devotion to her elderly mother-in-law left with no one to help in her choosing to go with her to a foreign land, live amongst foreign people and serve her God; The Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37) who chose to help a man he did not know who was of a people despised and considered enemies of his own, and Dorcas (Acts 9: 36-42) a disciple who walked the talk, was kind, devoted to good works and charity, whose reputation followed her, even after her death, to name just a few.

Each Biblical example shows a different facet of caring – for Ruth, there was in her choice to take on the role of caregiver, the fear of facing the unknown, among that which was harsh, foreign, strange, and totally unfamiliar to her. In the case of the good Samaritan, a parable told by Jesus, the core question being answered was not really who should I care for (i.e., 'who is my neighbor?' Luke 10:29) but rather 'what must I do to obtain eternal life?' (Luke 10: 25). In the book of Acts, Dorcas' story is recorded for us as both a testimony of the impact of a true disciple's lifetime of care for those around her as well as God's power to use such a disciple miraculously for his glory, strengthening of his church and furtherance of his kingdom (Acts 9: 40-42).

Using the Bible as the framework from which to thoughtfully read, review, study, and meditate on caregiving. We will examine these and other caring scriptures more closely and use Boykin and Schoenhofer's (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory's five Assumptions and six C's- Language of Care as a resulting framework from which to, reflect and pray that in so doing we will not just learn Biblical truths but also be willing and able to apply them to ourselves and our nursing practice in future.

Though each study group may be different, here is one suggestion. In preparation for each study, the participant should read the scripture(s) within that module, answer the questions, and reflect on the questions before meeting as a group. Each module should take approximately 30-40 minutes to complete (some may take a bit longer, others less)

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The Book of Ruth

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” – John 3:16 (NIV)

Module 1: Caring Comes at a Cost

Read: Bible, Book of Ruth (Chapter 1)

The first Assumption in Boykin and Schoenhofer’s (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory is ‘Persons are Caring by Virtue of their Humanness (Active Personal Engagement Comes as a Cost).’ In the Book of Ruth, Chapter 1, we meet Naomi, a Jewish widow. The lot of widowed women in the ancient world was a decidedly hard one. The culture of the time afforded protection and provision for women only through marriage and children, both of which Naomi now found herself bereft (Ruth 1:3-5). Indeed, the name Naomi means “pleasantness.” She viewed these losses as God’s divine punishment and wished to be called Mara, which means “bitterness” instead (Ruth 1:13 and 20).

Initially, both Ruth and Orpah start the journey back to Judah with their mother-in-law because word has reached them that the situation in Judah that drove Naomi’s family to Moab has changed. What has changed, and who is given credit for this change of circumstances in Naomi’s native land? (SEE: Ruth 1:6)

Along the road, Naomi stopped and urged her daughters-in-law to go home, recognizing the fact that there would be nothing for them in Judah just as there was now nothing for her in Moab. Jewish law afforded some measure of protection for widows as well as maintaining of a man’s family line through marriage to a deceased husband’s brother and any children born of such a union, but Naomi very pointedly and bitterly indicated that this was impossible in the situation that the three women now found themselves (SEE: Ruth 1: 8-13). Yet even in such disparate circumstances, circumstances that Naomi attributed to being caused by her God, to whom and what does she pray for her daughters-in-law? (SEE: Ruth 1: 8-9):

Ruth and Orpah’s lot as widows of marital age with families of their own in their own country to which they could return would have been viewed as a decidedly better situation than that of Naomi’s, who was past marital and childbearing age with no family to return to in Judah. Indeed, Orpah initially insisted that she would go with Naomi (Ruth 1: 10), but ultimately chose to go home (Ruth 1: 15), and who can blame her? When Naomi sees that Orpah has kissed her goodbye and chosen to return to Moab, she urges Ruth to follow suit. To whom does Naomi say Orpah is returning? (SEE: Ruth 1:15): “unto her _____, and unto her ____.” Why did Ruth choose to go with her mother-in-law to a foreign land with no provision or protection for either Naomi or herself? (SEE Ruth 1:16 17):

Both Ruth and Orpah, also widows, wept over their shared bitter situations and losses with Naomi, and both were credited as 'showing kindness' to Naomi and her sons. It was obvious that they both felt sorry for Naomi, but only Ruth clung to her, refused to leave her, and chose to act (See 1 John 3:18) by taking on the role of caregiver to her widowed mother-in-law instead of that of care receiver as a widow herself. Why? (SEE: Ruth 1: 16-17 and James 2:15-16).

We are not told in the story what the relationship was between Naomi and her daughters-in-law at the time of the death of their respective spouses. On the surface, one could assume it was a loving one based on both women being willing to go with her to Judah and how they both were tearful and reluctant to leave her. It could even be construed that for Orpah at least the choice to go home to her people and her Gods was based on her circumstances as a widow, so persuasively expressed by Naomi. However, we don't know that for sure based on the text. It could very easily be kindness or duty to the dead (as Naomi suggests in v 8) or merely the conventions of the time in which they lived that prompt the women's willingness to stay with their mother-in-law, their shared grief and loss the sole cause for tears.

What we do know based on the text is the kind of relationship Naomi had with her God. Naomi's God is all-powerful, ever-present, all-knowing, and in complete control of all things (SEE: Ruth 1:19-22, Job 1:21, and Habakkuk 3:17-19). Naomi credits the God who caused the famine in Judah for later "visiting his people to provide them bread" there as well (v 6). The God who took her sons is the God to whom she prays and who provides husbands for her two widowed daughters-in-law (v 8-9). Indeed, Naomi was not shy about mentioning her God (as Lord, God, the Almighty), out loud, no less than seven times in this chapter. Naomi speaks of God, and it was evident that she trusted Him no matter what the circumstances were, are, or would be.

We can also see the effect of Naomi's relationship with her God upon her relationship with Ruth as evidenced by Ruth's impassioned plea to her mother-in-law in which she vows to cling to her God, as well as to her (SEE: Ruth 1:16-17). Naomi only stops urging her to leave when she sees that Ruth is _____ to go with her (Ruth 1: 18).

Reflections

How significant do you think Naomi's relationship with her God was to Ruth over the 10 years they spent dwelling together in Moab? Why?

How significant do you think Naomi's relationship with her God was in Ruth's character development, and choice to later care for Naomi as well as make Naomi's God her own? Why?

Think of a time when you were either a caregiver or receiver. Would your relationship with God

have been as evident as Naomi's was to those whom you encountered or had a relationship with? Why or why not?

Although a short trip today, it would have taken Naomi and Ruth 7-10 days on foot to go from Moab to Judah in ancient times. The road was steep, a strip of rugged mountainous terrain approximately 50 miles in length. This perilous journey for the two women can also be viewed as a spiritual one from the foreign gods of Moab (the meaning of which is unclear and foreign to Hebrew but thought to mean "Who is your father?") The women are traveling from a city and its people attributed to the incestuous offspring of Lot and one of his daughters after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Bible. (SEE Genesis 19:30-38) to the one, true God of Judah (the meaning of which is "to praise" or "to give thanks" to God). Ruth chose to make this journey with her mother-in-law instead of being cared for by her own people. This choice came at great personal cost (comfort, provision, protection, safety, possible remarriage, and children in the future). What does this say about Ruth's character (HINT: Reflect upon/apply the six C's- Language of Care that you feel might be appropriate in Ruth's case)

Reflect on what insights you've gained from Chapter 1 of the Book of Ruth. Do you believe that 'Persons are caring by virtue of their humanness?' Why or why not?

Is feeling sorry (sympathy or empathy) for someone in need a caring virtue? Why or why not?

Reflect on what insights you've gained from Chapter 1 of the Book of Ruth. Do you believe that 'Active Personal Engagement Comes as a Cost?' Why or why not?

Reflect on what insights you've gained from Chapter 1 of the Book of Ruth. Review Boykin and Schoenhofer (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory's five Assumptions (pg. 6). Are there any other Assumptions, aside from Assumption #1, that you see as applicable in this chapter? (If so, explain)

Reflect on your own personal or professional life. How might Assumption #1: 'Persons are Caring by Virtue of their Humanness' and/or 'Active Personal Engagement Comes as a Cost' (or any of the other five Assumptions you may have also found applicable) relate to your own life?

When have you employed any of the Six C's - 'Language of Caring' (See pg. 6) in either a personal or professional capacity, only to find yourself meeting, exceeding, or falling short of the mark? (Explain)

How might you do better in the future?

If you've read Chapter 1 of the Book of Ruth before, is there an insight you gleaned from it here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?)

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

The Book of Ruth

“... The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” ~ 1 Samuel 16: 7

Module 2: Caring Encounters: Seeing the Whole Person

Read: Bible, Book of Ruth (Chapter 2)

The second Assumption in Boykin and Schoenhofer’s (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory is ‘Wholeness or Fullness of Being is Forever Present (Seeing a Person as Less than Whole Fails to Truly Encounter the Person).’ In the Book of Ruth, Chapter 2, Ruth meets Boaz, a “kinsman of her deceased husband” (v 2) in a grain field. As this chapter unfolds, we see beyond the economic hardship and social stigmatization of Ruth’s widowhood as well as Boaz’s economic abundance and social prominence. We also see how important opportunities and duties are, in what way they transform how we see one another in our relationships, and by what method they benefit both caregiver and receiver (Assumption #5).

The second book of Ruth begins with Ruth taking the initiative and offering to secure food for Naomi and herself by ‘picking up any grain left behind’ (v 2), from harvesters in a neighboring field. The women had arrived in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was just beginning. Naomi, who calls Ruth her “daughter” (v 2) gives her permission to go and do this.

It is notable that Ruth gives Naomi president as the older woman and does not tell her what she is going to do but rather Seeks Naomi’s opinion, guidance, permission, and/or blessing in the matter (SEE 1 Peter 5: 5). It is clear by this behavior that though Ruth will be shouldering the caregiver burden of hard labor working the fields to provide for them both, that she does not presume to either usurp Naomi’s place of honor as elder, mother, head of their home, nor make her feel dependent or subservient in any way as the recipient of her labors (See Deuteronomy 5: 16, Proverbs 23: 22).

Ruth also seeks ‘favor’ (v2) presumably from the harvesters of grain behind whom she will be gleaning in hopes that the harvesters will not strip the field clean leaving nothing for her to pick up (Leviticus 23: 22). Read the following scriptures identifying how God bestows his favor and reflect/write down how this applies to Ruth and/or her situation:

Psalm 5:12 _____
Proverbs 3: 3-4: _____
Proverbs 8: 34-35: _____
Proverbs 15: 33: _____
Proverbs 84: 11: _____
Psalm 90: 16- 17: _____
Proverbs 16: 7: _____
Genesis 39: 20-21: _____

Isaiah 66: 2: _____

Romans 8: 31: _____

Daniel 1: 8- 9: _____

Ruth enters a random field and begins to glean grain. The text states, “as it turned out she was working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelek (v 3).” This man was a relative on Naomi’s husband’s side of the family. So, though Naomi had no relatives on her side in Bethlehem, apparently, there was family on her deceased husband’s side. Do you think Ruth’s ending up in this particular man’s field was a coincidence? Why or why not?

Why do you think Ruth’s random choice landed her in this particular man’s field (HINT: With whom did she find ‘favor’ and why?)

Boaz arrived at the field that Ruth was gleaning in. What does his manner of greeting his workers and their response back to him tell you about this man’s relationship with both God and man (v 4)?

Boaz asked the overseer of his harvesters, “Who does that young woman belong to?” (v 5). The overseer, along with the rest of Bethlehem, was aware of the two widows, Naomi’s return from Moab with her foreign daughter-in-law, and shared this information with his employer. What other unsolicited information about Ruth’s character that he observed that morning does he share with his employer (v 7)?

Ruth obviously finds ‘favor’ in Boaz’s eyes based on what he has been made aware of concerning Ruth’s character. What does Boaz offer to Ruth (v 8 and 9) after hearing about who she is and observations regarding her behavior?

It is of interest that the text made no mention of Ruth’s physical appearance. We are NOT told if she has “tender eyes” (like Leah), or if she resembled Rachel who was “beautiful of form and appearance” (Genesis 29: 17). She is not described as Sarai was, simply “a very beautiful woman” (Genesis 12: 14) or even as Ester who won a foreign King over and was given the title of Queen. We are told via scripture that she had “a lovely figure and was beautiful” (Ester 2:7). Truth be told, even if Ruth was a stunner, working as a field hand harvesting leftover food all day would probably have taken a toll on her physical appearance. Still, I think we are purposely not told anything about Ruth’s appearance throughout her entire story, except that she was “young” (v 5). Indeed, we are told who she really was solely by how others described her character throughout the book of Ruth. This omission reminded me of how Jesus was described in Isaiah 55:2, “... like a root out of dry ground, he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.” Yet, God and those with whom he has a

relationship know his son by his character as well, “Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6)

Indeed, Ruth herself was overwhelmed by Boaz’s kindness and generosity. What position (physically as well as in her response to his offer) does Ruth take (v 10)?

If anyone had a good reason to be angry and bitter or wallow in self-pity over their circumstances, it was Ruth. Yet, she consistently chooses to focus on the duties and opportunities set before her, and to make the best of them. There was no complaining about the bad but rather seeking understanding about the good (See Proverbs 15:33). How does 1 Peter 3-4 and Proverbs 31:30 relate to Ruth

Boaz credits Ruth’s character, but also another reason for her ‘favor’ toward her. What was it (v 11 and 12)?

Ruth goes on to humbly express relief and gratitude to Boaz for his promise to care for her as she cares for Naomi, particularly as she has no familial or contractual relationship with him and he has no obligation to do so, but also because, in addition to this, she was a foreigner (v 13). How does Boaz’s treatment of Ruth reflect his Godly character?

Leviticus 19: 33-34: _____

Leviticus 24: 22: _____

Exodus 23: 9: _____

Deuteronomy 10: 18: _____

Psalms 146: 9: _____

Ephesians 2: 19: _____

Boaz favors Ruth further by inviting her to join him and his reapers at mealtimes and even giving her permission to dip her bread in the wine vinegar, which was considered a delicacy. Ruth keeps part of her meal back to share with Naomi, which was yet another behavior on her part that reflects a character of loyalty, generosity, and selflessness even amidst the hardship and scarcity of her present circumstances (v 14). Further evidence of Boaz’s character can be seen when he instructs his reapers to allow more to be left in the field for Ruth to pick up and to do so in a way that won’t embarrass her by either making her feel ill-equipped to do the work properly or like a charity case. Her dignity mattered to Boaz. He insisted she be treated respectfully by his employees (v 15 and 16). Ruth worked all day and gleaned more than she probably should have as a direct result of the ‘favor’ she’d found in Boaz’s field (v 17).

Ruth takes the food home to Naomi, who immediately recognizes how much more food she brought back than would have been usual in the circumstances. Naomi, true to form, praises

God for the abundance and asks Ruth in whose field she found such ‘favor.’ Ruth tells her Boaz (v 18 and 19). Ruth didn’t just get enough to get by; she received more than enough to satisfy both herself and Naomi. How does Exodus 3: 21 pertain to Ruth’s situation?

Naomi praises God first for the kindness shown to her before the deaths of her husband and sons (in the past), and which she sees as now continuing (in the present) for both her and Ruth. She also had revived hope for the future as she tells Ruth that this man is family on her husband’s side (v 20). Based on what we read here in Chapter 2, do you think it was premature for Naomi to change her name to Mara in Chapter 1 of the Book of Ruth? Why or why not

How might Romans 8:28 pertain to both Ruth and Naomi?

We seem to think that ‘favor’ is reserved for situations that we see as easy, convenient, safe, comfortable, peaceful, prosperous, or successful, happy, positive, or even wonderfully exciting. How does the following scripture contradict this type of thinking:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts”. ~ Isaiah 55: 8-9

Can you think of any other situations in either the Old or New Testaments of the Bible where ‘favor’ was given by God to his people in less than wonderful circumstances?

(HINT: Paul spent much of his time in a Roman prison where he was inspired by God’s Holy Spirit to write Ephesians, Philemon, Colossians, Philippians, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus, New Testament books of the Bible)

Ruth tells Naomi of Boaz’s promise of provision and protection in his field for the duration of the barley harvest (v 21), and the Chapter ends with Naomi encouraging Ruth to stay in Boaz’s field, which Ruth does till the barley and wheat harvest ends (v 22 and 23). Barley and wheat harvests in ancient times began in March/April and ended in April/May.

Reflections

What has Ruth’s behavior in Chapter 2 further told us about her character? (HINT: Reflect upon/apply the six C’s- Language of Care (pg. 6) that you feel might be appropriate)

What has Boaz’s behavior in Chapter 2 told us about his character? (HINT: Reflect upon/apply the six C’s- Language of Care that you feel might be appropriate)

Reflect on insights you've gained from Chapter 2 of the Book of Ruth. Do you believe that 'Wholeness or Fullness of Being is Forever Present (despite one's economic, social, or any other 'standing') and/or 'Seeing a Person as Less than Whole Fails to Truly Encounter the Person?' Why or why not?

Reflect on insights you've gained from Chapter 2 of the Book of Ruth and relate them to your personal or professional life. Do you believe that 'Duties and Opportunities are important, can transform how we see one another in our relationships, and are of benefit both to caregiver and care receiver?' Why or why not?

What Duties and Opportunities was Ruth obedient to, why, and how were they of benefit to her?

What Duties and Opportunities was Boaz obedient to, why, and how were they of benefit to him?

What Duties and Opportunities as either caregiver or receiver? Are you obedient in your personal or professional life? Why, and how are they of benefit to you?

Reflect on the six C's – Language of Care (pg. 6) and how they might apply to you.

If you've read Chapter 2 of the Book of Ruth before, is there an insight you gleaned from it here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?)

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

Book of Ruth

“The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom, and before honor is humility.” ~ Proverbs 15:33

Module 3: ‘Expressing Self and Recognition of Others’

Read: Bible, Book of Ruth (Chapter 3)

The third Assumption in Boykin and Schoenhofer’s (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory is: ‘Without Caring Between Giver and Receiver, Caring in its Fullest Sense Does Not Occur (Expressing Self and Recognition of Other). In Chapter 3 of the Book of Ruth, we see the tables begin to turn as Naomi takes on the role of caregiver for her daughter-in-law Ruth. Naomi does so by providing sound advice and guidance to the younger woman in accordance with her faith in God, and His laws/provisions for His people, which Ruth has embraced as her own, but is a novice at fully understanding as a refugee.

The first verse of Ruth Chapter 3 implies that time has passed. Indeed. We are told at the end of Ruth Chapter 2 verse 23 that Naomi and Ruth arrived as the barley harvest began and that Ruth spent her days in the field of Boaz until it ended (approximately 2 or 3 months) over which time she worked with the women of his house and doubtless spent time with him as well as his harvesters in Boaz’s fields. How do you think this arrangement allowed both Ruth and Boaz to express themselves and recognize the other?

Naomi told Ruth she was going to find a home for her through Boaz, their relative (v 3). According to Jewish Law the “Kinsman Redeemer” was responsible for buying a fellow Israelite out of slavery (freedom), making sure a murderer of a family member paid for the crime (justice), buying back forfeit family land (inheritance restoration), and carrying on the family name (insuring family legacy) by marrying the childless widow (Leviticus 25: 48, Numbers 35: 19, Leviticus 25: 25, and Deuteronomy 25: 5-10). In other words, the “Kinsmen Redeemer” was to safeguard the individual, their family home, fortunes, and futures. Read the following scriptures and write down to whom each description therein applies, and how they relate to Boaz’s title of “Kinsman Redeemer.”

John 6: 35: _____

1 John 2: 1: _____

1 Thessalonians 1: 10: _____

John 8: 12: _____

John 10: 10-11: _____

Acts 10: 42: _____

1 Timothy 2: 5: _____

John 8: 36: _____

Job 19: 25: _____
Luke 19: 10: _____
John 14: 6: _____
John 8: 32: _____
Titus 3: 5 _____

Naomi told Ruth to clean herself up, put on her best, and go to where Boaz was winnowing barley. She instructs her specifically to wait, to not make herself known to him till he's finished eating, drinking, and goes to sleep. Naomi then told her to lie at his feet, uncover them, and wait, that Boaz would then tell her what to do (v 4).

Ruth made no inquiries about what must appear to one unaccustomed to Jewish Law or culture, a quite unorthodox approach, stating she would do "whatever Naomi says" and proceeded to do just that (v 5 and 6). What Naomi proposed Ruth do was neither salacious nor inappropriate for the time. Servants lie at their master's feet. Naomi was suggesting that Ruth approach Boaz in a spirit of submission, humbly, as a servant. Note, Ruth didn't add to or detract from any of her mother-in-law's directives but rather followed them to the letter. In so doing, how did Ruth express self as well as recognize the other, that is, show by her actions that authentic care... giving and receiving existed between herself, Naomi, and Boaz as well as their God, which she had embraced as her own?

(HINT: SEE Philippians 2:3-11)

Boaz behaved precisely as Naomi predicted. He slept on the threshing floor, as at this time there was much economic and social turmoil in Judah, and crime was rife. Becoming aware of Ruth's presence in the dark, he was at first startled because of these times, until she identified herself to him (v 7 and 9). Ruth comes straight to the point and asks him to "spread the corner of his garment over her," which again was a custom of the time. The gesture indicated the taking of a wife (See Ezekiel 16:8 for reference of God's taking of his people, the nation of Israel).

Though Ruth reminded Boaz of his responsibility as "Kinsmen Redeemer," she made no demands. It may have been that due to the age difference between them, Boaz also wished to make no demands on Ruth, as evidenced in his response to her request (v 10) as it is also apparent throughout Ruth Chapter 2 that he respected her and favored this young woman very highly in thought, word, and action. How does Boaz's response to her humble entreaty express self in his regard for Ruth as well as recognize others regarding his family obligation and God's Law, thus demonstrating "caring in its fullest sense" (v 10 – 14)?

Boaz bids Ruth sleep there at his feet until morning, concerned with her personal safety and reputation in lieu of her walking the streets at night. He also gave her food to take home when she leaves (v 13-15).

Ruth chose the attitude of humble servant and NOT that of hapless victim, demander of rights, or even young temptress in her position as a widow, but rather trusted God. Boaz also made no demand or refusal of Ruth in his position as Kinsmen Redeemer, but rather deferred to doing the right thing by both Ruth and his family and by allowing God to determine the outcome in the matter, though he obviously wanted to marry Ruth. Both parties were, dare I say it, submissive and obedient to God. Words that have very offensive connotations today. But what does the Bible say about submission?

God says the following about his own Son in Hebrews 5: 8

God also says the following to us in James 4: 7:

and 1 Peter 2: 13-14:

What does the Bible say about obedience?

John 14: 15: _____
John 14: 23: _____
1 John 5: 3: _____
Acts 5: 29: _____
1 Peter 1: 14: _____
Isaiah 1: 19: _____
Luke 6: 46: _____
Exodus 23: 22: _____
1 John 3: 24: _____

Naomi asked Ruth upon her return how it went, which Ruth tells her, showing her the food Boaz gave her to take home (v 16 and 17). Naomi wisely discerned that Boaz would act quickly on their behalf and told Ruth she would not have long to wait (v 18).

Reflections

Reflect on what insights you've gained from Chapter 3 of the Book of Ruth. Do you believe that 'Without Caring Between Giver and Receiver, Caring in its Fullest Sense Does Not Occur (Expressing Self and Recognition of Other). Why or why not?

Reflect on what insights you've gained from Chapter 3 of the Book of Ruth. Review Boykin and Schoenhofer (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory's five Assumptions (pg. 6). Are there any other Assumptions, aside from Assumption #3, that you see as applicable in this chapter? (If so, explain)

Reflect on your own personal or professional life. How might Assumption #3: 'Without Caring

Between giver and receiver, Caring in its Fullest Sense Does Not Occur” and/or “Expressing Self and Recognition of Other is Key for authentic Caring Between Giver and Receiver” (or any of the other five Assumptions you may have also found applicable) relate to your own life?

When have you employed any of the Six C’s - Language of Caring’ (pg. 6) in either expressing self or in recognition of others in a personal or professional capacity? (explain)

How does personal submission and/or obedience aid in giving and/or receiving ‘care in its fullest sense ‘?

If you’ve read Chapter 3 of the Book of Ruth before, is there an insight you gleaned from it here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?)

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

The Book of Ruth

“Blessed is the man that trusts in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreads out her roots by the river, and shall not See when heat comes, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.” Jeremiah 17:7-8

Module 4: Caring: A Lifelong Process'

Read: Bible, Book of Ruth (Chapter 4)

The fourth Assumption in Boykin and Schoenhofer's (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory is: Caring Competency is a Lifelong Process that Develops and Shapes How We Care as Caregivers.' In the 4th and Final Chapter of the Book of Ruth, we see God's ultimate plan come to fruition. We also see that God's plan went far beyond the redemption of two widows by a 'Kinsman Redeemer' in Bethlehem "during the days when judges ruled" (Book of Ruth, Chapter 1).

Boaz did a remarkable thing when he chose duty in following God's Law over any personal desire he may have had to take Ruth as his wife. So did Ruth by unquestioningly following Boaz's directives, and Naomi, who also opted to wait on God for a final decision that would affect all of their futures. Boaz could have foregone Seeking out the relative closer to Ruth. Instead, he went to the place where business was conducted in the ancient world, the city gate, waited for the man to arrive, assembled witnesses to any transaction between them and approached him about the matter as God's Law dictated essentially leaving the decision regarding who would be Ruth's husband in God's hands not his own (v 1-4). NOTE: Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz were all active participants in God's plan. None of them was passive in this story. All of them, through submission and obedience, did their part. However, they trusted God for the outcome.

Read the following scriptures. How do these accounts also illustrate the type of unwavering obedience to God, similar to that demonstrated by Boaz, which came with great personal risk? How did they turn out?

Genesis 22: 1-13: _____

Daniel 3: 8-25: _____

Daniel 6: 10-23: _____

Acts 16: 18-30: _____

Acts 12: 1-11: _____

Do you think any of God's obedient followers listed above (inclusive of Boaz, Ruth, and Naomi) had any idea what God was thinking or going to do regarding the outcome of their fate(s)? (Explain)

Boaz gave the man the opportunity to 'redeem' the land, which was his 'right' as the nearest relative to Naomi's deceased husband. Initially, he was willing to do so but reneged when he was informed that he would also have to marry Ruth, the widow of Elimelech's son and maintain the name of the dead with any property he would acquire in the transaction (v 5 and 6). In other words, when it looked as though property would be acquired for himself, he was in. However, when it became clear that any acquisition of said property would go to Ruth's children and become part of her deceased husband's family, he was no longer willing to do it.

In what way did Boaz's obedience to God's Law find 'favor' with God and man (SEE v 7-12):

(NOTE: The entire nation of Israel was built by Rachel and Leah, who between them had 13 children, the 12 tribes of Israel, and Dinah. Perez was an ancestor of the people of Bethlehem See: 1 Chronicles 2:5 and Numbers 26:20)

Boaz married Ruth and "the Lord enabled her to conceive" a son (v 13). Naomi was praised and blessed by the women of Bethlehem, and the text reads that Naomi cared for her grandson named Obed (v 14-16).

Who was Obed's grandson? (SEE v 17): _____. The Book of Ruth ends (v 18- 21) with the genealogy of David (See: continued in Luke 3: 23-28 through to the Genealogy of Jesus Christ).

Reflections

Do you think this entire experience (from Moab to Bethlehem) developed and shaped Ruth and Naomi's relationship and ability to care? (why or why not?)

What about Boaz? When he saw Ruth gleaning in his field, do you think he had any idea where it would lead? How had the relationship with Ruth and, by default, Naomi developed and shaped his capacity to care? (explain)

(Indeed, Ruth, Boaz, and Naomi all were caregivers as well as receivers in the story, with God as the ultimate caregiver to all and through all)

Was this the 'God's punishment' story Naomi initially saw it as, or a restoration story... a story of redemption ... mirroring Christ as 'Kinsmen Redeemer' that was to come?

(HINT: See 2 Corinthians 4:17, Romans 5:3-4, and James 1:2-4)

Do you think it was an accident that Naomi was from Bethlehem and journeyed back there (similar to the story of Jesus' parents' journey back to Bethlehem for his birth)?

Boaz became Ruth's Kinsman Redeemer because of love (authentic care), NOT duty. He didn't have to do it. Boaz followed the rule of law (stepped aside as he was not the first 'kinsman redeemer'), and the fact that 'the law' failed Ruth was no coincidence either. God's law was never meant to save, but rather to make us aware of our need for salvation by a loving God through Jesus Christ (See Isaiah 54:4-8 and Galatians 5:22-23).

Reflect on what insights you've gained from Chapter 4 of the Book of Ruth. Do you believe 'Caring Competency is a Lifelong Process that Develops and Shapes How We Care as Caregivers'? Why or why not?

Reflect on insights you've gained from Chapter 4 of the Book of Ruth. Review Boykin and Schoenhofer (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory's five Assumptions (pg. 6). Are there any other Assumptions, aside from Assumption #4, that you see as applicable in this chapter? (If so, explain)

Reflect on your own personal or professional life. How might Assumption #4: 'Caring Competency is a Lifelong Process that Develops and Shapes How We Care as Caregivers (or any of the other five Assumptions you may have also found applicable) relate to your own life?

How have you employed any of the Six C's - Language of Caring' (SEE pg. 6) in either a personal or professional capacity regarding your caring competency? (Explain)

How might you develop and shape how you 'care' in the future?

If you've read Chapter 4 of the Book of Ruth before, is there an insight you gleaned from it here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?)

In closing our study of The Book of Ruth Chapters 1-4, it would benefit us to meditate a bit on the meanings of the names of our principal players, their respective roles in this story, and how it relates to us as caregivers:

Naomi ~ "Pleasantness" or Mara ~ "Bitterness"

Ruth ~ "Friend, Friendship, Compassionate Friend"

Boaz ~ "Strength, Power and Quickness"

Obed (Boaz and Ruth's son, David's grandfather, whose family line Jesus came from) ~ "to Serve" or "to Work"

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

The Good Samaritan

” ... this is the most important... love the lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength... love your neighbor as yourself” ~ Mark 12:29 31

Module 5: ‘Caring Encounters: Seeing the Whole Person’

Read: The Good Samaritan, Luke 10:25-37

The second Assumption in Boykin and Schoenhofer’s (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory is: ‘Wholeness or Fullness of Being is Forever Present (Seeing a Person as Less than Whole Fails to Truly Encounter the Person).’ In the case of the parable of ‘The Good Samaritan,’ Jesus tells the story to illustrate who our neighbors (care receivers) are, but in this instance, the core question was not who to give care to but rather “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” (v 25). Interestingly, Jesus’ ultimate response was to answer what began as a purely academic question in a matter of law with one of its ‘experts’ by applying said law. In so doing, Jesus took both of these questions from the realm of impersonal discussion or debate to one of personal, real-life relevance through a parable. In essence, he ‘tests’ the one who came to test him, the ‘expert’- challenging him to draw the appropriate conclusion at the end of this story to answer his own questions.

Jesus was challenged by an expert in the law whose expressed purpose in asking him this question was to ‘test’ our Lord. He wants to know, “What must I do to inherit eternal life? (v 25) Jesus answered his question with a question, or I should say, two questions, “What is written in the Law?” and “How do you read it?” (Luke 10:25 and 26). In other words, Jesus responded, ‘You are the ‘expert,’ what do you think God’s Law is telling you to do?’ The man responded with what he had been taught he should do, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength” (Deuteronomy 6: 5) and “... love your neighbor as yourself” (Leviticus 19:18). In response, what does Jesus say to the ‘expert,’ what does he tell him to do, and what does he tell him to expect as the result of so doing?

Luke 10: 28:

Why do you think the expert in the law, who received an answer to his initial questions, asked Jesus who his neighbor was?

(NOTE: to ‘justify’ means to declare of or make righteous in the sight of God or to demonstrate sufficient legal reason for an action taken)

Here, Jesus does something quite remarkable in answer to the man’s next question, “Who is my neighbor?” In the parable, Jesus addressed this question as well as the deeper question, “What must I do?” In other words, based on the ‘expert’ in the law’s own academic responses to Jesus’

questions (Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18), Jesus endeavors to illustrate to this man in a much more real, active, and personal way exactly how I love wholly and fully (God and my 'neighbor'). How do I wholly see and truly encounter both God and others?

Jesus begins this parable with a man in dire need of care. Why do you think Jesus did not describe this man's economic, social, racial, or cultural background (v 30)?

What happened to the man in need on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho in the story?

In contrast to NOT telling us anything about the man in need of care, who does Jesus tell us the three men who encounter him on the road are? (v 31-33)

(v 31): _____

(v 32): _____

(v 33): _____

Why do you think Jesus told the expert in the law and those gathered to hear him speak specifically and exactly who the men were who encountered the man in need on the road? How do you think each of these men's identities in the story resonates with those listening?

(HINT: A priest would have been highly regarded in the community, descendants of Aaron of the tribe of Levi who served in the Synagogue, officiating sacrifices being made to God, serving as the people's spiritual and moral guides, and teaching God's Law. Levites were the priests' assistants at the temple. Samaritans were considered half-breeds born outside the Jewish race, viewed as enemies of the Jews with whom they had no dealings. Jews would not even eat with a Samaritan (SEE John 4:9) and touching one would be seen as "polluting" oneself. The testimony of a Samaritan would not have been admitted in a Jewish Court of Law at the time.)

Indeed, being called a "Samaritan" was a derogatory term. A "racial slur" in its day. Who was called a Samaritan in John 4:48?

Why might the priest, when he saw the "almost dead" man at the side of the road, have decided to "pass by on the other side?" (v 31)? (HINT: See Leviticus 21:1)

What do the following scriptures say regarding God's views on mercy and sacrifice?

Hosea 6: 6: _____

Matthew 9: 10-12: _____

In the case of the Levite who would have had the same issues as the priest, there was the added consideration of his perhaps not being willing to stop if he saw that the priest did not do so. In both their choices, there was no LAW being broken, Godly or otherwise, as there were provisions in place should the “half dead” man die, and they were to become ‘ceremonially unclean’ (SEE: Numbers 19:11-13), they merely chose not to care. How might the first Assumption in Boykin and Schoenhofer’s (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory: ‘Persons are Caring by Virtue of their Humanness (Active Personal Engagement Comes as a Cost)’ (pg. 6) be applicable in this instance?

(HINT: Reflect on the Six C’s - ‘Language of Caring’ (pg. 6) regarding a priest or priest’s assistant, as well as your own personal and/or professional capacity here)

In addition to the above reasons proffered for both the priest and Levite to choose to leave a naked, severely wounded and dying man in the street instead of caring for him, there are of course, the ones akin to all of us, fear of being robbed as well, getting involved, getting into trouble (real or imagined) or just being inconvenienced (i.e., prioritizing where we are headed [work or home after a trying day, etc.], what we had planned to be doing, etc. over the man’s immediate need, which after all, may well have been his own fault in some way).

In the case of the Samaritan, what are we told prompted him NOT to pass by upon seeing the “half dead” man lying on the side of the road (v 33)?

What did the Samaritan do when he saw the man in need of immediate care (v 34)?

In putting the injured man on his donkey and walking, paying MORE than enough to the Inn Keeper for his stay and any further care (i.e., two Denari was worth 2 days wages of a laborer [See Matthew 20:2] and enough to feed 25 men [See: Mark 6: 37] AND offering the Inn Keeper even more if needed upon his return the Samaritan showed remarkable kindness, care and attention to a perfect stranger purely by virtue of his need at the time. Jesus illustrated who God viewed as our ‘neighbor’ as well as exactly what we should do to ‘attain eternal life’ in his description of how this despised Samaritan responded to someone in need of care. List them below from the following verses:

First, there is an impulse or feeling (v 33):

Second, there is an action or doing (v 34):

Third, doing occurs despite any immediate (short or long term) personal or financial inconvenience (v 34 -35):

Jesus ends this story by asking the ‘expert’ in the law, essentially, ‘who was the neighbor to the man in need of care?’ (v 36) and the expert’s reply was, “The one who had mercy on him” (v

37). What did Jesus tell him to do (v 37)?

(Jesus uses two action words in the final sentence of this parable. They are:

The man who 'tested' Jesus studied the law and was a human scholar, teacher-thinker. Jesus was the Messiah, the giver of the law, fulfiller of the law - the Doer.

What does God's Word say about the doers?

James 1: 22-25:

Romans 2: 13: _____

John 13: 17: _____

Luke 6: 46: _____

Matthew 7: 24-27: _____

Hebrews 4: 12: _____

What does the Bible say about the 'expert' in the law's take on wholly and fully loving God (Deuteronomy 6:5) and "... love your neighbor as yourself "(Leviticus 19:18):

1 John 4: 17-21: _____

1 Corinthians 16: 14: _____

Romans 13: 10: _____

Matthew 5: 43-48: _____

Reflections

What has the parable of "The Good Samaritan" told us about the capacity of its principal players (Priest, Levite, Samaritans) to care? (HINT: Reflect upon/apply the six C's- Language of Care (See pg. 6) that you feel might be appropriate for each)

Reflect on insights you've gained from the parable of "The Good Samaritan." Do you believe that the second Assumption in Boykin and Schoenhofer's (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory, 'Wholeness or Fullness of Being is Forever Present (despite one's racial, ethnic, economic, social, or any other 'standing') and/or 'Seeing a Person as Less than Whole Fails to Truly Encounter the Person?' (See pg. 6) Why or why not?

Reflect on your own personal or professional life. How might Wholeness or Fullness of Being is Forever Present (despite one's racial, ethnic, economic, social, or any other 'standing') and/or 'Seeing a Person as Less than Whole Fails to Truly Encounter the Person (or any of the other five Assumptions you may have also found applicable to this parable) relate to your own life?

How have you employed any of the Six C's - Language of Caring' (SEE pg. 6) in either a personal

or professional capacity regarding your care of 'neighbor?' (Explain)

How might you do better in the future?

If you've read the parable of "The Good Samaritan" before, is there an insight you gleaned from it here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?)

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

Elijah and the Widow at Zarephath

” So, Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you, as the Father has sent Me. I also send you.’
– John 20:21

Module 6: Transformative Caring: Mutual Benefits and Growth’

Read: 1 Kings 17:7- 16

The fifth Assumption in Boykin and Schoenhofer’s (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory is: ‘Caring Transforms the Nature of Our Human Relationships Through Duties and Opportunities (Important to Both Caregiver and Receiver for Mutual Benefits and Growth).’ In this Biblical account of the meeting of necessities for God’s Prophet Elijah and a poor widow, it is difficult to know who the caregiver is and who is the care receiver. The setting is a small Phoenician town named Zarephath, midway between Tyre and Sidon. It took place during a drought and subsequent famine which lasted 6 years and 3 months (SEE: Luke 4:26 and 1 Kings 17:10).

The town Zarephath’s name means ‘blast furnace, workshop for the refining and smelting of metals.’ Elijah was sent by God to this town whose name so aptly describes the prophet as well as the widow he will soon meet there. It was where they would both benefit materially as well as spiritually for having been through the ‘refining’ process of trust in God’s ‘furnace.’ Elijah, whom God had hid from a murderous king and had been caring for in a ravine with a brook to drink from and ravens to feed him (See 1 Kings 17:2-5) was directed to immediately go to the town of Zarephath when the drought had dried up the brook (v 7). God told Elijah that he had “directed a widow there to provide him food” (v 8-9). What was Elijah’s response to this directive (v 10)? (HINT: Did he seek clarification? Did he question or go and do?) What happens to Elijah when he enters this city (v 10-11)?

Because the town of Zarephath was undergoing the drought and famine, and that he was being sent to a ‘widow’ (i.e., a person of decidedly lower socioeconomic means than a gainfully employed male of any trade, profession, or rank in ancient times), did Elijah’s response to such a directive make sense?

Do you think God could have provided Elijah with water right where he was after the brook dried up? _____ (See Numbers 20_ 10-11). Why do you think God instead directed Elijah to come out of hiding (i.e., take the risk of being captured by a murderous king), go to a town experiencing drought and famine, and place himself into the hands of a socioeconomically deprived widow there?

Read/briefly summarize the following scriptures and reflect on whether God’s directives made sense or not to those receiving them and the various outcomes that occurred if they were

followed or not followed:

Leviticus 10: 1-7:

Numbers 20: 7-12:

Acts 8: 29- 39:

Acts 10: 9-21, 27-29, 34-36 and 44-48:

1 Kings 13: 7-26:

Luke 17: 11-17:

Mark 5: 35-42:

As we turn our attention back to the widow in this story, we see that she was in at least as much need as Elijah was, probably more. What was the widow's response to Elijah's request for food (v 12)?

We are told at the start of this story that God has directed this widow to care for Elijah by providing for him (v 9), which clearly she was willing to do, but does not have the means by which to do it. Do you think God's instructions to provide food for someone else when she had none for herself or her family made sense to her? _____. What do you think her, "As surely as the Lord your God lives..." (v 12) response to Elijah's request indicated? (HINT: This town was inhabited by worshippers of Baal, not God)

What does Elijah tell her to do (v 13-14)?

Elijah encouraged the widow not to fear but rather to trust God by following through with sharing the last of her own meager provisions so that God could provide her with an abundance of his. Do you think the time Elijah spent being unconventionally cared for by God (via ravens) in the ravine helped to strengthen his faith that God could do abundantly more than could be conceived for both the widow and him now?

Read/reflect on the following scriptures in relation to what God had directed Elijah and the widow to do. Jot down why you think God directs us to take what little we may have (whether it be our faith or material blessings) and give them to him for the care of others.

Matthew 14:15-20:

Mark 9:20- 29:

Luke 5: 4-11:

Hebrews 11:8-10:

Luke 1:28-35 and 37-38:

Matthew 1:20-25:

The widow did as she was told by Elijah (v 15), who stipulated to her that it was not he doing

the telling but rather the “Lord (his) God who lives (v 12)”, “the Lord, the God of Israel (v 13) who will keep her supplied with flour and oil till the drought ends (v 14). What happened after the widow did what God directed her to do (v 16)?

Reflections:

How did the widow of Zarephath’s opportunity to care for Elijah transform the nature of her relationship with the prophet?

(HINT: See 1 Kings 17: 17-25)

Did both the caregiver (widow) and receiver (Elijah) receive mutual benefits and growth as a result of their relationship?

Who was the ultimate provider of care to both the Prophet Elijah and this widow?

What makes this story different from Ruth’s or the Good Samaritan was the fact that both the one in need, Elijah, and the widow did not have the means beyond a single day’s meager meal to provide it. Reflect on your own personal or professional life. How might this kind of seemingly nonsensical directive impact how ‘Caring Transforms the Nature of Our Human Relationships Through Duties and Opportunities and how they are important to Both Caregiver and Receiver for Mutual Benefits and Growth?

Review the other Assumptions in Boykin and Schoenhofer’s (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory (See pg. 6). Are any of the other five Assumptions applicable to this story?

If so, how and how might they also relate to your own life?

How have you employed any of the Six C’s - ‘Language of Caring’ (See pg. 6) in either a personal or professional capacity when God directs you to take what little you may have (whether it be faith or material blessings) and give them to him for the care of others? (Explain)

How might you do better in the future?

If you’ve read about Elijah and the Widow at Zarephath before, is there an insight you gleaned from it here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?) Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

Rahab and the Spies

” Or do you disregard the riches of His kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness leads you to repentance?” – Romans 2:4

Module 7: ‘Caring Comes as a Cost’

Read: Rahab and the Spies, Joshua 2:1-24 and Joshua 6:22-23

The first Assumption in Boykin and Schoenhofer’s (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory is: ‘Persons are Caring by Virtue of their Humanness (Active Personal Engagement Comes as a Cost).’ This story of Rahab differs from Ruth’s, though for both women choosing to care definitely came at a cost. However, whereas Ruth was a moral woman of character and virtue, Rahab is identified as a prostitute. Ruth’s choice to care for family involved going to a foreign land and the great personal hardships that went along with that choice. Rahab’s choice to care for complete strangers who were enemy spies invading her own land involved facing intrigue, great personal danger, and even possible death from the invaders as well as her own people.

The story begins with Joshua sending spies into Jericho to look over the land (v 1). We are told that these two men stayed at the home of Rahab, a prostitute. Though why ‘men of God’ went there to stay was not stipulated (i.e., interpretation was left open that they may have been Seeking her services), though a more likely explanation for spies on a mission to “look over the land” and not the vices therein would be that a couple of strange men, travelers entering the city going there would arouse no suspicion. Another reason might have been Rahab’s home being situated along the city wall (v 15), which would have provided a good escape route for them as well.

The king of Jericho made aware of the spies sends his men to Rahab, telling her who the men are and demanding that she give them up (v 2-3). What does Rahab do (SEE: v 4-7):

Do you think Rahab may have already known who these men were based on v 4 and v 6? She tells the King’s men that the spies left just before the city gate was to close, at dusk, and that if they hurry, they may catch them (v 4-5). Rahab pointed them in the opposite direction that the spies would take, and she did so knowing that after the city gates closed, the pursuers of the spies would not be able to re-enter the city or revisit her home in search of them if they chose to do so. Thus, she cared for the spies by protecting them from being arrested and providing them with a good night’s sleep without worry of discovery, imprisonment or death.

Why did Rahab choose to risk her own life and limb to hide the Israelite spies (See v 8-11)?

Review the following scriptures and reflect on how they relate to Rahab’s motivation to risk helping the Israelites seeking safety and protection in her home:

2 Chronicles 20:29:
Psalm 36: 1:
Proverbs 9:10:
Proverbs 10:27:
Proverbs 19:23:
Proverbs 22:4:
Psalm 56: 3-4:
Psalm 118:6 and Hebrews 13:6:

Apparently, Rahab's faith in the living God (what He wills was seen as already done v 9) also prompted her actions to care for His people as well as her hope that in so doing God would care for hers too. Do you think this fact justified her 'lie' to the King's men? Why or why not?

(See: 1 Samuel 20: 1-3, 12-15 and 30-33 and NOTE: Rahab's time, before Christ's birth, life, death, resurrection and dispensation of God's Holy Spirit, had to have differed vastly from our own and also that God was the ultimate judge of what was good in the thoughts of her heart, motives/ behavior (praiseworthy) and what was bad (in need of pardon)

Rahab sought relationship with the Lord as well as his people leading to receiving care as well as giving care when she asked the spies to do what for her (v 12-13):

(NOTE: Rahab unselfishly sought care for her family from the spies and their God in whom she believed and was placing her trust, even her very life) What was the response of the spies to her request and why (v 14)? _____

Rahab entreated the spies to "show kindness" as she had shown kindness to them (v 12). She sought life for herself and her family. She was promised that she would be treated kindly as she saved their lives. Her life and the lives of her family would also be saved when God gave them the land (v 14).

Review the following scriptures. Write down in what way active personal engagement or a relationship that was costly led to care, and the role kindness played in the doing. How?

2 Samuel 9: 1-11:
Luke 15: 11-23:
Luke 23: 39-43:

Rahab let the spies down from her window (part of the city wall) with a rope, giving them instructions on how to elude their pursuers and make it home safely (v 15). The spies, in return, gave her instructions on how to save herself and her family from the city's impending destruction and warned her of the danger/threat of death she would be placing herself and her

family in if their instructions were not followed, or she gave them up to the King's men. Rahab agreed (v 17-21).

What significance, if any, do you see in the tying of a 'scarlet cord' on the window by a prostitute named Rahab to keep her and her family from complete annihilation by God's advancing Israelite army (v 18)?

(SEE: Exodus 34: 10-15, Leviticus 17: 6-7, Exodus 12: 5-7 and 12-13, John 1: 29, 1 Peter 1: 18-19, and Acts 16: 31)

The spies returned home safely and encouraged Joshua and the Israelite people with their report of the city's 'fear' of them as told by Rahab (v 22-24).

Joshua 'fought' the battle of Jericho by merely walking around the city seven times, blowing trumpets and shouting as directed by God, after which God brought the walls down (SEE Joshua 6:1-20). All the walls except the one house in the wall with the 'scarlet cord' hanging from its window, as promised. The entire city was burned to the ground, and everyone was killed. The only survivors were Rahab and her family (Joshua 6:21-23 and 25), and they lived in Israel from that time forward.

Rahab was mentioned in the Bible nine times. Five times in the book of Joshua, Rahab was mentioned only as "a prostitute." How was Rahab further described in the remaining four references to her in God's Word?

Psalms 87: 3-4: _____

Hebrews 11: 30-31: _____

James 2: 24-26: _____

Matthew 1: 5-6 and 16: _____

Rahab was astonishingly one of only three women mentioned in the 'hall of faith,' that is, the faith in action portion of the Bible (SEE: Hebrews 11). The Word of God also tells us she was "considered righteous in the sight of God" (See: James 2:25). She was also mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus along with Ruth. Amazingly, Rahab was Boaz's mother (See: Matthew 1:5-6).

Rahab's transformation from harlot and prostitute to faithful servant, redeemed of God, came about with a choice to break from the culture to which she was born, raised, and was a citizen. This choice required courage, putting her faith into action and providing care for the sworn enemies of her people. To do this, she wholly trusted the one true God, the Israelite's God. With this choice came intrigue, danger, and risk of death. Later came the rewards of such faith, namely, an obvious life change accompanied by a complete identity change. In place of this fact, read/meditate on the words of Jesus in Matthew 21:28-32 and jot down what you think this verse is really saying about what it means to be truly saved.

Reflections

Reflect on insights you've gained, particularly regarding the risks a prostitute was willing to take to provide care for strangers, invaders, enemies, putting her faith into action, and what the outcome was for her and her whole household. Do you believe that 'Active Personal Engagement Comes as a Cost'? Why or why not?

Review Boykin and Schoenhofer (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory's five Assumptions (pg. 6). Are there any other Assumptions, aside from Assumption #1, that you see as applicable in this chapter? (If so, explain)

Reflect on your own personal or professional life, particularly in relation to the amount of risk (intrigue, danger, injury, and/or death) Rahab was willing to take to wholly trust God and put this trust into action. How might Assumption #1: 'Persons are Caring by Virtue of their Humanness' and/or 'Active Personal Engagement Comes as a Cost' (or any of the other five Assumptions you may have also found applicable) relate to your own life?

When have you employed any of the Six C's - Language of Caring' (See pg. 6) in either a personal or professional capacity? Did you find yourself meeting, exceeding, or falling short of the mark where high-stakes personal risks were concerned? (Explain)

How might you do better in the future?

If you've read the story of Rahab and the Spies before, is there an insight you gleaned from it here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

Naaman Healed of Leprosy

“For who is the greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves.” ~ Luke 22:27

Module 8: ‘Expressing Self and Recognition of Others’

Read: 2 Kings 5:1-27

The third Assumption in Boykin and Schoenhofer’s (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory is: Without Caring Between Giver and Receiver. Caring in its Fullest Sense Does Not Occur (Expressing Self and Recognition of Other). In the story of Naaman’s healing, we See how reluctant some people are to do things God’s way, even when doing so would provide the healing they so desperately Seek. We also See the importance of the servant’s heart in caring for those difficult and unwilling recipients, particularly by caregivers who may be unappreciated or wholly unmotivated to do so due to their own humble circumstances.

Our story begins with a description of a patient with leprosy by the name of Naaman. Naaman was a Syrian military commander and a persistent enemy of Israel (SEE: 1 Kings 22:35-36). He was described as “valiant,” a “great” man, an “honorable” man who is highly thought of by the King of Aram. Unfortunately, he was also described as having “leprosy (v 1).” Aside from this disease being untreatable at the time and a death sentence, it was also viewed by society as making one “unclean.” It was a degrading, humiliating, and isolating terminal illness in ancient times (SEE Leviticus 13:45-46).

We are then introduced to an Israelite girl, a slave taken captive and brought to serve Naaman’s wife (v 2). What did this young girl, who was forcibly taken from her family, people, and home and made a slave in the house of her captors, choose to do for her mistress’s husband (V 2)? __

Why was this a remarkable thing for her to do, considering her situation?

What do you think motivated this girl to make such a choice when she most certainly did not have to do so?

(See: Matthew 5:3- 48, Proverbs 20:22, Psalm 37:8)

Review/reflect on the following scriptures. Mediate on how they relate to the captive maid in the story of Naaman’s healing, as well as how God’s ways are indeed mysterious, particularly in how he may choose to ensure that care between giver and receiver in its fullest sense can occur:

Genesis 37: 23-37

Genesis 50:19-21:

Acts 8: 1-4:

Romans 12: 17- 21:

Naaman's wife's maid (a captive Israelite) went to her mistress, and her mistress went to Naaman with the news she received. There was a prophet in Samaria who could heal his leprosy, and Naaman then went to his master, the King of Syria, requesting permission to go there. He was then given permission and a letter to take to the King of Israel. Naaman takes the letter along with treasures to pay for his healing with him to Samaria (v 4-6). What exactly did the letter the King gave to Naaman say (v 6)?

Considering the contents of the King's letter, their history, and the fact that the two Kings were enemies, what was the King of Israel's reaction to this letter (v 7)?

Was it within the power of the King of Israel to do what his enemy was commanding him to do?

The assumption being made by Naaman's master was that a relationship existed between the King of Israel and the Prophet Elisha, akin to his own and Naaman's. It did not. Neither does the King of Israel have a relationship with the God of Israel. His rule was not in accordance with God's laws. Nevertheless, when Elisha heard of the King's distress at the letter and a foreign leper's need, he told him to send Naaman to him that he may know "there is (still) a prophet (of God) in Israel" even if he was not welcome at the palace (v 8-9).

Instead of Elisha going to the palace, Naaman goes to Elisha (v 9). Instead of seeing Naaman himself, Elisha sends a messenger out to tell him that to receive the necessary care for healing, he must do what (v 10)?

What was Naaman's response to Elisha's simple instructions? Why? (v 11-12)?

Read/reflect on the following scriptures in relation to Naaman's response to Elisha's prophetic word (God's instructions) for healing and jot down what would have been a more appropriate attitude and why:

Proverbs 16:5:

Proverbs 22:4:

Proverbs 11:2:

2 Chronicles 7:14:

1 Peter 5: 6:

Proverbs 18: 12:

Philippians 2:3:
Proverbs 29 23:
Luke 14:11:
Matthew 23:12:
James 4: 6:

Naaman's servants boldly speak to their master (even though he was in a state of rage) humbly, using reason and common sense to persuade him to change his mind and do what was necessary to receive healing. How do they address their master that indicates their love, respect, and position as subordinates (v 13)?

How do they persuade him to do what the man of God says (v 13)?

Naaman overcomes his own anger as well as pride (See v 11) and arrogance (See v 12). He does dip himself seven times in the Jordan River as directed. What happened to Naaman because of his obedience (v 14)? _____

Why do you think God directed Naaman's healing the way he did (i.e., via a trip from a palace to a prophet's humble abode, giving direction through a prophet's servant and not the prophet himself, providing healing without the prophet doing anything by way of incantation, pomp or ceremony, indeed, not even being present or taking any form of payment for it (v 15-16)?

(NOTE: See above read/review scriptures. NOTE Elisha identified himself as God's 'servant' in v 16, and a healed Naaman identified himself as Elisha's 'servant' in v 17)

A remarkable thing happened to Naaman as a result of his healing. Like the one 'foreigner' leper of ten whom Jesus healed who came back to thank him (See: Luke 17: 12-19) Naaman goes to Elisha's home once more, this time in an attitude of humility and profound gratitude (v 17-19). What does he declare in v 15 concerning Elisha's God?

Deities in the ancient world were thought to inhabit specific locations. So, what does Naaman ask Elisha to allow him to do since he won't take any payment (v 17)?

What does Naaman's desire to do here and his statement in v 18 tell us regarding Naaman's faith?

(NOTE: His duty would require him to 'worship' idols in Syria, but though he would be outwardly doing so, inwardly he would be worshiping the one true God of Israel)

Instead of addressing Naaman's plea for forgiveness for continuing to frequent an Idol temple back in his home country of Syria, what does Elisha tell him to do (v 19)? Why do you think he

said this?

(NOTE: See James 4:12 and Romans 14:4).

What does Elisha's servant Gehazi do and why (v 22-24)?

Gehazi calls Naaman "this Aramean ", a reference to his being a foreigner. How do you think this prompted his action to ask for so many gifts that it took two other servants to carry them all home (v 23) and what do you think of this as well as his decision to lie to Elisha (v 22) and hide what he accepted from him (v 24) tells us about Gehazi's true character and motivations?

Upon his return, Gehazi lied to his master Elisha (v 25) but was also lying to God, Who knew where he had gone, why, and says so through his prophet (v 26). What made Gehazi's greed doubly abhorrent was the fact that he had not only done nothing to receive these gifts as Elisha's 'servant' but in doing what Elisha refused to do as God's 'servant', Gehazi shifted the glory away from the master (God) for the man's healing and ultimate conversion and reduced it to a business transaction for services rendered between 'servants' (men) [SEE Elisha's words: "Is this the time to take money or accept clothes (items Ghazi sought)– or olive groves and vineyards (even more than Ghazi sought) or flocks and herds (much more than Ghazi sought) or male and female slaves (the greatest measure of the level of wealth that Naaman had)" v 26].

Therefore, what did God give to Gehazi that was also Naaman's (and permitted to keep along with the wealth he had received from "that foreigner") as a further 'reward' for what he had chosen to do (v 27)?

So, the 'foreigner' (Naaman) received the spiritual gifts of healing and salvation (inheritance of eternal life) and the Israelite servant (Gehazi) earned the earthly wage of wealth and inherited a horrific disease "that would cling to him and his descendants forever" (v 27).

Reflections

Reflect on what insights you've gained from the story of Naaman's Healing of Leprosy. Reflect on the slave girl and servants of Naaman's in this story in comparison with Elisha's servant Gehazi in reference to 'expressing self' and 'recognition of other', Do you believe that 'Without Caring Between Giver and Receiver, Caring in its Fullest Sense Does Not. Why or why not?

Reflect on insights you've gained from the story of Naaman's Healing of Leprosy. Review Boykin and Schoenhofer (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory's five Assumptions (pg. 6). Are there any other Assumptions, aside from Assumption #3, that you See as applicable in this chapter? (If so,

explain)

Reflect on your own personal or professional life. How might Assumption #3: ‘Without Caring Between Giver and Receiver, Caring in its Fullest Sense Does Not Occur’ and/or “Expressing Self and Recognition of Other is Key for authentic Caring Between Giver and Receiver” (or any of the other five Assumptions you may have also found applicable) relate to your own life?

When did you employ any of the Six C’s - ‘Language of Caring’ (pg. 6) to care between as either giver or receiver in circumstances where you were not particularly motivated to do so in either a personal or professional capacity as a servant? (Explain)

How does personal attitude (arrogance, pride, anger, and/or humility) aid in giving and/or receiving ‘care in its fullest sense’?

If you’ve read the story of Naaman’s Healing of Leprosy before, is there an insight you gleaned from it here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?)

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

Paralyzed Man Lowered Through the Rooftop for Healing

“May the God who gave you endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had... ” ~ Romans 15:5

Module 9: ‘Caring Comes as a Cost’

Read: Mark 2:2-11

The first Assumption in Boykin and Schoenhofer’s (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory is: ‘Persons are Caring by Virtue of their Humanness (Active Personal Engagement Comes as a Cost).’ The story of the paralytic appears in three of the four gospels (See Mark 2:1-11, Matthew 9:1-7, and Luke 4:17-26), two of which include a rooftop entry. All include Jesus’ acknowledgement of the remarkable faith of four caring men and a crippled friend they brought to him via stretcher through a vast crushing crowd for help.

The story begins with Jesus returning to a town where he had previously performed miraculous healings. The word got out that he was back, and such a large crowd gathered that it spilled out into the street (v 1-2). Crowds came to see Jesus, some out of curiosity, some wanting to be entertained by the celebrity of their day, and some genuinely wanting to hear what he had to say. Jesus was there to “preach the word” to them (v 2). Though Jesus’ ministry was a spiritual one, to save sinners, the ‘Son of Man’ often confirmed his deity among men through supernatural manifestations, miraculous physical healings being among them (See John 2:1-11, Matthew 14:13-21, Luke 7:11-17). As Jesus was preaching the word of God to the crowd, what happened next (See v 3-4)?

Pause and reflect for a moment on the amount of time and energy it took the stretcher bearers to carry their friend through the hot, arid climate over the dry, dusty road(s) to where Jesus was, only to find upon arrival there was no viable way to enter it because of the crushing crowds. Do you think that these men anticipated how far they would have to go when they started their journey to Jesus?

Do you think what they did was reasonable in the circumstances?

What do you think motivated the crippled man’s friends to do what they did to ensure Jesus saw him?

So, the crowd within the house listening to Jesus was upset by the dirt, mud, and tile of the roof falling on their heads, and looked up to see a crippled man on a mat being lowered down into the room directly in front of Jesus. Jesus finds this man’s friends’ faith remarkable (v 5) because of what they have undertaken to ensure he received the care only Jesus could give him. This account was unique in the Bible because of the faith of a group of like-minded individuals working together to meet the needs of their crippled friend.

Review/reflect on the following scriptures and jot down how individual faith should be activated within a 'faith community' to provide care

Acts 12:5-17:

Acts 4:32-35:

Acts 2:44:

1 Corinthians 1:10:

1 Corinthians 12:25-27:

Galatians 6:2:

Matthew 18:19 20:

Romans 12:5:

Romans 1:11-12:

In this situation, it took the active personal engagement of no less than 4 people, and the cost of all 4 literally carrying another human being through dusty streets, crushing crowds, and the manual physical labor of digging through a rooftop and lowering him in tandem safely down in front of Jesus. This may have obscured the view of all the 'teachers of the law' who had seats of honor in the front row. Could this crippled man have gotten to Jesus without the 4 stretcher bearers?

(NOTE: He might well have made it to Jesus with 3, 2, or even 1 helper, but think of the burden incurred with fewer active participants. It would have taken much longer, perhaps too long, to arrive in time to see Jesus or been insufficient to get through the crowd and roof once there, making entry impossible.)

What does Jesus say to the paralyzed man, and why do you think He says this (v 5)?

(NOTE: Jesus addresses this man of faith as 'son' or 'child' depending on the translation being used, like the relationship he has with his father God. A term of compassion and care. The fact that he addresses the man's sin (spiritual need first underscores his true mission on earth.)

What do the 'teachers of the law' think about what Jesus said to the paralytic (v 6-7)?

(Jesus knew what these men were thinking in their hearts. He knew "in his spirit" (v 8). It was not surprising, as the only reason they were there at all was to see if Jesus did or said anything by which they could trap, arrest, and kill him.)

What does Jesus say in response to the 'teacher of the law's' thoughts (v 9)?

What do you think Jesus meant by this (v 9)?

(NOTE: Jesus does the one thing they can see [healing] to prove that he also has the authority

to do the other, which they cannot see [forgive sins]. For God, both are equally easy. For man, both are equally impossible.)

Jesus proves his deity by miraculously healing the paralytic (v 10-11). It is of note that the paralyzed man does exactly what Jesus tells him to do without equivocating or questioning, and the crowd was duly astonished, giving God the glory (v 12).

Reflections

The paralytic man's 4 friends chose to carry him to where Jesus was and made sure he got in to see Jesus at great personal cost. What does this say about their personal as well as corporate faith (HINT: Reflect upon/apply the six C's- Language of Care that you feel might be appropriate in this case)

Reflect on insights you've gained from the Biblical account of the Paralyzed Man Lowered Through Rooftop for Healing. Do you believe that 'Persons are caring by virtue of their humanness?' Why or why not?

Is faith meant to be a purely private, individual spiritual journey, or is the faith community also a virtue necessary for meeting the needs of others? Why or why not?

Reflect on what insights you've gained from the Biblical account of the Paralyzed Man Lowered Through Rooftop for Healing. Do you believe that 'Active Personal Engagement Comes as a Cost'? Why or why not?

Reflect on what insights you've gained from the Biblical account of the Paralyzed Man Lowered Through Rooftop for Healing. Review Boykin and Schoenhofer (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory's five Assumptions (pg. 6). Are there any other Assumptions, aside from Assumption #1, that you see as applicable in this chapter? (If so, explain)

(NOTE: Reflect on the faith benefits of the healed paralytic's 4 stretcher bearers. The shaping, development, and mutual benefits of having done what they did)

Reflect on your own personal or professional life. How might Assumption #1: 'Persons are Caring by Virtue of their Humanness' and/or 'Active Personal Engagement Comes as a Cost' (or any of the other five Assumptions you may have also found applicable) relate to your own life?

When have you employed any of the Six C's - 'Language of Caring' (See pg. 6) in either a personal or professional capacity, only to find yourself meeting, exceeding, or falling short of the mark? (Explain)

How might you do better in the future?

If you've read the Biblical account of the Paralyzed Man Lowered Through Rooftop for Healing before, is there an insight you gleaned from it here that you may not have seen? (If so, what?)

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

Dorcus Raised from the Dead

“So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.” ~ Galatians 6:10

Module 10: ‘Caring: A Lifelong Process’

Read: Acts 9:36-42

The fourth Assumption in Boykin and Schoenhofer’s (2001) *Nursing as Caring Theory* is: ‘Caring Competency is a Lifelong Process that Develops and Shapes How We Care as Caregivers.’ It seems appropriate to conclude this study with an account of Dorcas, also known as Tabitha, a lifelong caregiver and follower of Christ. By virtue of her relentless kindness, generosity, and service and despite her humble socioeconomic means, this one lowly woman ended up becoming “known all over Joppa” (a strategic Mediterranean port city in the ancient world) and was responsible for “many people believing in the Lord” (Acts 9:32).

A disciple recorded for us this account in the Book of Acts, which begins with a brief description of Dorcas, implying that not only was she known among the Jews (as Tabitha) but was also known among the Greeks (as Dorcas) for “always doing good and helping the poor” (v 36). What impression do you get about whom Dorcas saw as her ‘neighbor’ from this brief description when compared with Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan?

Review/reflect on what God has to say regarding what constitutes “doing good” and compare/contrast with your own:

Ephesians 6:5-9:

Psalms 34: 12-14:

Psalms 37: 1-4:

Matthew 5 38-48:

Romans 7 21-25:

1 Timothy 6 17-19:

Hebrews 13: 16-16:

James 4: 17:

1 Peter 3: 11-13:

We are told that Dorcas became ill, died, and her body was prepared for burial (v 37). What did the disciples do (v 38)?

(We are not told if Dorcas was a widow herself or an unmarried woman, but one can certainly assume one of the two, as there was no reference to a husband or family being present even after she was dead, and her body prepared for burial by the church folk (believers), and widows

are specifically mentioned here. It was approximately 8 miles from Lydda to Joppa. Peter had previously healed Aeneas of palsy there, and as a result, Lydda experienced revival. It was likely these believers had heard of it because Dorcas' need could be said to be much worse than being ill at this point. They obviously expected Peter would not only come but would be able to raise their sister from the dead.)

How was this situation similar to Jesus' raising of Lazarus from the dead (SEE John 11:14 and 17)?

(See full account of Jesus' raising of Lazarus from the dead at John 11:1-44)

Peter arrived and was taken to where Dorcas was lying. There were many widows there grieving her passing, and they shared with Peter evidence of her generosity in caring for them. She was apparently a seamstress; she made clothes and robes which she gave to those in need (v 39). Dorcas was not an apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, elder, deacon, teacher, music minister, worship leader, or any other prominent church member as outlined in the Bible (SEE 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Timothy 3:8-13, Acts 20:28, Colossians 3:16, Ephesians 4:11-12). What did Dorcas have that set her lifelong ministry of caregiving apart as a Christian seamstress in Joppa? (See Galatians 5: 13-14; 22-23, Romans 12: 1-3 and 6-8, Colossians 3: 23-24)

Peter cleared the room as Jesus had always done. Then what does Peter do (v 40)? After doing this, Peter simply tells Dorcas to "get up," which she does.

Review/reflect on the following scriptures. Jot down what the care receiver does before they receive the healing:

Luke 8:43-44:

John 5:8-9:

John 9:1-6:

Matthew 9:27-30:

What does Peter do next (v 41)?

Why do you think Peter "especially called back the widows" along with "the believers" (the rest of the church)?

(NOTE how Dorcas' example might develop and shape others in her sphere of influence for Christ)

When Dorcas' raising from the dead by Peter was made public, what happened (v 42)?

So, Dorcas' seemingly insignificant local sewing ministry grew exponentially, taking on evangelical proportions as we know of her, her life, and her ministry through the Word of God in the Book of Acts.

Read/reflect on the following scripture: Philippians 2:1-11 and apply its principles to Dorcas' story regarding exactly how caregiving competency through personal development and shaping can occur over a lifetime.

Reflections

Reflect on what insights you've gained from Dorcas being raised from the dead. Do you believe 'Caring Competency is a Lifelong Process that Develops and Shapes How We Care as Caregivers'? Why or why not?

Reflect on what insights you've gained from Dorcas being raised from the dead. Review Boykin and Schoenhofer (2001) Nursing as Caring Theory's five Assumptions (pg. 6). Are there any other Assumptions, aside from Assumption #4, that you see as applicable in this chapter? (If so, explain)

Reflect on your own personal or professional life. How might Assumption #4: 'Caring Competency is a Lifelong Process that Develops and Shapes How We Care as Caregivers' (or any of the other five Assumptions you may have also found applicable) relate to your own life?

How have you employed any of the Six C's - Language of Caring' (See pg. 6) in either a personal or professional capacity regarding your caring competency? (Explain)

How might you develop and shape how you 'care' in the future?

If you've read of Dorcas being raised from the dead before, is there an insight you gleaned from it here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?)

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

In closing, the following excerpt is from Oswald Chambers' *My Utmost for His Highest* and reflects the sentiments found in this study

"A mistake we make is believing that, because God is capable of miracles, we don't need to put forth any effort of our own. When God says, 'Rise from the dead,' we have to get up; God will not lift us up. In Matthew 12, Jesus heals a man with a shriveled hand—but first, Jesus asks the man to reach out to him. 'He said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' So he stretched it out and it was completely restored" (v 13). As the man acted in faith, Jesus acted to help the man. The same principle holds true in our lives: Although God, in his infinite power, could give us a life of instant, effortless gratification, this is not his will for us. Instead, he asks us to extend ourselves to him as he extends himself to us." <https://utmost.org/modern-classic/inspired-initiative/>