

**Mount Vernon Nazarene University
School of Nursing and Health Sciences
Nursing Department**

Concepts/Sub-concepts

God: The faculty affirms the belief in a sovereign God from whom all things in heaven and earth were created (1Corinthians 8:5). The triune God is manifest as Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Galatians 4:4-6; John 14: 25-27). We believe in Jesus Christ the Son of the Living God, who being born of the Virgin Mary, died for our sins and was resurrected on the third day. Through this resurrection we receive salvation from sin and everlasting life through the blood of Christ Jesus (John 6:43; John 14:6). As members of the body of Christ, the gift of the Holy Spirit has been imparted to us, to guide us in obedience to His will (Acts 2:4; John 14:25).

Godly Living: We affirm Godly living as a basis for delivery of nursing care from a biblical perspective. We approach the practice of Christian nursing not only as a science and an art, but as a response to God's grace toward us, from which we receive power through the Holy Spirit to holistically care for others. The faculty assists students in growing in Christ by role modeling Godly living and Christian values in their nursing practice.

Truth: Nursing knowledge is acquired through empirical testing, personal, ethical and aesthetic knowledge (Carper, 1978). All truth, both objective science and subjective experiential truth, ultimately comes from God.

Evidence-Based Nursing: Nurses deliver care to others based on evidence acquired through empirical testing, personal, ethical and aesthetic knowledge. Professional nurses are responsible for purposefully analyzing data to make sound judgments regarding client care. Interpreting and analyzing data is essential in the process of decision-making. The nursing process is used to assess clients, plan appropriate interventions based on evidence, implement interventions according to accepted standards of nursing care and evaluate the outcomes of such action. Evidence based nursing is always cognizant and respectful of human dignity and cultural values of both clients and nurse. Professional nurses participate in the development of new knowledge through research and theory development.

Persons: We believe each person is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) for the purpose of having a relationship with God (Deuteronomy 6:4-6), through the person of Jesus Christ (Matthew 22:37-39). As persons created of God's love, we affirm each person should be honored and served with dignity regardless of social, mental or physical status. Persons are physiological,

psychological, sociocultural, and spiritual beings. These variables are present within a variety of developmental stages and have a wide range of potentials. The spiritual component of the person is always in the process of development. This spiritual aspect permeates all other variables thereby supporting optimal health, even if the person does not acknowledge it. The spirit controls the mind and the mind consciously or unconsciously controls the body (Neuman, 1995). Spiritual aspects of the person include the need to develop trusting relationships with God and others, recognition of the need for forgiveness and to forgive, and the need for meaning, hope and purpose in life.

Environment: The environment includes all that is created, both physical and spiritual. The environment was created by God, but remains separate from God. Included in this definition is the setting in which nursing occurs. God entrusted human beings as stewards of the environment; therefore nurses advocate for environmental health and protection. The environment has significant impact on the health status of the individual and communities.

Health: From a Christian worldview perspective, health is understood holistically as the ability of the person to function in harmony with God, self, others and the environment. Inherent in this process is the ability to forgive and receive forgiveness, to love others and accept love, and experience a sense of meaning and purpose in life. Multiple dimensions are included in the concept of health including the physical, psychological, sociological, spiritual and cultural aspects.

Nursing: The ministry of nursing is multifaceted. Nursing practice is aimed at assisting persons and communities with their response to actual or potential changes in health status. Nursing has a unique body of knowledge acquired through empirical testing, personal, ethical and aesthetic knowing. Christian nursing is holistic and includes caring for the physical, psychological, sociological, spiritual and cultural dimensions of the person. Nurses advocate for health of persons and communities. The role of client advocate can be carried out through providing direct care for clients, coordinating care among members of the interdisciplinary health care team, advocating for equality in resource allocation, and by political activism aimed at improving health care delivery and access. The nurses' roles in education cannot be overemphasized. Nurses have a responsibility to participate in the education and/or mentoring of future nurses. In addition, nurses educate clients and the public with regard to issues impacting the health of persons and the community. The act of Christian nursing is not merely a response to human need and suffering, but is a direct response to God's grace toward us. We have the ability to care for others through the power and wisdom given to us through the Holy Spirit.

Comfort Care: The nurse provides comfort to clients and strives to reduce human suffering. Caring is an act of faith based on a response to God's grace. Nurses provide compassionate care for the whole person with the aim of facilitating optimal health and providing comfort to all who suffer.

Assessment of client needs from a holistic framework, including cultural values is essential in the delivery of comfort care. The act of caring is client centered even to the extent of requiring sacrifice by the nurse. Comfort care requires the nurse to be fully “present” with the client, and includes providing for physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual well-being. The Christian nurse provides comfort, hope and compassionate presence even to those for whom recovery will not be possible. A Christian nurse can provide care as an expression of Godly living.

Communication: Communication is essential to effective nursing practice. The nurse must achieve excellence in written, verbal and nonverbal communication to address adequately the needs of clients. Communication among members of the interdisciplinary health care team, those who have the responsibility for public policy making, and clients who need health care information is central to nursing practice. Nurses must have skills in acquiring and discriminating among vast amounts of health care information with the aim of making decisions from the best sources of information available. Written and verbal communication skills are essential to disseminating health care information to others.

Spiritual Care: As Christian nurses we affirm spiritual care as primary to the health of individuals and society. Spiritual care is centered not only on the client, but also on the nurse. Even so, we are conscious of, and respectful of spiritual beliefs that differ from our own. We believe that spiritual distress permeates all dimensions of a person’s health and society; therefore we assist others in the development of a relationship to God according to their openness to receive spiritual care. We share our commitment to Christ by living out a life of service to others.