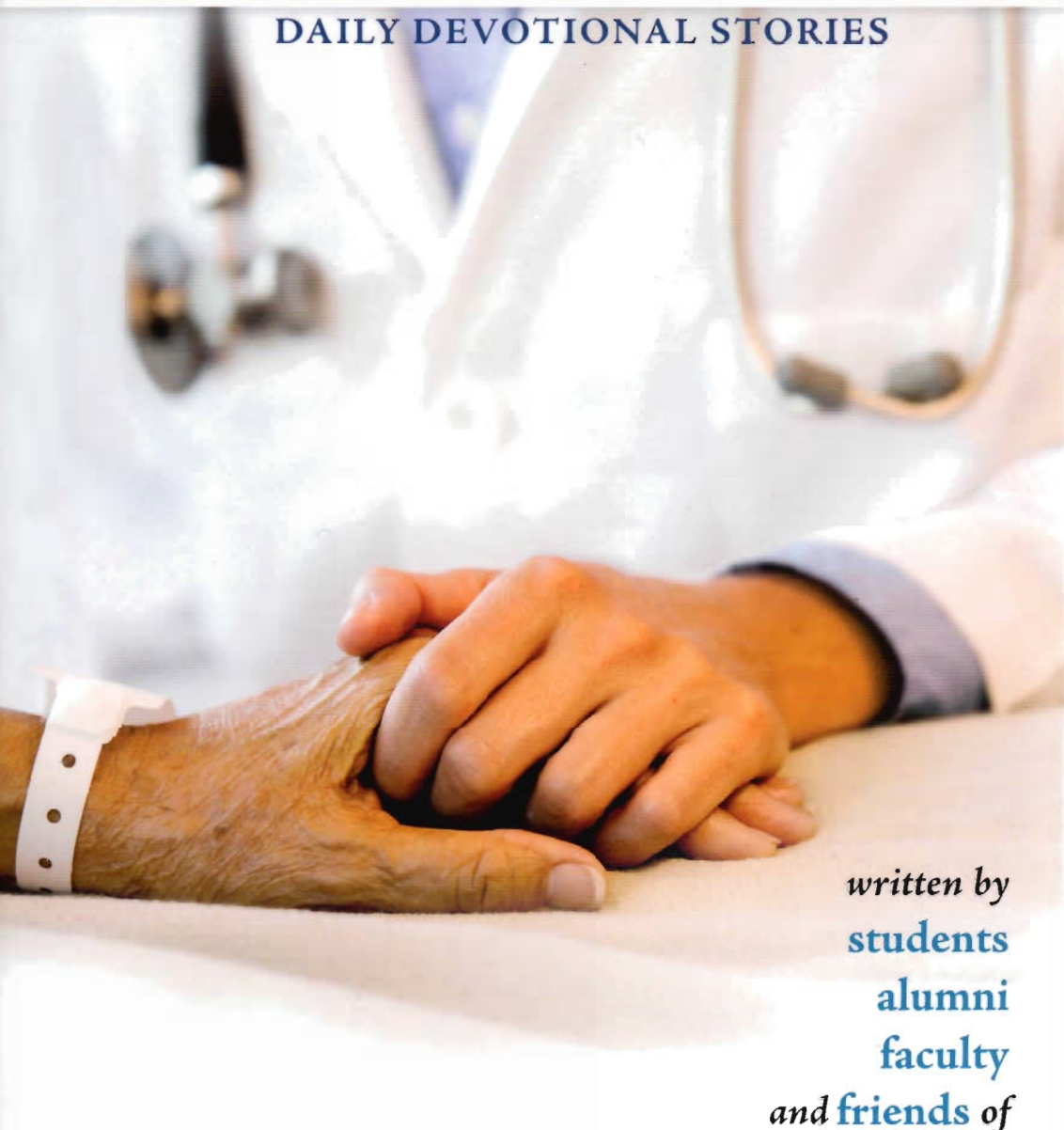


EVENING ROUNDS

DAILY DEVOTIONAL STORIES



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And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Luke 22:61, ESV

“Doctor, I have a patient for you to see,” said the Togolese health-care provider, who went on to describe a patient with unresectable cervical cancer, an all-too-common condition in this rural African mission hospital. At the time, I was covering for the missionary surgeon, who was in the United States on furlough. I was exhausted, emotionally spent, and reluctant to brave the noonday heat of 110 degrees. I patiently asked him to repeat his findings and his thoughts. He knew it was unresectable. I then asked why I needed to see the patient, since we both knew there was nothing I could do. He merely repeated, “You need to see this patient.”

Grumbling, I pulled on my white coat as I walked through the heat and humidity. As I entered the examination room, I put on my professional, caring persona. I examined her. Indeed, there was nothing I could do in this African country for this unfortunate woman. I broke the news as gently and carefully as I could. She and her daughter collapsed into each other’s arms, sobbing as the bad news impacted them.

Turning to write my note, I was startled when a clear voice within my head asked, “Is that all you have to offer them?” Silently, I enumerated my findings, and enlightened God as to the lack of chemotherapy or radiation therapy in this poor country. I made a solid argument. Clearly, I thought I should have convinced even Him.

But I heard the voice asking again, “Is that all you have to offer them?” Chagrined, ashamed, and somewhat angry at this unreasonable demand, I turned and began to talk to the patient once again. I explained that what I had told them was totally true, but that I had some hope for them nonetheless. Through the interpreter, I began to tell them of the true Hope of the world. My interpreter was born an evangelist and with the door now open, she bolted through it and the conversation ran without me!

As I turned back to write my notes, the tears in my eyes blurred the paper and I prayed fervently—both for the woman’s salvation and for my own. I certainly needed to be rescued from my own blindness, self-centeredness, and narrow focus. I felt like Peter must have felt after his denial of Christ when Jesus raised his eyes and looked at him. God had weighed me and found me wanting. Forgiving and loving God that He is, He gave me a second chance to be used in His service.

During the past 15 years in the mission field, I have had many situations where I may not have been able to offer temporal physical healing, but I could always offer eternal healing. I only regret that I did not learn that when I was still a practicing physician in the U.S.

I challenge you to look for ways to share the “God News” that Christ is still the Great Physician—as Christ’s messengers, we can and must *always* offer hope.