

# THE CRUCIATES

*An Image of Stability for Life*

JEFFREY A. RUSSELL, PhD, ATC

with

Kandis J. Maust, MS, ATC



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Sharper Than a #11 Scalpel

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ISBN 978-1-936746-50-7

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## **DEDICATION**

This e-book is dedicated to Professor Karl Glass and his Athletic Training students at Trinity International University. Professor Glass had the vision to incorporate these devotionals into his Athletic Training administration course in order to equip his students with more than just the world's knowledge.

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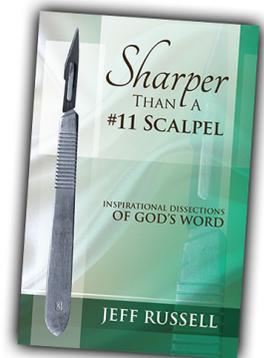
## INTRODUCTION & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This e-book is a series of Christian devotionals centered on topics about sports medicine and several of its related sub-disciplines. All of these inspirational writings are based on healthcare-related metaphors from the Bible. It is a “sampler,” if you will, of the more than 350 healthcare themed devotionals I have written since 2007, sending them weekly to a mailing list that extends literally around the world. It is a great privilege to be able to offer these words of encouragement to my colleagues week in and week out.

You will quickly note how this e-book got its title when you read the first devotional. Indeed, Jesus’ gift to humanity, paid on the cross of eternal sacrifice, is the only source of true and lasting stability in this crazy world where we live.

The first five devotionals contained herein come from my book *Sharper Than a #11 Scalpel: Inspirational Dissections of God’s Word*.

I recommend the 150 devotionals contained in nearly 600 pages of this book if you find you are encouraged and disciplined by what you read in this e-book. It is an excellent resource for personal or small group study. You can order a copy by clicking [here](#), or on the image of the book, or by going to <http://bit.ly/11scalpel>. I



appreciate very much the willingness of Crosslink Publishing to allow me to reproduce the portions of the book here.

I am so excited to be collaborating on this project with a wonderful friend of mine, athletic trainer and performing arts medicine colleague Kandis Maust. She readily accepted my invitation to participate. What a joy to work with her to prepare this resource for our fellow co-laborers who serve in sports medicine, performing arts medicine, athletic training, physical therapy, orthopaedics, strength and conditioning, and other fields. Kandis' bubbly personality and strong faith are well-suited to a project designed to encourage people, and I am deeply thankful for her ministry to my wife and me during the time we've known her.

Now, without further ado dive into God's Word, and let the cross on which He sacrificed His Son stabilize your life. As you study, let us know how *The Cruciates* ministers to you by clicking here to e-mail us.

Jeff Russell

Athens, Ohio, USA

November 2014

# 1. ANATOMY

**For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps...and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls. (1 Peter 2:21, 24–25 NASB)**

**I**n the middle of the knee joint lie a pair of connective bands, the anterior and posterior cruciate ligaments. These are the most important stabilizers of the knee; they are exceedingly significant, particularly in people who are physically active, because they tether the femur and tibia, thus controlling these bones' movements in relationship to one another. Their grip on the bones prevents undue motion in several planes, including rotation. Alas, it is knee rotation that so often interrupts the careers of many athletes. When the foot is planted on the ground and an athlete turns, one of the cruciates—usually the anterior—may tear. With knee stability thereby reduced, continuing to play is difficult to impossible.

The cruciates are so named because they overlap each other and form a cross pattern in the knee. Derived from the Latin word *crux*, you will recognize that the English word cross, Spanish *cruz*,

French *croix*, and German *kreuz* all are related. Now read again 1 Peter 2:24. Jesus bore our sins on the cross. Without us acknowledging the cross of Calvary by receiving God’s gift of grace (the spiritual healing He offers by Jesus’ death on our behalf) there can be no true stability in our lives...just like without the cross of the cruciates there can be no stability in the knee.

### **Dissect God’s Word and Let It Dissect You**

1. Read the verses above carefully. What are three results we gain because Jesus suffered for us and bore our sins on the cross?
2. It seems counterintuitive that we are healed by Jesus’ wounds, but that is actually the beauty of God’s gift to us. Describe the connections between verses 21 (“leaving you an example...”) and 24 (“For you were continually...”) as they pertain to our steps before and after we began to follow Jesus.
3. Reflect on and jot down a few ways that your life became stabilized once you received the gift of the cross God gave You.

**The Prayer of Your Heart:** Jesus, thank You for Your willingness to take my punishment as You bore my sins on the cross. Do not let this gift depart from my mind because it has had such a stabilizing influence on me. I want to know even greater stability as I get to know You better and better.

## 2. ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY

**Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ’s body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. (Romans 12:4–5 NLT)**

**S**o far as we know, the apostle Paul was not an anatomist nor a physiologist. But, he may as well have been based on this pair of verses in his letter to the Romans. The metaphor of the structure and function of the human body representing the structure and function of the body of Christ—that being the worldwide population of Christians—is quite insightful.

Just prior to verses 4 and 5 of chapter 12, Paul instructs believers in proper conduct and attitude. Then, before he draws the parallel between the human body and the body of Christ he cautions us not to think we are better than others. Why not? Because we need each other! More importantly, a lost world needs us working together so the message of Jesus Christ is proclaimed.

Be sure you notice the last phrase of this key passage: “we all belong to each other.” Because of the dynamic nature of our membership in Christ’s Church, we have a special relationship to every other believer. This not only gives the body strength, health, resistance to infection, and the like, it means we have a vested interest in looking out for one another. Are you doing your part by being your part?

## **Dissect God's Word and Let It Dissect You**

1. The phrase “parts of one” in Romans 12:5 is very important. In New Testament Greek the word is *polús*; this is where we get our English prefix “poly-,” as in “many.” The Greek word for one implies an inward direction; thus, the many parts all feed into one functional entity. Jot down some ways that this picture has been corrupted by present day Christianity.
2. Now, in an effort to ensure that you are part of the solution rather than part of the problem, what are some specific ways that you will counteract this tendency? As you answer, think of your gifts, abilities, contacts, and the areas of influence in your life.

**The Prayer of Your Heart:** Lord God, the world desperately needs Your people to work together for the benefit of Your Kingdom. I want to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem. Give me the grace I need to join others in accomplishing Your ministry.

### 3. SPORTS MEDICINE

**I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice. He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.” (Luke 6:47–49 NIV)**

**A** good foundation is the key to health and success in many parts of life. But, a foundation you might not have considered is under the nail on your great toe. As small a part of your body as it is, don't minimize its importance as an illustration from which you and I can learn much.

A subungual hematoma, or “black nail,” is a common occurrence in sports and dance. Most often it occurs when an athlete's foot is stepped on or because of the forces on the nail when a ballet dancer stands *en pointe*. The nail turns dark because of the hematoma that forms in the nail bed. Treated by early appropriate draining, the nail has a good chance of being retained. Apart from such treatment, however, the blood congeals and decays. The pressure of the extravasated blood also stimulates the plentiful pain receptors in the

bed, causing a nagging reminder of the condition. These changes compromise the blood-rich tissue that holds the nail and, left without a firm foundation, the nail begins to detach. Over time it may fall off completely.

How, then, is the foundation of your life? Is it blood-rich with the blood of Jesus, adhering to and supporting you as you go? Luke 6 says this marks the one who hears Jesus' words and puts them into practice. Or, is your foundation full of decaying cells that are slowly orchestrating the demise of your spiritual life?

### **Dissect God's Word and Let It Dissect You**

1. When forces come against your life—much as they do to create a subungual hematoma—it is important to perform the right treatment, such as drainage of the pressure, protection from a worsening injury, etc. Otherwise, more severe damage—akin to losing the nail on your great toe—occurs. In the left column of the table below, offer some detrimental forces, signs, and/or symptoms that you have experienced recently. In the right column, write what care alleviated each condition and how God was involved in that. It is a good exercise to recount the ways that our troubles are handled so we have an appreciation for how God ministers to us.

<b>Forces/Signs/Symptoms</b>	<b>Alleviating Care/God's Involvement</b>

2. Now make an assessment of your foundation so that you'll be able to ensure that your life stands when storms come against you. Fill in the chart below with aspects of your life that you see as creating instability in your foundation (and thus needing corrective attention) and those that are helping you be as stable as possible.

<b>Unstable Foundation</b>	<b>Stable Foundation</b>

**The Prayer of Your Heart:** God in heaven, there is no doubt that storms are going to come against me. Your Son, Jesus, is the Solid Rock, and I want Him to be my foundation. Show me each day how to build on that Rock.

## 4. PHYSIOLOGY

**And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:24–25 NASB)**

**M**uscle tissue is supposed to contract in a marvelously coordinated way that yields a resultant movement. However, that movement doesn't occur properly unless the innervated muscle fibers are stimulated. When a motor nerve conducts an action potential to the nerve's motor end plate in a muscle, a wave of depolarization spreads across the motor unit (the group of muscle fibers innervated by that nerve) and all the sarcomeres in the motor unit are stimulated by the sarcoplasmic reticulum's release of calcium. As the proteins of the muscle fibers interact in the presence of the calcium, contraction takes place so that force can be exerted by the muscle. Then that force, seen as muscle strength, is adjusted upward by fiber recruitment as necessary.

God recruits His people, too. The Holy Spirit is the motor nerve of the Church, but it is the collective motivation of individuals—just like fibers in a muscle responding to calcium's signal—that provides function and strength. Muscle tissue would be significantly compromised if several fibers in a motor unit were dysfunctional. The

Church is likewise less effective when Christians elect not to involve themselves in “love and good deeds.” The passage in Hebrews 10 tells us to stimulate the participation of one another. In a way we must be like the calcium that enables contraction in muscle fibers.

You’ve just read my encouragement, my attempt to stimulate you; now you consider whom you can stimulate and how you are going to do it.

### **Dissect God’s Word and Let It Dissect You**

1. The word for “stimulate” from Hebrews 10:24 is *paroxusmós* in Greek, which actually is best translated “provoke.” That’s obviously the place from where our English word paroxysm emanates. A paroxysm is a sudden attack, so God’s intention for how we are to stimulate our fellow Christians must mean that we are to be purposeful and forceful (in an edifying way, of course!). If not, then we’ll just be like a motor unit that doesn’t fire. Think of your own interactions with fellow believers. When have you experienced this type of stimulation? Write down some of the results. Were they “love and good deeds”?
2. Now notate some times when you have wished for or needed *paroxusmós*, but haven’t had it. Did you notice ministry effectiveness that was lower than expected? What were some other adverse results?

**The Prayer of Your Heart:** God, You are my energizer, and the energizer of all Your people. Please help me to stimulate my brothers and sisters to engage in ministry, and guide them in stimulating me. And do not let us forsake our assembling together to worship You and encourage one another.

## 5. SPORTS MEDICINE

**If you are too lazy to plow in the right season, you will have no food at the harvest. (Proverbs 20:4 NLT)**

**The lazy person is full of excuses, saying, “I can’t go outside because there might be a lion on the road! Yes, I’m sure there’s a lion out there!” As a door turns back and forth on its hinges, so the lazy person turns over in bed. Some people are so lazy that they won’t lift a finger to feed themselves. (Proverbs 26:13–15 NLT)**

**F**ew healthcare workers I have ever met could be labeled lazy. No, there isn’t time in a typical healthcare facility to sit around and do nothing. However, the book of Proverbs is always good for getting our attention and forcing ourselves to re-evaluate what we do...especially what we do for God.

Many years ago, a substantial body of research about exercise began to be formulated. It became evident that doing something for physical fitness was considerably better than doing nothing. It doesn’t seem very sophisticated, really, but it is life-changing. Even a small amount of physical activity is now known to be beneficial to health and longevity compared to the alternative of inactivity. Walk instead of sitting at home. Park your car farther from your destination building to increase your stroll to the door. Take the stairs, not the elevator. A multi-billions-of-dollars industry was spawned from this research

evidence that is now irrefutable, and physical activity has become integral in many people's lives.

Now transfer the concept from what we know about physical activity to your representation of God in healthcare. Maybe you aren't as active in this area as you would like to be. Apply Proverbs 20:4 in a spiritual context: if you and I are lazy about ministry, God's harvest will suffer. So, do *something* rather than *nothing*, even if it seems rather unsophisticated. It's good for you, good for others, and good for the kingdom of God.

### **Dissect God's Word and Let It Dissect You**

1. The Hebrew word for "lazy" in these verses from Proverbs, *'āṣēl*, often is translated as "sluggard," which is certainly not a label we want applied to us. It means exactly what we would expect in English. Yet, we can indeed be like sluggards in our spiritual lives and ministry if we succumb to the devil's plan to lure us into inactivity. Take a frank assessment of yourself to determine if your efforts to reach out to people could use some renewed vigor. Being tired, busy, or stressed can take a toll on your desire to engage with people. What is your assessment and, if your ministry is more sedentary than you want it to be, what is weighing you down?
2. If doing *something* is better than doing *nothing*, then list some ideas that will break any stationary inertia that besets you.

Make sure they are easy to incorporate into your life, but still purposeful ways to touch people's lives. Then, get active!

**The Prayer of Your Heart:** Precious Savior, Your grace is sufficient. I am glad You are not a condemning judge. Please help me find effective ways to increase my ability to bring Your encouragement to people I interact with.

## 6. SPORTS MEDICINE

**Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained, but happy is he who keeps the law. (Proverbs 29:18 NASB)**

**Where there is no vision [Where there are not faithful ministers of the word of God], the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy [is] he. (Proverbs 29:18 Geneva Study Bible of 1599)**

**A**s an undergraduate sports medicine student in the late 1970s, I remember reading operative reports of our team physicians. The field of sports medicine was in an early phase, and reconstructive surgery for anterior cruciate ligament rupture was being developed and refined in order to allow athletes sustaining such injuries to return to competition. I would read the doctor's notes about knee surgery techniques such as "Eriksson's modification of Jones' procedure," a methodology that was described by Dr. Eriksson in the journal *Orthopedic Clinics of North America* in 1976, based on Dr. Jones' 1963 article in the *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery*. This memory that sticks in my mind is a very simple example of visionary pioneers who guided the boat called orthopaedic sports medicine along a rushing whitewater stream of progress during this period. Many others before, since, and in every other healthcare field have similarly

advanced our abilities to treat people with injury and illness. Without them, people's lives are not improved.

How much more important it is, then, that you and I serve today's world as visionary leaders! You don't have to be in charge of a large ministry, you don't have to apply or be voted into office, and you don't have to possess special abilities. You simply need to be, as the 16th century Geneva Study Bible put it, "a faithful minister of the word of God." "Vision" in Proverbs 29:18 means "a word from God," but it prescribes action. That is to say, vision means we have to look for His Word first, and then act on it. Without our action, people's lives are not improved.

### **Dissect God's Word and Let It Dissect You**

1. Whether you call yourself one or not, you are one of God's visionary leaders. After leaving a worship service or Bible study you depart into the missionary field and it seems easy to spread the word of God. But temptations leak in and can ruin that feeling. Once you are out there, why is it hard to declare yourself as a visionary leader? What sets you back from being a faithful minister each and everyday? How can you change that?
2. Reread the passages. Consider "Happy is he who keeps the law." Besides the literal meaning of law and not keeping it, what else can these few words mean? How do you interpret

and apply this?

3. Just as there were medical visionaries researching the best ways to reconstruct a torn ACL, we as God's visionary leaders have to find the best ways to improve people's lives. Jot down a few ways to do this that you can work on this week. Make it a point to help a friend through a difficult time by sharing God's Word, or talk to a stranger about the Good News. It only takes a few times before you can feel comfortable and confident about it. Sometimes you may be rejected and, although this hurts at first, remember that God sent His Son and He was rejected over and over again. Do not lose sight of what you are called to do.

**The Prayer of Your Heart:** Heavenly Father, I am so grateful that I have been called to be a faithful missionary in the world of healthcare. Help me in the next week be a visionary leader for You. Guide me with the right words, the right actions, and the confidence in them I need.

## 7. REHABILITATION

**Look, you taught many people. You made weak hands strong. Your words helped those who had fallen down. You made shaky knees strong. Now trouble comes to you. And you are unhappy about it. It strikes you down. And you are afraid. Shouldn't you worship God and trust in him? Shouldn't your honest life give you hope? (Job 4:3-6 NIV)**

**R**eading the book of Job reminds me that my problems aren't nearly as troublesome as I think they are. Within the Bible—brimming with evil, affliction, distress, and heartache—Job is the quintessential sufferer. In the midst of his anguish, some of his “friends” offered their twisted versions of consolation. However, buried in these gooey, messy oysters of misguided opinions are several pearls of God's truth. For example, Eliphaz' comments near the beginning of Job 4 harken to the value of a life with and for God as a hedge against trouble. There I see a physical therapist, occupational therapist, athletic trainer, or any other of the numerous types of rehabilitation professionals.

Read the verses again. The rehabilitators described there are, first and foremost, teachers instructing their patients. Resolutely and with compassion they explain injuries and illnesses, offering a variety of techniques and exercises designed to promote restoration and give

a patient new confidence that the outlook is brighter than it seems, that progress is happening, that success is just around the next bend. It has to be that way, otherwise rehabilitation is futile.

No matter if your profession is rehabilitation or not, when you focus on serving others, hands are strengthened by your assistance. You pick up those who are down. Shaky knees stand with new firmness next to your own. Life is better for someone because you care. But, despite all that you pour into others, trouble will assuredly come to you, or maybe it already has. Unhappy, down, afraid? “Shouldn’t you worship God and trust in him? Shouldn’t your honest life give you hope?” Indeed.

### **Dissect God’s Word and Let It Dissect You**

1. Hospitals, clinics, doctor’s offices, and dentist’s offices are scary places to a lot of people. Entering through the doors, many of our patients are unsure of what is going to happen or if they are going to make it through okay. Besides delivering the care that we are trained for, we need to apply compassion and understanding, realizing that patients may be apprehensive. Think of a time when you were working with a patient who needed more than just a medical professional doing his or her job. What else did that patient need? A hand to hold? A hug? A prayer sent up to God? Are you willing to take these extra steps in your practice? How do you do so?
2. Think of a current patient with whom you are having a hard

time. Pray for him/her, yourself, and all of the medical providers who are part of his/her treatment. What can you do the next time you see him/her to make his/her time in the hospital, clinic, athletic training room, or ER an easier experience?

**The Prayer of Your Heart:** Father above, thank You for making my hands and knees stop shaking when I need to be that person for someone else. Thank You for my training and knowledge that allows me to help others. Help me to remember to come to You when I need Your help with a patient.

## 8. EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGY

**Then Peter continued preaching for a long time, strongly urging all his listeners, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation!” Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all. (Acts 2:40–41 NLT)**

**They praised God. They were respected by all the people. Every day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved. (Acts 2:47 NIrV)**

**Believers were added to the Lord in increasing numbers—crowds of both men and women. (Acts 5:14 HCSB)**

**Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and strong in faith. And many people were brought to the Lord. (Acts 11:24 NLT)**

**T**he principle of progressive resistance exercise was first described by Dr. Thomas DeLorme, a Captain in the US Army Medical Corps during World War II. (Delorme TL. Restoration of muscle power by heavy-resistance exercises. *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery [Am]*.1945;27(4):645-667.) He formally described in this article, and others he wrote, a method that had been used for a long time in strength training and rehabilitation. Fundamentally, he noted, muscle power improves under the

influence of resistance training that overloads the musculature and is progressively increased over time.

Of course, muscles that are exercised this way increase in size. For many years it was thought that this enlargement occurred by hypertrophy, or the increase in size of individual muscle fibers. However, some researchers examining muscle tissue with microscopes started promoting the idea that another physiological process—hyperplasia, or the increase in the number of individual muscle fibers—was partially responsible for the improvement in muscle size and function. Today, even though we know that hypertrophy is the predominant mechanism of muscle enhancement that intensifies force and power output, hyperplasia is known to occur, as well.

Read about the first revival in Acts 2. It's known as the Day of Pentecost. From that point onward, Acts is full of examples of what happens when training (a concept we know better in our faith as discipleship) and power output come together. Nowhere else in the New Testament do we see such an increase in the number of Jesus followers and their impact on society. It was a hyperplasia of souls brought to the Lord and, unlike in muscle, hyperplasia is the only way to increase the power of the Church. If you and I multiply hyperplastically, our number will at least double. What if that happened as a result of everyone in your small group or your church exemplifying the Christian life and explaining their faith when they have the chance? Quite honestly, if that occurred today, the hyperplasia would make Pentecost look as tiny as a muscle biopsy on a microscope

slide.

### **Dissect God's Word and Let It Dissect You**

1. The Good News in Peter's time was new and exciting for the thousands of new believers. The Word states that 'believers were added to the Lord in increasing numbers.' At times we hide our faith instead of increasing the power of the Church through hyperplasia. Why is it difficult for you to keep the heart of evangelism alive and to spread the Good News?
2. Think of a time where you could have shared the Good News, but didn't because you were afraid to say the wrong thing or to "bother" the person. Write down some ways you could turned this situation into a time for sharing the love of Christ.
3. How can we overcome our apprehension about sharing God's Good News? Jot down three ways you are going to progressively, yet respectfully, spread your faith in the next week. Then prepare yourself to listen closely to God's Spirit prompting you as He leads the way for you to do so.

**The Prayer of Your Heart:** Lord in Heaven, thank You for giving us leaders like Peter to be role models for us in spreading Your Word. Help us to increase the power of the Church by not being afraid to share our faith with friends, acquaintances, and even strangers. Give us the words to say and the courage to not back down even when we are feeling ill-equipped or tentative.

## 9. SPORTS MEDICINE

**Let me now remind you, dear brothers and sisters, of the Good News I preached to you before. You welcomed it then, and you still stand firm in it. It is this Good News that saves you if you continue to believe the message I told you—unless, of course, you believed something that was never true in the first place. I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. (1 Corinthians 15:1–4 NLT)**

**Y**ou can well imagine, even if sports medicine or orthopaedics is not your field, that orthopaedic surgeons are quite varied in their opinions about how to reconstruct a torn anterior cruciate ligament (ACL). When the main stabilizing ligament in the knee is ruptured—particularly in someone whose livelihood relies on his or her active body—something must be done to re-establish the knee joint’s integrity.

I have attended conferences where several orthopaedists—all intelligent, talented, and experienced—presented vastly different methods of reconstructing the ACL. I’ve read many medical journals where the debate is played out in print, too. Patellar tendon, gracilis tendon, semitendinosus tendon, single-bundle, double-bundle,

autograft, allograft, open procedure, arthroscopic procedure. On and on the discussion goes. But, after the lectures are through, those surgeons shake hands, say goodbye, and depart for home where all of them return to their work of ensuring that athletes and other patients get the best care possible.

How is this scenario possible? Because each and every orthopaedic surgeon agrees on the essentials of their craft. The femur, the tibia, the patella, the anterior and posterior cruciate ligaments, the quadriceps and hamstring muscles...these fundamentals are what allows the surgeons to function effectively in healthcare in spite of the differences in their practices.

In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul listed the three essentials of the Christian faith that we must believe: [1] Christ died for our sins. [2] Christ was buried. [3] Christ was raised from the dead. Paul also notes the authority for these: “just as the Scriptures said.” The list is helpful mostly for what is notably absent from it: things like music style, size of the church building, location, weekly attendance, clothing, baptism method, personal appearance, type of glass in the sanctuary windows, and number of sinks in the men’s washroom. That’s right, you won’t find any of the stuff that Jesus didn’t care very much about listed in Paul’s components of our faith.

I know of a vibrant, growing, ministering church that meets in a seaside bar on Sunday mornings. Some Christians would be horrified that “bar” and “church” appear in the same sentence, much less in the same building. But, overlooking a beach in one of America’s vacation

destinations, this community of believers meets people that are broken and looking for answers. Packed to overflowing weekly, the attendees hear the essentials of the faith: Christ died for their sins, Christ was buried, and Christ was raised from the dead...just as the Scriptures said. Once God opens their hearts to this message, down to the beach they march to be baptized. Then they're disciplined. Wow.

One of the blessings of my life, as my balance has tipped toward grace and away from the confines of my self-imposed faith box, is to see the incredible variety of people around the world who love and follow Jesus. I need to continue to remember the essentials of the faith and acknowledge that God is able to do remarkable work through people who act much differently than I do. Maybe you and I can get far enough out of our boxes that we have a better view of God's handiwork.

### **Dissect God's Word and Let It Dissect You**

1. Name some circumstances in which you have seen God's handiwork in a different way than how you were used to seeing it.
2. Re-read those essentials of our Christian faith. In a world where there are many different beliefs, personalities, schedules, and more, how do we focus on those essentials and become disciples for the Lord? Jot down some ways you can bring these essentials into your everyday life and practice as a healthcare provider.

3. Paul typically spelled out the Good News as he stood before crowds preaching. This is likely a different methodology than what we will use in our healthcare settings. Write opportunities you have taken (or will attempt to take) to [1] creatively share the essentials of the faith and [2] creatively help someone take a small step in the direction of God (some might call this “pre-evangelism”).

**The Prayer of Your Heart:** Heavenly Father, You sent your Son to be our Savior. He is the foundation of our faith essentials. I want to see Your handiwork present in those who may not approach their faith exactly as I do. Help me to stand firm in my faith while You inspire me to creatively spread Your Good News.

## 10. ORTHOPAEDICS & PODIATRY

**You must therefore be careful to do as the Lord your God has commanded you; you shall not turn to the right or to the left. You must follow exactly the path that the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you are to possess. (Deuteronomy 5:32–33 NRSV)**

**Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3:5–6 NASB)**

**Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track. (Proverbs 3:5–6 MESSAGE)**

**I**t is said that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. Geometry tells us clearly that this is true. So does a case of severe hallux valgus, a lateral angulation of the great toe that also may be accompanied by a bunion. Underneath and slightly behind the first metatarsophalangeal joint that connects the great toe to the foot are two small bones about the size of white pea beans.

Called sesamoids, these bones are embedded in the tendon of the flexor hallucis brevis muscle. Their upper surfaces articulate with

facets on the underside of the distal first metatarsal as a way to help the MTP joint function optimally. The sesamoids and FHB tendon work just fine when the great toe is aligned straight with the foot in the typical anatomical arrangement. However, when the toe points outward in hallux valgus, an angle is created between the foot where the FHB muscle is and the great toe where the FHB tendon inserts.

The greater the angle of hallux valgus, the more the sesamoids are dislocated from their normal location and the greater the discomfort from this anatomical variation, not to mention the compounded pain from a resulting bunion. This makes sense, though, because the tendon simply follows the rule that the shortest distance between two points (the muscle and the bone, in this case) is a straight line. (You can see this result, if you wish, on the x-ray located here: <http://www.wheelsonline.com/image9/hv2.jpg>.) Understand that the problem originates not from the tendon or the sesamoids, but from the crooked toe. Thus, surgical realignment may be a viable solution.

There is a similar pattern in our life following Jesus. When our spiritual life has hallux valgus, the pain increases. This is God ensuring that His Word and His path for us remain straight; He is the flexor hallucis brevis taking the shortest distance between two points. Just like that toe, we experience pain, dysfunction, and other signs and symptoms of pathology. Understand that it isn't God's Word that has become crooked; it is our approach to life that's out of whack and off the track. He never promises that all of our problems will go away, but if we allow God to realign us to His straight path, we will find that

pain is reduced, function is restored, and life generally seems to work better.

### **Dissect God’s Word and Let It Dissect You**

1. Think of something that is causing you to have a “hallux valgus” in your spiritual life right now. Jot that down. What are the “signs and symptoms” of this troublesome time? What creates your pain?
2. We are told in Proverbs 3:5–6 that we should not rely on our own understanding, but always turn to God. As we read these passages, think of the debate you certainly have experienced. It’s the classic war between good and evil: God’s Spirit tells you to go one way and your fleshly desire tells you to go the other. Deuteronomy 5 tells us to head along the exact path God commands us to go. Write some brief notes about something you have been trying to do that isn’t working or a problem you’ve been experiencing. Then include your thoughts about why your path hasn’t worked.
3. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart” and take time in prayer everyday this week to ask God to show you His straight path. Then come back and reflect on your difficult situation and you’ve seen improvement as you’ve gone down the straight and narrow path of Christ.

**The Prayer of Your Heart:** Heavenly Father, Thank You for always being the one I turn to when my life is out of whack. Help me to always come to You when we need to be reminded that You have the straightest path. When life gets to me, help me to always turn to You.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

### *Jeff Russell*

Dr. Jeff Russell serves as Assistant Professor of Athletic Training in the College of Health Sciences and Professions at Ohio University. Prior to taking this post he was Assistant Professor of Dance Science at the University of California, Irvine's Claire Trevor School of the Arts.

Jeff is a Certified and Licensed Athletic Trainer. In 2012 he was hired by Ohio University to establish a comprehensive performing arts medicine program that combines clinical care of dancers, musicians, and other performers; applied scientific research into the musculoskeletal demands of performing arts; and education of healthcare workers to equip them to care for performing artists. As an academic scholar, one of his great joys is mentoring students and young professionals to become leaders.

Jeff has more than 30 years of experience in sports medicine, orthopaedics, and performing arts medicine. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Physical Education (emphasis in Sports Medicine) from Rice University and a Master of Science in Physical Education (with an emphasis in Athletic Training) from the University of Arizona. He holds his PhD in Dance Medicine and Science from the University of Wolverhampton in the United Kingdom, where his dissertation explored the anatomy and motion of the ankle in female ballet

dancers. He has numerous national and international presentations and publications in these fields.

In 1997 Jeff and his wife, Ruth, founded The Kardía Foundation, an international nonprofit organization devoted to connecting the Christian faith with healthcare and equipping Christian healthcare workers to compassionately and effectively integrate their faith into their practice. The work of the Foundation continues today; its latest project, LIGHTS2020, is developing the framework to reach 2,020,000 healthcare workers with biblical leadership training by the end of the year 2020. In his role as President, Jeff and his family have travelled to numerous countries to speak at conferences and encourage healthcare professionals in their work. His teaching is filled with object illustrations that help bring Bible concepts alive; he also has designed several innovative printed pieces that promote the Word of God with healthcare themes. Each week he writes an e-mail Bible devotional, *E-KardiaGram*, that uses medical metaphors to teach principles from the Scriptures. A compilation of 150 of the more than 350 *E-KardiaGrams* Jeff has written appears in his book *Sharper Than a #11 Scalpel: Inspirational Dissections of God's Word* (Crosslink Publishing, 2013).

Jeff is a member of the Board of Directors of the International Association for Dance Medicine & Science and serves on the STOP Sports Injuries Education and Outreach Committee of the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine. Jeff and Ruth reside in Athens, Ohio; they have two adult children, Dina and Caleb.

## ***Kandis Maust***

Kandis Maust serves as an athletic trainer for The Ohio State University's Wexner Medical Center under the Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation specialty. She is the Head Athletic Trainer to OSU's Marching Band and Assistant Athletic Trainer to BalletMet Columbus.

Kandis received her Bachelor of Science degree in Athletic Training from The Ohio State University in 2013. While an undergraduate she had the opportunity to work with BalletMet Columbus; she also earned a minor in Dance from OSU. Following those experiences she decided that her passion in healthcare was for performing arts medicine. She continued her studies at Ohio University and graduated with her Master of Science in Athletic Training in 2014. At Ohio she was the first Licensed Athletic Trainer appointed by Dr. Jeff Russell to work in the Clinic for Science and Health in Artistic Performance (SHAPe Clinic) he established in August 2013. In addition to serving as the SHAPe Clinic's Lead Athletic Trainer, Kandis completed her graduate research in self-perceived body image of performing artists. She also co-authored a paper with Dr. Russell on managing concussions in dancers that was presented at the 2014 annual meeting of the International Association for Dance Medicine & Science. This project stemmed from her work in the SHAPe Clinic.

Kandis enjoys working with performers and will soon pursue a certification in Pilates. She loves spending time with her niece and nephew (with two more nieces on the way). She currently resides in Gahanna, Ohio.