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### Christian Missionary Nurse Reflection Paper

Susan Walsh, a pediatric nurse practitioner, was married to Brian Walsh, a carpenter, and had three children, Brad, Maggie, and Kyle. She, along with her family, lived a normal life in Chicago until Brad was involved in a fatal car accident in May 2003. Not soon after, a car hit Susan while she was crossing the street. Susan broke both her legs and knees, requiring three months of recovery as well as six months of physical therapy. Susan believed that the rest and recovery period brought her the solace she needed, and she came out stronger after. Nearing the end of her recovery period, she received a surprising phone call asking her to become a clinical instructor for a pediatric nurse practitioner program at the University of Illinois. It was only after she accepted this position that led her passion for medical missions. Susan spent much time researching the conditions she would face traveling to an underdeveloped country. Though she received backlash from her family and friends, she believed that her late husband would encourage her to pursue her dreams.

On February 2006, a group of twelve individuals made their way to Haiti to take part in a weeklong medical mission. Susan was introduced to the owner of the clinic named Willem where she and her team would be working. Susan's team came prepared with twenty-four suitcases filled with medical supplies that would be used to help treat their patients. Though they worked tirelessly from morning to evening, they were able to provide care for over 200 patients. A few of the treatments that they provided included patients with skin infections, pneumonia, bronchitis, asthma, and parasite infections. Expecting mothers and children were provided with

vitamins and peanut butter as it is high in protein and fat. Throughout the duration of their trip, Susan and her team aided in the care of over 1,000 patients without running out of any supplies or medication.

Susan called her team the Little by Little Team, which brought in funding from those who supported their cause. This funding granted them access to purchase additional supplies and medications as they anticipated more people visit their clinic. Furthermore, Susan and her team, Little by Little, visited Willem's clinic for one week each year until 2010. Haiti was faced with a 7.0 earthquake in January 2010. This devastation left hospitals short of supplies and aids to treat patients. Though they were ill-prepared for this tragic event, they still provided care to those in need to the best of their abilities. Many Haitian families were grateful to have Susan and her team sacrifice their time to help those in need. This task may seem challenging for most, however, Susan believed she was called to do God's work and continued to follow her heart to serve the Lord through nursing. To follow and serve when God calls one to do so is not an easy task. Susan shared God's love with the Haitian community through their acts of service. Additionally, Susan reminded her team to carry out their work with the intention of serving God.

Susan continues to pursue her love and passion by serving the Haitian community. Her desire to help those in need is driven by her adoration for Christ and fulfill her promise to serve his kingdom. Her life story exemplifies and defines perseverance.

Unraveling Mrs. Walsh's life story prompted me to reflect on the moments when I once had to take a leap of faith and join medical mission trips. Prior to my acceptance into nursing school, I did not believe that God could use me during a medical mission's trip. My husband, a pharmacist by trade, has been involved in numerous mission trips that require his critical thinking abilities and skilled leadership roles. Like Susan, I have always admired my husband's

dedication to leading and serving those in need. Mrs. Walsh has taught me that when God places something on our hearts, it's best to seek and run after it. There have been moments in life where I've allowed opportunities to fade away. However, Susan's story has inspired me to chase after the desires that God places in our hearts. Nursing as a profession requires us to serve others without hesitation. The ability to save someone's child, mother, father, or friend is rewarding. I'm truly grateful to have learned about Susan's story as it has inspired me to embrace serving others.