
Touch Points for Evangel's Prayer Vigil team

For the week of February 9, 2014

This series is aimed to support our "Stepping Out in Faith—for the Sake of the Gospel" initiative. It is based on *The One Year Book of Praying Through the Bible* by Cheri Fuller (Tyndale House, 2003). We will focus on specific topics that relate to faith, witness, prayer and outreach. "The driving force behind this proposal is to increase our evangelistic witness and the impact on our neighborhood and community." (From the overview document, available at www.evbapt.org/docs/steppingOut.pdf)

Forgive Me

When I refused to confess my sin, I was weak and miserable, and I groaned all day long.

Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me.

Psalm 32:3-4

Prayer for the Week

God, I thought I could fix it myself. I hid my sin because I was ashamed and felt as if I had failed you. When you called my name, I ran from you, yet I longed to be in your presence. Please forgive the sins—large or small—that hide in my heart. When you discipline me, it is for good, because you long for us to have fellowship together, with our hearts joined as one.

Notable Quote

In confession...we open our lives to healing, reconciling, restoring, uplifting grace of Him who loves us in spite of what we are.

Louis Cassels (1922-1974)

Reflection

There are many reasons that we hide our sin from God. It might be that we don't want to face our shortcomings or that we are ashamed. Unconfessed sin weighs heavily on us because we do not have the means to forgive our own sins. Rest assured that God seeks us when our sin separates us from him. The Holy Spirit follows us into the hidden places to draw us back to a place of safety.

The wonderful thing is that we don't have to run from God when we have fallen short of his standards. He paid a costly price—the sacrifice of his own Son—to redeem us from our sins. Wouldn't it be better to run to him and lay our sins at his feet than to continue to carry such a heavy burden? Take a few moments and allow God free rein in your heart. Ask him to reveal any areas where you have tried to hide your sin. Openly confess whatever wrong motives, actions, or words the Holy Spirit shows you, and allow his gentle mercy to remove the heavy weight you've carried for far too long.

PRAYER PROMPTS

- Use this week's thoughts to test your own need to reveal any sin you have been trying or hide . . . or pray for opportunities to connect with someone who particularly needs to hear this message and the promise of God's loving forgiveness.
- Continue to remember one family from your circle of influence for intercession. They could be a neighbor, coworker or relative. Pray for their struggles to be resolved, their health improved and their relationships strengthened. Ask the Lord to bring them to a fuller, closer relationship with Himself in faith and obedience.
- Continue to pray for opportunities to invite people to our services. Ask the Lord to open doors of conversation, connection or compassion with others to enable an offer of attendance.
- Prayerfully reflect on the lessons from Sunday's worship service, the music, Scripture, and Pastor Dave's message beginning the new series on Exodus, "Let My People Go: Introducing Our Expectations for Exodus" (Psalm 105:23-25)*. Pray for opportunities to apply these lessons throughout the week, particularly Jesus' encouragement for us to serve.
- Continue to pray for our "Stepping Out in Faith" initiative: for the identification of a church planter, for unity and commitment as we seek to bring success to this evangelistic effort by growing ourselves. Pray for Mark Albrecht of Converge Mid-America as he seeks the Lord's direction to find the best person for the Wheaton area—and for the contact Pastor Dave had with one potential planter in the area. In the meantime, renew your dedication to meet Bill France's challenge to pray that God will lead 25 adults and 50 children to Evangel—a seemingly impossible task! But not impossible for God! Pray persistently that God will bring a great harvest in 2014!

*A podcast of the sermon, plus pdf documents of the sermon outline and PowerPoint notes are posted on the website, normally by Monday.

Touch Points is e-mailed every Friday and normally posted on the website (www.evbapt.org) by Saturday.

Printed copies are available in the lobby on Sunday.