

## **"First Watch" Touch Points for Evangel's Prayer Vigil team**

### **For the week of April 14, 2013**

Share with others on the Prayer Vigil throughout the week, during our Connections time on Sundays, or using our FaceBook group "First Watch Prayer Vigil." [www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=63044309096](http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=63044309096).

This week we start a new series that is designed to fit into the strategic planning for a potential new major ministry initiative to increase our witness and outreach, the possibility of parenting a daughter church at our facilities. More details will be coming this week and will be included with next week's Touch Points. You are invited to attend a focused time of prayer during the coming weeks in our Wednesday evening prayer time. Fourteen people responded to the e-mail invitation this past week.

This series 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 most clearly support this initiative, starting with ones that relate to the theme of witness and outreach. We start with one that also ties in to recent sermons from Matthew by Pastor Dave.

### **Good Medicine**

When he heard [the Pharisees' criticism], Jesus replied, "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do" Then he added, "Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: 'I want you to be merciful; I don't want your sacrifices.' For I have come to call sinners, not those who think they are already good enough."

*Matthew 9:12-13*

#### **Prayer for the Week**

God, thank you for showing me that you desire that I be merciful rather than make sacrifices to you. You come to those of us who know that apart from you we are sick instead of to those who believe that they are well but are really sick at heart. Thank you for being my Great Physician and for never being too busy to attend to my needs or wounds. Guide me in joyfully dispensing to others the good medicine you pour out to me.

#### **Notable Quote**

God is not saving the world; it is done.  
Our business it to get men and women to realize it.

*Oswald Chambers (1874-1917)*

#### **Reflection**

When Jesus ate with the tax collectors, he caused a stir throughout the city. Many were men of ill repute who abused their power over their fellow citizens by overcharging them and then lining their own pockets with the difference. The Pharisees reasoned that if Jesus were truly the Messiah, he would not seek out these vile men but would eat with the righteous instead. When the Pharisees confronted Jesus about this, he silenced them with a challenge to discover the true meaning of mercy, defined by his own example. Rather than wait for the unbeliever to come to church, Christ brought a living gospel to the doorstep of their homes.

The challenge is no less compelling today. Right outside the walls of your local church are people who are seeking answers. There are those who need healing, who are lonely, and who may even be reviled by others in their community. You have good medicine to dispense—a gospel message that heals hearts and changes lives and reconciles sinners to a merciful Savior.

#### **PRAYER PROMPTS**

- Prayerfully reflect on the lessons from Sunday's worship service, the music (including our special guests, the Bethel University Women's Chorale), Scripture, and Pastor Dave's message "What Do I Do with Jesus?"\* from Matthew 27. Pray for the leading of the Spirit in applying the lessons learned to your own life and as a witness to others.
- Pray for Evangel as we face significant challenges *and* opportunities. Pray specifically as we seek the Lord's will for a clear vision for the days ahead as we pursue the possibility of the major ministry initiative mentioned above. More details on the process of evaluating this opportunity and formulating a vision and strategy for it (or any other option the Lord clearly directs us to) will begin coming soon. For now, please join us on Wednesday evenings to help produce a growing chorus of praise and intercession.

\*A podcast of the sermon will be posted on the website by Monday, along with pdf versions of the PowerPoint notes and sermon outline