
Touch Points for Evangel's Prayer Vigil team

For the week of March 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)

Living as a Broken Jar

Thoughts to carry through the Lenten season

Jesus was in Bethany at the home of Simon, a man who had leprosy. During supper, a woman came in with a beautiful jar of expensive perfume. She broke the seal and poured the perfume over his head.

Mark 14:3

Prayer for the Week

Dear Lord, please show me the things that I consider dear and precious that need to be broken so that I, too, may do a beautiful thing for you. The most costly gifts I can give you are my life and my love in ways that are pleasing to you. I give you also the gifts and treasures you have given me, and I offer them up for your use. Today, let the fragrance of my brokenness bring joy to you.

Notable Quote

Prayer thrives in the atmosphere of true devotion, for God dwells where the spirit of devotion resides.

E. M. Bounds (1835-1913)

Reflection

As we read this description of exorbitant devotion, so often we hone in on the fact that this was a costly, dear, and precious thing, a fragrant, expensive perfume worth more than a year's wages, that Mary lavishly sacrificed in reverencing her King. Yet her extravagance moves us to ask ourselves, What thing that we consider costly and dear might the Lord want us to offer up to him: a relationship? a habit? a cherished possession? Perhaps it is one of the gifts God has given us that lies hidden or saved for use for a time that never comes. These very treasures could bring light to someone's faith, to touch someone's heart, to change a life. One of these important things could be the very "jar" that he wants us to break before him. Notice, Mary broke open the jar, representing that her life was no longer centered in herself but in Christ Jesus, that she counted him as the treasure above all others.

Is your life a broken jar, the contents poured out in joyful abandonment to the Lord? Of those who live as broken jars, Jesus says, they have "done a beautiful thing to me" (Mark 14:6, NIV).

PRAYER PROMPTS

- As we enter the Lenten season, pray the "Prayer for the Week" each day. By the end of the week, write down those things that represent your "jar" and continue to focus on this throughout the weeks leading to Easter in order that "the fragrance of my brokenness [may] bring joy to you."
- Prayerfully reflect on Sunday's "Songs of the Cross" service. Keep the bulletin so you can review the lyrics of the songs, the readings, and Scripture references throughout the week.
- 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.
- 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!

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.