

FORERUNNER SATURDAY SERVICE – OCTOBER 8, 2011

PRAYER: CHANGE STARTS WITH ME – PASTOR MARTINA HUANG

PRAYER: CHANGE STARTS WITH ME

+ PRAYER CHANGES OUR PERSPECTIVE

¹⁷ I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. (Ephesians 1:17)

- The way we get to know God is through opening our spiritual eyes. Receiving revelation is the way that our spiritual eyes open, and when that happens our perspective will change, including the way we view our difficulties and circumstances. Therefore, every day we need to pray to receive revelation.
- We can pray for our immediate needs, but our prayers should not stop there. Through **consistent prayer** we will get to know God better, receive healing, and change our lives.
- Testimony: In Martina's family, Martina often felt like her home was without warmth and love. After God opened her spiritual eyes, she realized that “money was the currency of love.” Martina recognized in the past when her parents gave her money, they were expressing love to her. In response, Martina has learned to express her love to her parents by giving them money.

+ PRAYER ALLOWS US TO OVERCOME OUR HUMAN NATURE

- Testimony: Personality-wise and emotionally Martina was ill-prepared to be a pastor. Since she has a Type 7 personality, she often desires freedom, uses humour to mask inner anxiety, and daydreams. Despite her natural human tendencies, Martina really desired to build her spiritual character. It was hard to do many of the duties required of a pastor, but she was able to find grace to persevere through consistent prayer.
- Although Martina didn't have the natural traits to be a leader, she chose to submit to the circumstances and God helped her to develop these traits through consistent prayer. As her perspective changed, Martina was able to develop good character traits such as patience, studiousness, practical insight and responsibility to better serve the church. Also, through prayer and submission, Martina was able to gain focus in her everyday life and to prepare the church for the end times.
- The reason we struggle with our sin is because we don't pray enough for ourselves to strengthen our inner man. We must pray everyday to strengthen our inner man.
- Through prayer we can overcome the faults in our natural personality. When we pray for ourselves, we will be able to overcome our old selves and our natural emotional responses.
- Testimony: One day a sister wrote a letter to Pastor Grace to complain about Martina. Martina was able to humble herself, step out of her comfort zone and show love to this sister. Through prayer, God has helped Martina find the lovable traits in difficult people.

+ PRAYER WILL SHAPE OUR DESTINY

- Story: Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple, once said that he lives each day as if it were his last. When he learned that he could possibly die from pancreatic cancer at any moment, this only made him

work even harder. Knowing that he had a limited time to live fostered his urgent drive to succeed. As a result, Jobs is famous because of the influence he had on our lives with his Apple products. In the same way we should also live each day with vision and passion.

- As Christians, we can also have an influence on the lives around us. However, we have something better to motivate us than cancer. God can be our motivator. In all our daily actions we can ask for God's help.
- Testimony: Bethany Hamilton, the surfer who lost an arm to a shark, became an even greater surfer after her disability. She was able to overcome her disability and resume surfing when her perspective changed. Her father encouraged her, "I can do all things through things through Christ who strengthens me." Eventually, Bethany learned that the most important thing in her life was not to compete in surfing but to love others.
- Through prayer, God can build us up to do great things to love others. We can have hope because God knows us and our weaknesses.

+ PRAYER IS A CHOICE

- Praying consistently requires a conscious choice. However, when we are willing to step out and receive the Holy Spirit's help, we will be able to overcome our old selves.
- As young people, we must choose to pray. Our destiny in 10 years or 20 years will be determined our choices. We must choose to consistently wait upon God and pray for ourselves. Each day we must make a choice to exercise spiritual discipline.
- We will have a spiritual goal when our spiritual eyes are open. We will be filled with a strength and joy to obtain personal victory against strongholds in our lives.
- After receiving God's healing, we should step out of our comfort zone. We can take action by praying for ourselves, our church leaders, our families, and our small group. We can prophesy over our own lives with scripture. The important thing is to start praying every day; you can start with 3 minutes a day and then increase to 15 minutes and then 50 minutes.

+ ACTION PLAN: Pray for at least 15 minutes daily (It doesn't have to be powerful and dramatic. What's important is consistency).

1. Praise and worship out loud (3 minutes)
2. Pray for your own transformation (3 minutes)
3. Pray for your leaders (3 minutes)
4. Pray for your small group (3 minutes)
5. Pray for the things on your heart. (3 minutes)

Praying for your own transformation (3 minutes)

1. Spirit of wisdom and revelation
2. Faith and courage
3. Patience and perseverance

Praying for one of your leaders:

1. May be your parents
2. or your small group leaders
3. or your district leader
4. or your pastor

Praying for your small group:

1. For the needs of your small group-bringing new comers, spiritual hunger, listening to messages.
2. or for your serving this week
3. For the people you are taking care

Praying for the things on your heart:

1. For the difficulty you encounter at work
2. For the salvation of your family members
3. For the sick around you
4. For tests
5. Others

+ DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Did the story of Bethany Hamilton inspire you in any way? What is your dream for life? Do you eager to became an influential person?
2. Prayer is a choice, and it takes time and consistency. What are the things or habits that hindered you to have a consistent prayer time? How would you change it? (e.g. set alarm, pray with prayer partner, ask a friend to remind you, etc)
3. The message mentioned that the way to know God is through opening our spiritual eyes. Have you notice whether God changed your perspective about a particular things/person during your prayers lately?
4. Have you tried praying for your inner man? Have you seen changes in old habits or personality through praying (e.g. tardiness, laziness, not trust-worthy, self-pity, pride, etc)?