Lesson 3 - Become a Vessel of Prayer
Oct. 25-26, 2012

I. WELCOME, 15 mins.
Plan one to two icebreakers for the purpose of mixing around and getting group participation or getting acquainted.

II. WORSHIP, 20 mins.
Prayerfully choose a few songs to lead people into God’s presence. During this time, cell leaders will encourage cell members to listen to the Holy Spirit and release the words of strengthening, encouragement, and comfort they have received for the cell group, the church and nations. Upon each word shared, the cell leader will lead members by thanking and praising God for His promise and/or praying aloud together for the needs, etc.

During this time, the cell leader will also lead the group to pray aloud for: (1) the mission organization or daughter church that the cell group adopts (2) the church ministry needs (3) blessings for new comers, the sick.

MISSION ORGANIZATION: __________________, their needs: ______________
(Please contact the church if you don’t know the needs of the mission organization.)

Prayer Requests for CHURCH MINISTRY:
1. Cell Group Sunday booth: 11/4, please pray that there will be great interest from people to join the cell group
2. Ministry Coworker Recruiting Day: 11/11, please pray that people will join to serve and grow through serving
3. Presidential Election: 11/6, please pray for America and the election. Pray that God will transform the church with the renewed minds and the church will become a true prophetic voice for the nation.
4. Christmas Party: 12/15 (Sat), please pray that new friends will come to the party and cell groups will have a successful outreach through celebrating the birth of Jesus.

III. WORD, 45 mins.
A. Sharing from last Sunday’s message.
   1. What is the main message from last Sunday sermon? What did God say to you from the message?
   2. How would you respond to the message? What action will you take after listening to the message?

B. Discussion Topic: We may fight the good fight for the Lord

Scriptures: 1Timothy 2:1-7 (Please read Bible verses in turns)
Memorizing Verse: I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. (1 Timothy 2:1-2 NIV)

Foreword:
In the previous chapter, Paul encouraged Timothy to become a good steward of God’s household and fight the battle well. Immediately afterwards Paul mentioned that “church shall make petitions, prayers and intercessions,” because connection to God is made through prayer, which is the secret weapon to bring God’s presence. A church with God’s presence must be a church of prayer. As members of the church, you and I must all become a vessel of prayer, through which we can experience God’s wonderful work!

1. Church shall intercede for all people (1Tim 2:1-2):
   1. The importance of prayer (1 Tim 2:1a): Paul used “first of all” to show that prayer is the most important ministry with the highest priority in a church, because prayer always brings God’s presence. Prayer is by no means the last resort, but rather the most effective approach.
   2. The content of prayer (1Tim 2:2b):
      a. Petitions: The fact that Paul emphasized that first of all church shall make petitions for all people does not mean it is not important to pray for yourself. Rather, it means that you should have a broad view in prayer and make petitions for God’s kingdom, all people and all nations first. God’s blessing will not come until then. (Matthew 6:33)
      b. Prayers: This type of prayer is to supplicate and bring people’s needs to God. We shall not only pray for people’s physical needs under various circumstances, but pray for the salvation of their souls.
      c. Intercessions: We shall stand in the gap and intercede for all nations and all people. This is the warfare with prayers. May God bind any work of the enemies, so that the Spirit of God can move freely.
d. **Thanksgiving**: Bless all nations in your prayers. Bless your family, community, nation and the world. The Bible says: “Just bless. Don’t curse.” Make thanksgiving for all nations and all people. May God bring all nations back to Him soon.

3. **Whom to pray for and benefits (1 Tim 2:1-2):**

   a. **All people**: You shall pray for all people, including believers, non-believers, your friends or enemies, acquaintances or strangers.

   b. **Kings and all those in authority**: Paul said: “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.” (Romans 13:1) God permits even the authorities for those in authority that are against God. Pray for them often. May God give them a fearful heart to God so that they can be full of wisdom and power to govern the country in God’s principles and be kind to the people, so that everyone in the country can please God and receive His blessings.

   c. **We may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness**: The biggest benefit from praying for those in authority is that we may live in peace. When kings or state heads fear God, what they do will please God and bring peace to the nation.

2. **Praying for all people please God (1Tim 2:3-7)**

   1. **Because this is what pleases God (1Tim 2:3)**: Today God calls us to live on different lands. We shall not only pray for our families, and ourselves, but also acknowledge that God has already entrusted this land to us, for which we bear great responsibility. We have to keep praying until God starts to work on this land.

   2. **Because this is what God wants (1 Tim 2: 4)**: God wants all people to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth. Church is the body of Christ, so it must understand what God wants! In addition, God has already given church the authority of intercession, so that it can participate in God’s plan to save the world.

   3. **Because Lord Jesus gave himself as a ransom for all people (1Tim 2:5-6):**

   a. **Only Lord Jesus was qualified to accomplish the salvation (1 Tim 2:5)**: The only way all people get saved is by the salvation by Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only mediator between God and mankind. There is no other way to get saved except through Jesus Christ who is both the son of God and the son of man.

   b. **Only Lord Jesus was willing to give himself for all people (1 Tim 2:6)**: The Lord loves the world so much that He gave up all the heavenly glories and became a man to demonstrate the love of our Heavenly Father. He also accomplished the salvation on the cross to save both you and me, and “all people”. The church shall understand what the Lord wants, and intercede for all people, so that they can come to knowledge of God and receive the benefits of the Gospel.

   c. **4. Because this is the reason Paul spread the Gospel (1 Tim 2:7)**: Paul already tasted the grace of the Lord. He also understood that the Lord loves the world. So he preached the Gospel to all people. Every follower of the Lord shall keep praying for all people to be saved, and by following Paul’s example preach the Gospel to all people that the only salvation is through Lord Jesus Christ, so as to please God.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Why shall we make petitions for all people? What does this kind of petitions have to do with you?

2. What shall be included in our petitions for all people? What is the significance?

3. Why shall we intercede for those in authority? Would you intercede for those leaders you don’t like, you don’t know, or you don’t agree with? Why?

4. Do you know the names of those in authority in the U. S.? Are you willing to intercede for them one by one?

5. What is the benefit from petitions for all people?
6. What does God want from all people? What has the Lord done for all people? What kind of God do you think He is from this?

7. What prayer meetings does the church have? Why do you go to those meetings? Please encourage cell members to go to the Wednesday night prayer meeting at the church!

8. Cell leader, please lead the cell group to pray for the general and local elections. May God choose for us the leaders that fear God and follow God's will.

Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, We thank you and praise you, for you love us so much that you want all people to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. You sent your only beloved Son, Lord Jesus Christ, to come to this world to save us and show your love to us! Lord, we are willing to follow your heart and make petitions and intercessions faithfully for all nations and all people, so that they can share the benefits of the Gospel. We say this with thanksgiving in the holy name of Jesus Christ. Amen!

IV. WORK (Pray for each other), 10 mins.

Please break into group of 2 or 3 to pray for each other’s needs.