

Texas Minister Teaches Christians to Pray Like Jesus

✖ A Texas minister who developed prayer guides for President George W. Bush, President Barack Obama and their administrations says there's a simple path to effective prayer—follow Jesus' model.

Pastor Suzette Caldwell, who with her husband Kirbyjon Caldwell leads Windsor Village United Methodist Church in Houston, says following the pattern set out in the Lord's prayer has produced "tremendous" results in her life and ministry.

She followed what she calls the Model Prayer when she was diagnosed with an aggressive form of breast cancer several years ago and believes that is why she has been cancer-free for the last five years.

"When I got diagnosed, I started taking this Word as my spiritual medicine," she said. "I followed the doctor's orders, and I took the Word as my spiritual medicine. I know that's what took care of all of this."

The experience motivated her to write a book, *Praying to Change Your Life*, to train other Christians to pray more effectively. That is also the focus of her annual Prayer Explosion conference, which began Wednesday and is designed to allow participants "to experience the results of hands-on, powerful praying."

Beginning and ending with praise and worship, the Model Prayer includes praying God's will, praying for your need, praying for forgiveness and praying for protection.

Although it sounds formulaic, the prayer forces Christians to focus on God's will, which "works to transform you," Caldwell

said, adding that "God's Word is His will for our lives."

"I always like to say, 'If you always pray what God never said, then you'll always experience what God never intended for your life,'" she said. "If you always say what God has already said, then you'll always experience what God has planned for your life. This Model Prayer teaches us to do that."

At the Kingdom Builders Prayer Institute, a training ministry she leads through the church, Caldwell says people have been healed and experienced financial breakthrough after learning to pray the Model Prayer.

Her husband prayed according to that pattern when he gave the benediction at President Bush's inauguration in 2004. And she says it has been key to the growth of their ministry, which at 14,000 members is the largest congregation in the United Methodist Church.

She says because of prayer, God "produced" the various ministries at Windsor Village, including a 100-acre residential community, a credit union and a pediatric health clinic. Its Power Center ministry complex has branches of Belhaven College and M.D. Anderson Cancer Center.

"Praying using this model prayer, it works," she said. "It produces results."

She acknowledges that some people pray and don't receive the answers they were seeking.

"I cannot explain the outcome for people's lives," she said. "What I know for sure is that this model prayer that Jesus told His disciples and subsequently us, it works. I know that for a fact. I know that when we trust in God, no matter what, believe His Word and obey it, it produces exactly what the Lord says it will produce according to His Word."

The Prayer Explosion ends Saturday. In addition to its teaching on prayer ministry, the conference includes a discussion about marriage and family featuring CNN contributor Roland Martin and his wife, Rev. Jacquie Hood Martin, as well as a business luncheon with Church of God in Christ Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake as the keynote speaker.