

December 27, 2015



DeGaulle Drive

CHURCH OF CHRIST

4700 GENERAL DEGAULLE DRIVE

NEW ORLEANS, LA 70131

www.DegaulleDriveCOC.com

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

Morning Bible Class	9:00 AM
Morning Worship	10:00 AM
Pew Packers	5:30 PM
Evening Worship	6:00 PM

MID-WEEK

Tuesday Ladies Class	10:00 AM
(September—May)	
Wednesday Bible Class	7:00 PM

ELDERS

Wes Arabie	504-858-2881
Bill Burchett	504-393-2409
Howard Goodale	504-272-0502

DEACONS

Steve Tucker	504-812-2617
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EVANGELISTS

Scott Cain	504-392-4110
Wes Arabie	504-858-2881

EMAIL: office@degaulledrivecoc.com

WORKS SUPPORTED:

Benevolence:

Childhaven of Cullman, Alabama

Media:

Gospel Broadcasting Network
In Search of the Lord's Way
The Old Landmarks
The Truth in Love

MISSIONS:

Budapest, Hungary: Curry Montague,
curry.monta@gmail.com

India: Ron & Karen Clayton
RCIndia@sonet.net

Padova, Italy: Jeff & Tia Brauer Family,
brauer@padovateam.org

Marshall, Texas: Azael & Dinora Alvarez

PREACHER TRAINING:

Memphis School of Preaching

BUILDING PHASE 2: PUTTING UP THE WALLS

A HOUSE OF PRAYER

Part 2

Allen Webster

WHAT HAS GOD OBLIGATED HIMSELF TO DO WHEN WE PRAY?

God Sends Workers in Answer to Prayer. Are there too few workers in your congregation? Pray about it. The Master said, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send⁴ forth labourers into His harvest" (Matthew 9:37-38). The word Jesus used here for prayer (*deomai*) means, "to beg," and suggests the fervency we should use in prayer (cf. Luke 22:44; Colossians 4:12).

If a church feels its preacher or elders are not evangelistic enough, would it not be more profitable to the kingdom to pray for them rather than criticize or castigate them? If we want to start a petition around, let's make it a prayer list. The Lord may very well put them to work. If that doesn't work, He may send someone else to do it. There could be a preacher change in the works, or perhaps just a dedicated Christian may move to the area and place membership.

Of course, this verse has in mind more than just a local area—when we pray for laborers, God may put them to work in another part of the world. He certainly knows best where the harvest is most needed. The main thing is for us to pray for workers.

God Opens Doors for Evangelism in Answer to Prayer. Ask any preacher what he considers the hardest part of evangelism. He will likely say, "Finding prospects." This may be his fault for being too busy with other things to look for them, or it may stem from the brethren moving him about the time he gets to know the people in the community.

What is the answer? Ask God to give him (or you) some studies. Paul wrote, "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ" (Colossians 4:2-3; cf. Romans 10:1). Jesus described Himself to the Philadelphia church of Christ as "He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name" (Revelation 3:7-8).⁵

In Paul's missionary report to his sponsoring congregation at Antioch, he "rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles" (Acts 14:27). In Troas, Paul found "a door was opened unto me of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 2:12; cf. 1 Corinthians 16:9). In these passages, the term *door* is used metaphorically for an entrance to any business, occasion, or opportunity of doing any thing; and consequently, "a door of utterance" is an opportunity of preaching the Gospel successfully.⁶ We should pray in general that "the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified" (2 Thessalonians 3:1) and more specifically for success in our local area.

Consider God's vantage point in heaven as He watches what happens on earth. He sees a sinner with a good heart who would become a Christian if he knew what to do. He sees a Christian in the same town on his knees asking for an opportunity to teach someone what to do to be saved. Do you think God can arrange a meeting between the two? He did with Candace's treasurer and Philip (Acts 8). He did with a local preacher named Ananias and a well-known lawyer named Saul (Acts 9). He did with a preacher on a rooftop and a soldier in a port city (Acts 10).⁷ He did with a pleading Macedonian and a wandering (wondering) missionary (Acts 16). He won't give us a midnight vision or an audible command (1 Corinthians 13:8-10), but He doesn't have to do it that way: He can set the stage behind the scenes.

We can also pray for success in specific studies. We can pray that the Lord will "open the heart" of those we are teaching (Acts 16:14) and that we'll have wisdom to say the right things, not to hinder the Truth's persuasion of this sinner. If we know of others who are teaching the lost, we should also remember to pray for them. We should let one another know when to be praying and for whom.

God Grants Peace & Deliverance in Answer to Prayer. Paul wrote, "Finally, brethren, pray for us . . . that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith" (2 Thessalonians 3:2). This inner trust in the power of prayer to deliver is also seen in the Book of Hebrews: "Pray for us . . . that I may be restored to you *the sooner*" (Hebrews 13:18-19). Paul asked the Romans to "strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea" (Romans 15:30). Peter was delivered from prison by the prayers of those in John Mark's mother's house (Acts 12), and Paul was delivered out of the "mouth of the lion" (2 Timothy 4:17).⁸

Jesus instructs us, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36). The immediate context deals with the destruction of Jerusalem and Christians escaping Titus's army, but the principle applies to God's people today. We can avoid some persecution in answer to prayer (though not all, Matthew 5:10-12; 2 Timothy 3:12).

"Ere you left your room this morning, did you think to pray?"

WHAT WILL GOD GIVE US THROUGH PRAYER?

Prayer is the largely untapped reservoir of blessings that God has for His people. What will God give us "for the asking?"

GOD EMBOLDENS US THROUGH PRAYER. One church prayed, "now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word" (Acts 4:27). What happened? "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:29).

God granted their prayer for boldness, and He will grant ours—though in a less direct way. Paul asked Christians to pray for him: "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, *that I may open my mouth boldly*, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: *that therein I may speak boldly*,¹ as I ought to speak" (Ephesians 6:18-20). Is it incidental that early Christians were known for both boldness and prayer (cf. Acts 4:13)? Their confidence and aggressiveness were without doubt tied to their prayer lives.

A praying church is constantly reminded that they are fighting on the Lord's side (Romans 8:31). One of Napoleon's generals once stated that the appearance of Napoleon on the field of battle was equivalent to a reinforcement of forty thousand men. This reputation stood him in good stead during the campaign that culminated in the great victory of Austerlitz. By some mistake Napoleon had allowed his advance guard to be cut off and hemmed in by the Austrian forces.

Taking a sudden resolution, he traveled rapidly through the night and arrived in the French camp just as the troops had awakened to the hopelessness of their predicament and were preparing to surrender. The moment they saw him the whole situation changed. Though the numbers against them were more than ten to one, every soldier suddenly became inspired with the conviction that the enemy was already beaten, and when the envoys arrived from the opposite side to demand their instant capitulation, they laughed in their faces.

The dismay of the Austrian officers was extreme, too, when, instead of the dispirited handful of men they had expected to greet, they were ushered into the presence of Napoleon himself. So far from coming to dictate terms to a beaten foe they were sent back to tell their own commander that unless *they* surrendered without delay they would be annihilated. And, they did surrender without striking a blow.

Such is the attitude of those who realize that the Captain of their salvation is on hand to lead them into battle (Hebrews 2:10). With him, "five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword" (Leviticus 26:8; cf. Numbers 14:9; Deuteronomy 28:7; 1 Chronicles 11:11, 20). Joshua also used a mathematical ratio in his parting statement: "One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, He it is that fighteth for you, as He hath promised you" (Joshua 23:10). A man who has fortified himself with prayer doesn't have to do the math as he enters into battle. God is the majority in any confrontation. He stands undefeated in six thousand years and three dispensations of battles.

NEWS & NOTE

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

UPCOMING EVENTS:

1. **SONG LEADING CLASS:** Will meet today at 4:30 PM.
2. **GENERAL TEACHERS' MEETING:** January 10 at 4PM. All teachers & those interested are encouraged to attend.

WORK NIGHT: December's work night produced 27 cards of encouragement, 245 local mailings, & 35 World Bible School mailings. Thanks to all that helped in this evangelistic effort.

NEWS N' NOTES: Please see the board for notes of gratitude from Jessica Hidalgo & Gayle Hopkins; granddaughter & sister of Tommie Brock

REJOICE! We rejoice together with heaven over Eugene Carter's decision to put on Jesus in baptism! Please welcome our new brother in Christ!

CONGRATULATIONS! Meijah Lieteau graduated from the University of New Orleans last Friday as the first recipient of the school's music composition degree. Way to go, Ms. Lieteau!

IT'S A BOY! Tre'Sean Avion Garrett was born on December 18th at 8:31 AM weighing 7lbs & 1oz. He & his mother Cyera (& his grandmother Yvette) are at home & doing well.

LAST WEEK'S RECORD

Attendance

Bible Study	57
Sunday AM	88
Sunday PM	49
Wednesday	n/a

NEEDING CARE & PRAYERS

Our Members & Visitors

Debbie Starr: Was hospitalized with pneumonia while in Colorado for the holidays.

Family of Dan Joseph: Dan passed from this life Thursday afternoon. His memorial service will be this Thursday at 11 at Garden of Memories in Metairie.

Tony Sylve: Asks for prayers as she continues to deal with epileptic episodes.

Family of Tommie Brock

Bill & Barbara Burchett

John & Mary Cullum

Loretha "Bubba" Starr

LaTonya Brooks-Washington

Our Shut-In

Elwanda Piskorik

Our Family & Friends

Roger Ferrell: Will need further surgery in the near future for a recurrent hernia.

Sean Brown: Son of Carol Byes; installed as a deacon with the Forest Hill church of Christ in Cleveland. Asking for prayers that he may fulfill the duties of the position.

Mary Macaluso: Having extreme withdrawals from narcolepsy medication.

Mike Roberts: Husband of Ann Roberts; had surgery & tests confirmed that he does not have cancer in his neck.

Joby Smith, Jr.: Grandson of Wes & Cheryl Arabie; needs prayers & encouragement. Please send your kind thoughts to him at the following address:

Tennessee Children's Home

Attn: Joby Smith

P.O. Box 10

Spring Hill, TN 37174

Kaiyah Alexander

Betty England

Quinn Merryman

Mia Paige

Family of Delmar Cooper

Family of Daryl McKinney

Allen Morris

Martha Ruddy

Deployed Servicemen

Nathan Gillespie: Nathan, Dawn, Tempe, & Dalton are serving in Japan (Well, Dawn & the kiddos are actually here this week, but they're currently *stationed* in Japan!).

Please submit all prayer requests in writing to Scott or Melissa Cain. Please supply regular updates on each individual in order to keep our prayer list up-to-date. For the sake of space, any name (except for shut-ins) will be removed after four weeks unless a new update is received. Thank you for helping us all to stay informed of the spiritual & physical needs of our members, friends, & family.

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

THIS WEEK

DECEMBER 27

Sunday AM

Welcome:

Steve Tucker

Prayer:

Ron Landis

Song Lead:

Howard Goodale

Communion Scripture:

Steve Tucker

Hebrews 1:1-6

Lord's Table:

Ron Landis

Sermon:

Scott Cain

Dismissal:

Paul Macaluso

Sunday PM

Welcome:

Steve Tucker

Prayer:

Keith Cooper

Song Lead:

Wes Arabie

Lord's Table:

Ron Landis

Sermon:

Readings I Cor. 3-4

Dismissal:

Roland Keith

NEXT WEEK

JANUARY 3

Sunday AM

Welcome:

Wes Arabie

Prayer:

Keith Cooper

Song Lead:

Howard Goodale

Communion Scripture:

Paul Macaluso (2)

Hebrews 1:8-13

Lord's Table:

Paul Macaluso (2)

Sermon:

Scott Cain

Dismissal:

Glenn Bates

Sunday PM

Welcome:

Wes Arabie

Prayer:

Roland Keith

Song Lead:

James Cobette

Lord's Table:

Paul Macaluso (2)

Sermon:

Scott Cain

Dismissal:

Howard Goodale

GOD EMPOWERS US THROUGH PRAYER. We are heirs of an earth-shaking tradition. When Jesus died, the earth shook (Matthew 27:51); when He was resurrected, the earth shook (Matthew 28:2); when the church began, the earth shook (cf. Hebrews 12:26-27); when the disciples prayed, the earth shook (Acts 4:31); when Paul and Silas prayed in prison, the earth shook (Acts 16:25-26).

God gives His people power in answer to prayer. We cannot dismiss this by saying, “Well, that was when the church was more exciting, and God won’t give us power today.” It is true that God does not give out miraculous power today (1 Corinthians 13:8-10), but untrue that He does not dispense providential power today. Paul wrote, “Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith *with power*” (2 Thessalonians 1:11). Jesus said, “And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive” (Matthew 22:21; cf. Mark 11:24).

A prayer-less church will be a powerless church. A prayerful church will be a powerful church. Jesus told His disciples, “Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak” (Mark 14:38), implying that they would receive strength to fight temptation by prayer. If churches prayed more, they would sin less. Sin is the greatest hindrance to growth, for it causes God to withhold His blessings, and sinners to be turned away.

GOD ENABLES US THROUGH PRAYER. There are four ways to affect church growth:

- Convert lost sinners (bring them in the front door);
- Keep weak members from leaving (going out the back door);
- Restore erring members back to service; and
- Lead unfruitful saints to fruit-bearing (John 15:1-5).

Genuine prayer helps in each area. We can and should pray for ourselves to be stronger (Matthew 6:13; Luke 11:4). (Remember a stronger church begins with *me*.) Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, “Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, *and that thou wouldest keep me from evil*, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested” (1 Chronicles 4:10; cf. Psalm 121:7).

We can also pray for other Christians to be stronger. Jesus told Peter: “I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:32; cf. John 17:9-11; 2 Thessalonians 3:3). Paul wrote, “Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest” (2 Corinthians 13:6; cf. Philippians 1:4-6; Colossians 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 3:10; 5:23). John wrote, “If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and He shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it” (1 John 5:16).

We have far more need to pray that we may not do evil, than that we may not suffer evil. The apostle not only desired that they might be kept from sin, but also that they might grow in grace, and increase in holiness (1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:1).⁹

Endonotes:

- ⁴ The word for *send* here (*ekballo*) is interesting—almost humorous. It means, “to eject, expel.” The picture is that God will furiously drive out a worker when we pray for the harvest to be reaped.
- ⁵ Matthew Henry’s comments on this verse are good: “He opens a door of opportunity to his churches; he opens a door of utterance to his ministers; he opens a door of entrance, opens the heart. He shuts the door of heaven against the foolish, who sleep away their day of grace; and against the workers of iniquity, how vain and confident soever they may be.”
- ⁶ *Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*
- ⁷ It is interesting to note that Peter was *praying* on the rooftop when the men arrived.
- ⁸ Prayer is not mentioned in the immediate context, but knowing Paul as we do, we know he prayed. He is, after all, the author of 1 Thessalonians 5:17.
- ⁹ *parrhesiazomai*, “to be frank in utterance, or confident in spirit and demeanor.”