

January 10, 2016



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 (September—May)	10:00 AM
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 3: ADDING THE CEILING AND THE ROOF A HOUSE OF PRAYER

Part 4

Allen Webster

Some activities have pleasing side effects. We start jogging to lose weight and find that it also relieves tension. We invest in IRAs to avoid taxes but end up with a tidy retirement. We stop to help a family whose car is broken down and end up converting them and becoming friends.

Prayer is like that. It has side effects - and they are all pleasant. These are not answers that God gives to prayers, but are extras He throws in to praying churches (cf. 1 Kings 3). You could say God tops off His answers to prayer with additional blessings. In the analogy of building a house (church) of prayer, these crowning blessings are the ceiling and roof.

A Praying Church Will Have Fewer Rebellious and Unruly Members. Jesus spent more time in prayer than any man in Scripture, and it is not coincidental that He was also God's most submissive Servant (Matthew 26:39; John 5:30; John 6:38; John 12:28; John 14:31; Romans 15:3). When we pray as He taught us, "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth, and forgive us our sins" (Luke 11:2-4), we come away without the baggage of pride, which is the fuel that starts church fires. Our perspective is better on our knees. We come to see ourselves as beggars needing what only God can give (cf. Matthew 5:3). We can better see the big picture when we are small in our own eyes. God is in heaven; we are on earth. God is infinite; we are finite. God sees the future; we have trouble understanding the present. God on His worst day is better than we are on our best day (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:25). The more we pray, the more we recognize that we are impotence kneeling in the presence of Power and need holding a hand out to Supply.

The more time we spend thinking about God, the less likely we are to rely upon ourselves. Jesus, when He was one of us, expressed man's position: "I can of Mine own self do nothing, I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me" (John 5:30). Job was a man of prayer, and he learned to submit to God whatever the circumstances. At the death of all his children, and the loss of all his property, he still said, "the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD" (Job 1:21).

David spent much time at God's throne, and came back with the attitude: "behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him" (2 Samuel 15:26). When Israel saw their true condition, they prayed, "do Thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto Thee" (Judges 10:15). Even though the message was against him, Eli said, "It is the LORD: let Him do what seemeth Him good" (1 Samuel 3:18).

If preachers taught churches to spend more time in prayer during the week, there would be less arguing with his sermons on Sunday. If elders led their flocks into meaningful prayer, they will have fewer of them disputing their decisions. If we went back to praying as Jesus prayed, there would be no rejecting of God's Truth for innovations He never put a stamp of approval upon. God tops off the efforts of a praying church with peace and a submissive membership.

A Praying Church Will Be a Forgiving Church (Mark 11:15). So many congregations don't grow because there are old feuds in the family, bad blood in the

body, and half-buried hatchets under the pews. Unforgiveness is a rotting carcass in the spring of the water of life; it is mold on the bread of life we are trying to dispense to our communities; it is a cancer in the body of Christ. We must get rid of it!

How can we develop a forgiving attitude in church members at odds with each other? Appeal to self-preservation. We must simply tell them what Jesus did - if you do not forgive others, God will not forgive you. If you want others to go to hell, then you will go there.

This seems to have been the main point Jesus was making in the Model Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13). This is the part He chose to elaborate upon after concluding it. He did not comment on hallowed, or daily bread, or the coming of the kingdom, but He did upon forgiveness. After He said, "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (6:12), He explained, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (6:14-15). He was one of us, and divine, too, so He knew this would be a hard thing for Adam's race.

A Praying Church Will Become a More Holy Church. When Jesus went up onto a mountain to pray, He came back with His face shining (Luke 9:28-29). When Moses spent time with God, his face was so bright they had to cover it (Exodus 34:29-33). Stephen, a man close enough to God to be described as full of faith and the Holy Ghost (Acts 6:5), had his face shine as an angel (Acts 6:15).

We may not get up from prayer looking any different, but we will get up acting differently. We cannot spend time in the presence of God's holiness without some of it rubbing off on us. Anthropologists have long observed that man becomes like the god he worships. As we worship the holy God (1 Peter 1:16) of Scripture in prayer, we become more holy. Would not our churches grow faster if there were less hypocrisy and worldliness among our members? If we can develop a praying membership, hypocrisy and worldliness will dry up on the vine and then be cast away as untimely figs.

A Praying Church Will Be a More Optimistic Church. Some older preachers observe a higher level of pessimism in the brotherhood today than when they were younger. Some younger preachers (and older ones, too) are less aggressive in preaching the simple Gospel of God today because they seem to think that the things we have preached from the Bible have had their day. They say the church of Christ is on the decline. Some insist that we have to change with (for) the culture, or we will die. Is Christ dead (Romans 8:31)?! Then how could His body be dead? Is God finished with the work of saving people? Then how could His instrument for saving souls be out of business?

We can always make a case for pessimism, but we can also make a case for optimism. The only answer to pessimism is to focus on God instead of on man. God has lost none of His great power (2 Samuel 22:32-33; Job 36:22; Psalm 66:3; Jeremiah 32:17). And He still gives power and boldness to His people when they pray (Psalm 68:35). We need to pray again the Psalmist's prayer: "O God, forsake me not; until I have showed Thy strength unto this generation, and Thy power to every one that is to come" (Psalm 71:18).

There are clouds, of course, and we would be foolish to lay down our swords and use a trowel in both hands, but we also must not put down our trowel and take up two swords (cf. Nehemiah 4:17). There have been clouds before. If we had been alive in March of 1866 when Alexander Campbell died, what would we have thought?¹ The Civil War had fractured the country and divided much of the church. We might have wondered if the movement would survive, but it did. If we had been alive during the 1900s when the digressives split the church, we would have wondered if it would survive. We lost much of the brotherhood - most of the members, almost all of the large churches, and most of our church properties. But the church survived. J.D. Tant, a powerful preacher, came to Nashville in the early 1900s and had a debate with a Baptist preacher. After the debate the Baptist and Reflector Magazine wrote: "That is the end of Campbellism in this community. The death knell has been sounded, the casket has been lowered, Campbellism is dead in Nashville." They were, of course, using a derogatory misnomer for the Lord's church, but the church certainly was not dead. About one hundred and thirty churches of Christ will meet in the Nashville area next Lord's day. David Lipscomb, like an old woman with a broom trying to keep the tide of digression from coming in, taunted and fought. And the church survived. We regained our aggressiveness and then thrived.

WHEN IS PRAYER THE ANSWER?

Prayer is not always the answer. The Bible teaches that prayer is important (Luke 18:1; Romans 12:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Timothy 2:1), but it also teaches that there are times when prayer is inappropriate. When Moses prayed that God would change His mind about punishing Miriam, God told him to quit praying and accept the consequences of sin (Numbers 12:13-14).

Prayer won't change some things:

1. If I commit sexual sin, prayer may remove the guilt, but it will not restore my purity.
2. If I am unfaithful to my mate, prayer cannot remove the fact that I have committed adultery, and my spouse can put me away (Matthew 19:9).
3. If I am promiscuous and contract a disease (e.g., AIDS), prayer will not miraculously remove the disease.
4. If I destroy my liver with alcohol or my lungs with cigarettes, prayer will not restore those on my deathbed.
5. If I drink, drive, and kill someone, all the prayer in the world won't bring that person back from the dead.
6. If I as a parent waste precious years of training and molding my child into the image of Christ, it may be that one day I'll

NEWS & NOTES

LAST WEEK'S RECORD

Attendance

Service	2016	Last
Time	Goal	Week
Bible Study	70	61
Sunday AM	100	97
Sunday PM	60	58
Wednesday	60	53

Bible Reading

Reading Plan	2016	Last
	Goal	Week
Daily Readers	45	?
Bible in 2016	45	?
NT in 2016	60	?

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

UPCOMING EVENTS:

1. **SONG LEADING CLASS:** Will meet at **5PM** today.
2. **GENERAL TEACHERS' MEETING:** Today at 4PM. All teachers & those interested are encouraged to attend.
3. **POTLUCK:** January 24th after AM worship service. Last names A-L have setup & cleanup.

NEW MEMBER: Our sister Justice Pitts desires to labor together with the saints of DeGaulle Drive. We are thankful to count her as part of the number here.

NEEDING CARE & PRAYERS

Our Members & Visitors

Voncile Lieteau: Asks for prayers for her family through difficult times.

Bill & Barbara Burchett
Family of Dan Joseph
Debbie Starr

John & Mary Cullum
Gelanda Riddick
LaTonya Brooks-Washington

Our Shut-In

Elwanda Piskorik

Our Family & Friends

Family of Allen Marshall: 65 yr-old son-in-law of Louise Fitzgerald; passed away unexpectedly last week at his Tulsa apartment.

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

Katy Swain: Granddaughter of Mack & Chris Meek; was baptized into Christ on December 27th.

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
Roger Ferrel
Quinn Merryman
Mike Roberts

Betty England
Mary Macaluso
Allen Morris

Deployed Servicemen

Nathan Gillespie: Nathan, Dawn, Tempe, & Dalton are serving in Japan.

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

THIS WEEK

JANUARY 10

Sunday AM

Welcome:

Howard Goodale

Prayer:

Roland Keith

Song Lead:

Howard Goodale

Communion Scripture:

Roland Keith

Colossians 1:15-20

Lord's Table:

Paul Macaluso (2)

Sermon:

Scott Cain

Dismissal:

Ron Landis

Sunday PM

Welcome:

Howard Goodale

Prayer:

Paul Macaluso (2)

Song Lead:

Ron Landis

Lord's Table:

Paul Macaluso (2)

Sermon:

Scott Cain

Dismissal:

Howard Goodale

NEXT WEEK

JANUARY 17

Sunday AM

Welcome:

Steve Tucker

Prayer:

Wes Arabie

Song Lead:

Howard Goodale

Communion Scripture:

Norman Starr

Romans 5:1-11

Lord's Table:

Paul Macaluso (2)

Sermon:

Scott Cain

Dismissal:

Jerome Riddick

Sunday PM

Welcome:

Steve Tucker

Prayer:

Jerome Riddick

Song Lead:

Scott Cain

Lord's Table:

Paul Macaluso (2)

Sermon:

Wes Arabie

Dismissal:

Glenn Bates

pray that they'll come back, and I won't be able to get them back.

7. If I gossip against someone, I may pray, and be forgiven, but those words will not be unheard.

8. If one of these young folks gets in a car with some friends and finds himself in a criminal situation, he may pray and still be an accessory to the crime.

God told Joshua to get rid of the sin in the camp, and then pray (Joshua 7:10). Jeremiah was told not to pray for rebellious Israel (Jeremiah 7:9-10, Jeremiah 7:16; Jeremiah 11:14). God told Cornelius (Acts 10) and Saul (Acts 9, Acts 22, Acts 26; cf. Acts 22:16), in effect, to stop praying, because there was something else they needed to do in order to be saved.

But often prayer is the answer. How can we encourage more prayer at the grass roots level? It needs to start with elders, deacons, and preachers. When we first set the example, we can say with Paul: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). While one does not talk of his personal, private prayer life, neither can he hide it. Members can tell which elders and deacons pray. Listeners can discern if the preacher has spent any time on his knees that week. It just shows. Paul wrote, "Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid" (1 Timothy 5:25).

Once the example is being set, preachers should give emphasis to prayer from the pulpit and in church publications. A congregation can also put in place some public prayer sessions beyond the opening and closing prayers. One that works well is to ask all who want to pray for the church to come a half hour before the Sunday morning Bible class. Choose an appropriately sized room (don't meet in the auditorium because others coming in will disrupt the prayers). Designate one man as the leader. Any who have prayer requests who will not be there can call him ahead of time. When the meeting starts, he quickly takes additional requests from those present. Write them down - perhaps on a marker board. Let all male Christians who desire to lead a prayer, do so each Sunday. If there are several, ask each to pray a short prayer. If there are too many, then rotate prayer leaders from week to week. The session is also open to women and children, of course. One does not have to lead the prayer to pray effectively. Some churches ask the sisters to write cards to those who were mentioned in prayer that day. These cards can be passed around and signed by all present. (Those shut-in their homes or hospital rooms with little to do will pass the time trying to decipher all the names and, perhaps, trying to place all the faces.) This is much more personal than just the name of a church with a note saying, "We are all praying for you."

Some churches are going back to Wednesday prayer meetings. These can be done monthly, quarterly, or on the Wednesdays preceding Gospel meetings and other special events. They should be carefully planned and not just left to whoever shows up to pray for whatever comes to mind. Those who will lead prayer should be informed beforehand. To avoid too much duplication in the service, ask each man to pray for a particular part of the work or event. With a Gospel meeting, for instance, one man could pray for the preacher, another for those who are not yet converted, another for the wayward, another for the songleader and song-service, another for the congregation, and so forth. Incidentally, it is hardly coincidental that the church stopped growing in our country about the same time Wednesday night prayer meetings went out of vogue.

We have plowed no new ground in this study. We have scaled no unvisited peaks of divine Truth. Most preachers have preached such sermons at fairly regular intervals. But have we implemented these ideas into rubber meets the road, day-in-day-out church programs? Has our methodology matched our theology? Do we practice what we preach?

Augustus Caesar is said to have found Rome a city of wood, and left it a city of marble. If the congregation where we worship is a city of wood, let's start praying - and working - and see if in ten years it is not a city of marble.

Endnotes:

¹⁴ The Rebirth of America, Arthur S. DeMoss Foundation, 1986, p. 113

¹⁵ These illustrations are taken from an unpublished sermon by Paul Rogers. It was preached in Fulton, Mississippi, during a VBS.