

UPCOMING

- Fellowship meal March 29 following worship service
- Singing Night this Wednesday night
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Prayer List

Pray for all those with ongoing health ailments.

- Renee Cumberland (cancer)
- Ora Barrett
- Connie Montgomery
- Emily Linton
- Andy Duncan (Liver transplant)
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Communion Preparation

2026 preparation list is in foyer
March - Rowell
April - Potts
May -

Birthday / Anniversary

Mark Potts - 6th
Larry Montgomery - 13th
Kylie Joiner - 23rd

Men to Serve

Announcements - Shay Cooper

Scripture Reading - Luke 18:1 - 8

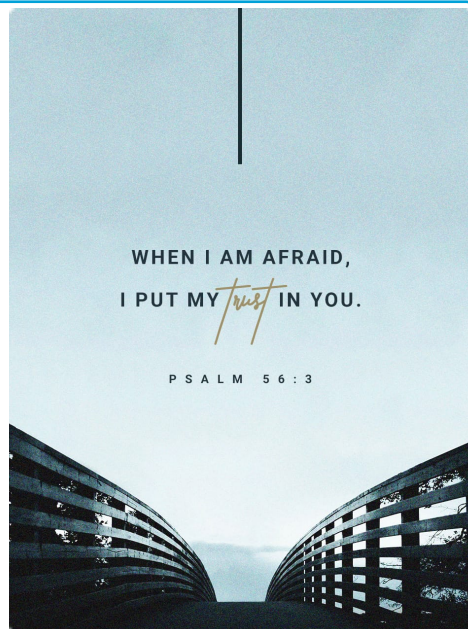
Lead Singing - Chuck Rowell

Head of Lord's Table - Larry Montgomery

Assist on Lord's Table - James Johnson

Scripture Reading - Matthew 27:15 - 31

Closing Prayer - Dwight Callens



03 / 22 / 2026

WELCOME

We are a body of believers whose soul intention is to glorify and serve the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the head of His church. Our desire is to reflect that of our God--that all be saved. Anyone who is willing to humble himself before the mighty hand of God can be saved.

WEEKLY SERVICES & MEETINGS

SUNDAY

Bible Study //
9:30 am
Worship Service //
10:30 am

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study //
7:00 pm

NORTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST

4217 Highway 39 N // Meridian, MS 39301

PHONE: (601)483-2726 WEB: www.nscocmeridian.com

Join us via live stream for our worship service!

Like our Facebook page!

SERMON NOTES

Praying Through the Darkness

By Gary Henry

“Out of the depths I have cried to You, O Lord” (Psalm 130:1).

When you are passing through a “dark night of the soul,” how does that affect your prayer life? I hope no one has taught you that it is wrong to pray when your faith is weak, for it is never more important to pray than when we are discouraged and doubtful. If the times are dark, that is no reason to stop praying. At such times, rather than backing away from prayer or looking for a detour around the darkness, we need to pray through the darkness.

In the Parable of the Persistent Widow, Jesus’ point was that “men always ought to pray and not lose heart” (Luke 18:1). When we have prayed for God to do something and He has not done it, that fact alone shouldn’t cause us to quit praying. However, we need to be equally persistent when we are discouraged and God seems so far away that prayer feels like a pointless exercise. To give up and allow the darkness to defeat us would please no one but the devil.

Think for a moment about the time when Jesus was teaching about doing good to others, even our enemies. He said, “If you love those who love you, what reward have

you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?” (Matthew 5:46). I believe He would also say, “If you pray only when you’re in the mood, what do you do more than others? It doesn’t take a very mature person to do that.”

In prayer, as well as everything else, there will be times when steadfastness is the virtue we need the most. Winston Churchill wasn’t talking about prayer when he said, “It is the courage to continue that counts,” but the point is certainly applicable. When the devil has wrapped a cloud of darkness around us so thick it feels like God was never anything more than a foolish dream we had, we will either keep praying despite the darkness . . . or the devil will have us.

The truth is, God is laboring mightily to solve every problem we’ve ever prayed to Him about. Loving us more than any earthly father ever loved his child, He tells us what He told Paul, “My strength is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9). So let’s plant our flag on the battlefield and stand with David, who prayed, “If I say, ‘Surely the darkness will hide me, and the light around me will be night’ — even the darkness is not dark to you. The night shines like the day; darkness and light are alike to you” (Psalms 139:11,12 CSB).

“In the dark night of the soul, bright flows the river of God” (John of the Cross).

Gossip and the Three Gates

By Kent Heaton

The most powerful weapon in the world is not a nuclear bomb, a fast airplane, mighty ship, indestructible tank, or secret weapon of mass destruction. It is not a very large instrument and in relation to other parts of its same unit, it is a little member. Yet, this little member has caused more wars, death, destruction, and unrest in more cases and times than any other thing in the world. Since the creation of man, the instrument created by God for good has been put to evil purposes with death as its final victory. This deadly foe is the tongue.

For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. Indeed, we put bits in horses’ mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring can yield both salt water and fresh. (James 3:2-12, NKJV)

The tongue is a fire that destroys everything in its path when not used properly. One of the most insidious ways that the tongue is used is gossip. A gossip is a person who habitually reveals personal or sensational facts, often untrue. The heart of a gossip is evil for they do not seek the good of the individual but the good of the evil news. Their heart is defiled with the ungodly love of talebearing. The wise man had much to say about those who bore tales in deceit (Proverbs 16:27-30; 11:9, 13; 6:19; 18:8; 20:3, 19; 10:18).

Gossips are busybodies and are evil people (2 Thessalonians 3:11-12). Paul wrote to Titus (Titus 3:1-2) and exhorted him to “speak evil of no one.” In Ephesians 4:31, Paul describes it as “evil speaking.” Peter told the saints if they had to suffer, suffer as a Christian and not as a “busybody in other people’s matters” (1 Peter 4:15-16).

How do you tell a gossip? They are not hard to find. Their mouths are always wide open! Consider the following taken from “The Arabian”:

THREE GATES — If you are tempted to reveal a tale to you someone has told about another, make it pass, before you speak, three gates of gold. These narrow gates: First, “Is it true?” Then, “Is it needful?” In your mind give truthful answer. And the next is last and narrowest, “Is it kind?” And if to reach your lips at last it passes through the these gateways three, then you may tell the tale, nor fear what the results of speech may be.

David wrote in Psalm 15:1-3, “LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart; He who does not backbite with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend.” Gossip is a sin. Repent. As someone once said, “No one can keep the gossipers from gossiping, but all of us can keep our ears from serving as garbage cans.”

A Little More Regarding Gossip — A young man went to an elderly man for advice. He had spread a tale about another that he had later learned was untrue. He asked how he could repair the damage. The old man told him to lay a fluffy chicken feather at the door of every house in town, then come back for more instructions. When the young man returned, the old man said, “Now go and retrieve each feather.” The boy objected that by now the wind would have scattered them and it would be impossible to recover them. The old man nodded in agreement and said, “So it is with your words. Like the feathers which the wind scattered, they have blown in every directions, and you can never recall them.” (author unknown)

A Jamaican Proverb: “Empty barrel mek di most noise,” i.e. an empty barrel makes the most noise — meaning that he who has the least to say will often say the most.