



# A SPECIAL CALL TO PRAYER

## FROM GARY COOK

I wanted to share with you a special prayer need in the life of our University and ask you to prayerfully consider joining us in asking the Lord to provide.

This past summer, I was in the midst of my prayer time and sensed that the Lord wanted us to begin a special campaign to raise money for student scholarships. Of course, we have always asked for scholarship funds from individuals, but the Lord very specifically told me to begin a campaign to raise a total of \$100 million in scholarships.

As you know, college tuition is very expensive, and although we have tried over the years to keep our costs as low as possible, and in fact, we are among the least expensive private universities in Texas, we still have many, many students who need financial help. These are wonderful students who come from wonderful families, but they just do not have the money to pay for school, and often, students have to put their college plans on hold or attend a state school or community college since the tuition in those places is subsidized by state taxes.

So we have a great need for scholarship money, and when the Lord laid this campaign on my heart, I knew how wonderful it would be to have this help for our students. However, I was very hesitant to announce this or let anyone else know that we wanted to raise this much money. Former Mayor of New York, Rudolph Giuliani, wrote a book on leadership, and in that book he gave some advice that resonated with me. He said that the mark of good leadership isn't to announce huge, grandiose plans, because often circumstances prevent us from fulfilling them. Instead, it is best to "under promise and over deliver." And I have always attempted to lead in this manner.

But when the Lord laid this on my heart, it was a challenge for me. I debated with the Lord about whether or not we should announce this campaign. During this time, I was reading a wonderful book by Mark Batterson, who is a pastor in Washington, D.C., called *The Circle Maker*, and in there, he writes about how in our prayers and ministry we should always seek to do those things that only the Lord can accomplish.

These words reminded me that only God could provide this money, because I had tried and tried through the years to raise money for the school, and it has taken some 27 years to construct our new buildings on the campus, and that has cost about \$127 million. Fortunately, they are all paid for. If it took that long to raise the money, I wasn't sure how long it would take to raise another \$100 million. So while I continued

to pray about it, I also continued to ask the Lord to provide confirmation about whether or not we should have a campaign to raise this money.

A few weeks later, I met with our vice presidents, and I shared with them about reading the book by Dr. Batterson and our need to ask for what only the Lord could provide. I didn't share with them what the Lord had laid on my heart about the scholarship campaign, and instead just listened to their ideas. We talked for awhile and came up with some wonderful things that could be accomplished, but nobody mentioned the scholarship campaign.

The following day, one of the vice presidents gave me a letter, and in it, he stated that on the way home after the meeting, the Lord laid on his heart the need for us to raise \$100 million in scholarship aid. When I read that I was so surprised, and I took it as a sign, but I still needed more.

Over the course of the next several months, the Lord consistently laid on my heart the need for the campaign, and time and again, He told me to trust Him to accomplish this task and not rely on my own abilities.

So at the beginning of the fall semester, I explained everything to the vice presidents, and each one of them supported this new campaign. Then I brought it before the Board of Trustees, and they unanimously affirmed it as well and encouraged us to proceed ahead. I was able to share this with all of the DBU faculty and staff members, as well as the student body at chapel and at our annual Russell H. Perry Dinner.

Our first step in this campaign is really our most important step, and that is to turn to the Lord in prayer and ask Him to provide. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills; we just need to be faithful to ask, and He will receive all of the glory.

Would you please consider joining us in this prayer effort? We are working to enlist 1,000 prayer partners to daily pray that the Lord will provide us with this \$100 million for scholarships, and it would be wonderful if we could include our senior adult prayer partners in this effort. Some of you have joined, and I know that there are many more of you who are so faithful to pray for us who would be willing to add this to your daily prayers.

We serve a wonderful God who is always faithful. Our job is just to be obedient and to seek His face. Would you join with us in praying for this scholarship campaign?

Sincerely,

Gary Cook  
DBU President