

1 Timothy
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“The challenge of prayer”

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I. Introduction

Paul started the 2nd chapter of his letter to Timothy with the elements and order of the worship service, now he gives Timothy the aspects of what “***Prayer***” will accomplish if we devote ourselves to this. We will be challenged to pray for “*all men*” and specifically for “*kings and all who are in authority*” and with our current political climate many will find this difficult. But I remind you that long before the broken campaign promises of past and present presidents there was a world political figure named Augustus Caesar so named because he thought himself the “*highest One.*” He said in his own way, “*No new taxes*” and “*If you like your insurance and doctor you can keep it!*” but broke those campaign promises by raising taxes and sending the young couple named Mary and Joseph to a different doctor in a different city. Little did he realize that this broken campaign promise was being used to fulfill biblical prophecy of Micah 5:2? So the August one was really being led by the Almighty One who was guiding the birth of His Son to Bethlehem. Saints we have never met a person that doesn’t need prayer nor a person that we cannot or should not pray for! Jesus said in Matthew 5:44 “*But I say to*

you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.”

II. Vs. 1c-2 Twofold effect of our prayers

Vs. 1c-2 The greater question based upon the text is, “*Who shouldn’t we pray for?*” as Paul starts out in verse 1 saying “*all men*” and by that he does not mean for the church to pray for all mankind as that would be a very long service. What he means is **all mankind without exceptions or distinctions**. And I’m not certain if this was Paul’s intent but it works quite well with our current dislike for Politian’s Paul says, “*Just so you know the depth by which I mean there ought to be no exceptions, pray for those who have the responsibility to regulate the affairs of your life, those who are over you.*” The emphasis in this passage is upon the little three letter word ALL as Paul uses the word 5 times in the first seven verse.

Early Christians were often accused of being against the state as they wouldn’t worship the King as they worship a higher King, but here we see that Paul encourages the believers to not worship the king but to pray for him. Now it is safe to say that there were scanty few of those leaders in Paul’s day that were godly but yet Paul still says to pray for them. We are to pray for kings and even for bad presidents because they are in positions of authority by the predetermined counsel of God. Paul had recently been released from imprisonment because of his faith in Christ by the cruelest Roman Emperor Nero, yet as Paul wrote this letter to Timothy he was including Nero! **I’m afraid that far too often the Christian in history has been far too quick to pick up arms instead of bend their knees in prayer.**

Next Paul mentions “*and all who are in authority*” which would include all subordinate positions in government all the way down to the local levels without bias, even those that are unrighteous and ungodly, cruel and vicious! Now we can that God would open the eyes of their hearts that He would transform their lives but the truth is that God doesn’t have to do so to use them. Proverbs 21:1 tells us “*The kings heart is in the hand of the Lord, like the rivers of waters; He turns it wherever He wishes.*” We need only to turn the pages of our Bibles to read of kings like Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus the Persian and others who are called the “*servant of God*” even when their hearts weren’t right with God and they were punishing God’s people. The result of our prayers for those in Government is that we can expect that our prayers will have a **twofold affect**:

1. **Leads the citizens of all society into “a quiet and peaceable life...”**: Wow, saints have you ever thought about this fact that peace and peacefulness of our society lay in the hands of those who believers who pray? Conversely the opposite is also true, when God’s people aren’t praying for the government. In 2 Chron 7:14 God say to His people, “*if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*” Would you categorize this time we are living in as quiet and peaceable? If not we now know the reason why, God’s people are not humbling themselves and praying for the leadership of the nation! By the way, “*complaining about leaders is not the same thing as praying for our leaders!*”
2. **Leads the citizens of the Kingdom of God “in all godliness and reverence.”**:
The first result when we pray for those in leadership over us in our Government is

outward, a peaceful life. The 2nd thing we can expect is **inward transformation** that will result in us becoming more **godly** and **reverential**.

- a. **Godly**: This word in the Greek is not normally translated “*godly*” as it means “*a consciousness of what is required in life with respect to God, your fellow man, and yourself.*” Paul says, when we pray for our leaders we will go through life knowing what is required of us in all circumstances and situations. Praying for those who govern us will cause us to **better**

understand:

- **What is really happening**
- **Why they act and behave the way they do**
- **The forces and pressures that are at work against them in society**

As such we don't get all amped up and angry at them and instead because of praying for them we are able to live with a sense of assurance and confidence in spite of the world we live in.

- b. **Reverence**: The word in the Greek would better be translated “*respectful or courteous*” we will treat our fellow human better when we are praying for them as we realize that they just like us are a victim and not the problem. When we pray for those over us we will become more courteous and grace filled people.

III. Vs. 3-4 The aim of prayer

Vs. 3 Prayer accomplishes the will of God. Paul tells us that prayer is the means by which God opens people's hearts to the gospel that they may become believers.

Prayer is the first thing that God uses to “*till the ground*” for the seed of the gospel that it may bring forth fruit in its season! When God's people pray for folks, even

though they have heard the gospel multiple times prior, they will start hearing and light will begin to creep into dark hearts.

Vs. 4 He desires “*all men*” to be saved to come to the knowledge of the truth! And again the word all here means “*without distinction*” He has no bias towards anybody all kinds of people can be saved. ***Let’s put this to the test, let’s put on the prayer group people we know that are away from the knowledge and experience of the love of God and watch what God will do in opening their hearts!***

IV. Vs. 5-7 Four truths

Vs. 5-7 Gods desire is that “*all men*” to be saved and Paul clarifies the way in which prayer will accomplish this as he lists ***four specific truths with regards to the means of man’s salvation:***

1. There is “*One God...*”: There is only One God, there is not a god for the Muslims, a god for the Hindus’ a god for the Buddhist’s. No there is One God and one way for a person to come into a relationship with God.
2. There is “*one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus*”: There is no other means possible by which man can know God except through Jesus. When Jesus walked upon this other people marveled not because they believed that He was God, they marveled because He was like no other man in the way He lived, spoke and interacted with others. Jesus said it in John 14:6 “*No man come to the Father except through Me.*” Saints the truth is ***there are many paths to Jesus but there is only one path to God and that is through Jesus!*** Jesus said in Matthew 7:14 “*Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*”

3. There is One who gave Himself a ransom for ALL.” The Perfect Lamb of God paid the price and through His death we have been set free from the penalty and power of sin. Some folks say that there are many different ways in which you can relate to that One God and that they have chosen to relate to that God through Islam, or Mormonism but there is only one way to relate to God and that is through the perfect man Christ Jesus. Jesus gave Himself so that all kinds of people, from every walk of life may come to God through Him.

Vs. 6b-7 Finally Paul mentions the 4th and final truth with regards to mankind’s salvation as well as the third aspect of what goes into the Church worship service preaching the Word of God. There is only one gospel, one truth to be taught with regards to mankind’s salvation and that is teaching the good news about Jesus. Paul was appointed to that very work to speak the truth about Jesus into every type of person to Jews and gentiles alike. You can see why the priority of the Church worship service is design for prayer, praise and preaching so that God can change broken hearts and ruined lives! This is what “*body life*” with in these walls is supposed to be and by the power of God working through us I pray it is what we are growing into. We need to realize like what God said through Jeremiah 29 that we are only going to be in our Babylon 70 years so go ahead get married, have children, build houses, have a career but don’t get too attached because you are only going to be here 70 years are so.