

July 16, 2017

“Pray for Those in Authority”

Focal Passage: 1 Timothy 2:1-8 (NASB)

Cross References: Psalm 24:3-6; Ezekiel 18:21-23, 30-32; Matthew 20:28; 28:19-20; John 3:16-17; Romans 10:11-17; 13:1-8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 1:2-3; 4:4-5; James 4:8; 2 Peter 3:8-9; 1 John 1:7-10; 2:1-2; 4:1-3

Lesson Idea: We should pray for those in authority so that we can live peaceful and godly lives and share Christ Jesus freely with those around us.

BIBLE IN A YEAR READING PLAN

July 9 Psalms 120-132	July 10 Psalms 133-139
July 11 Psalms 140-145	July 12 Psalms 146-150
July 13 Proverbs 1-3	July 14 Proverbs 4-6
July 15 Proverbs 7-9	July 16 Proverbs 10-12

Background: Paul put a priority on the church’s prayers, because he knew that God could provide peace. Paul’s desire went further than just a tranquil life. He desired the church to live in a peaceful society, so that the sharing of the truth about Jesus would go unhindered. How often do we neglect the opportunities to share Christ Jesus with our friends and neighbors, even though we live in a society that protects our freedom to do so? We have seen in recent years the threatening of those freedoms. This passage serves as a wake-up call to pray for our nation, AND also to utilize the opportunities that we possess today to share Jesus with our world.

1 Timothy 2:1-8

1 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. 3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time. 7 For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying) as a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

8 Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension.

DISCUSSION:

- v 1. Why does Paul use the phrase “first of all” when talking about prayer? Define the different forms of prayer that he calls for:
 - *entreaties*
 - *prayers*
 - *petitions*
 - *thanksgivings*

NOTE: from David Guzik:

First of all: This does not refer to time; it refers to importance. What comes next is of first importance in the heart and mind of Paul. Paul’s broader context following is the public worship of Christians, so this begins a series of instructions for those meetings. . .

Supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks: These terms describe the wide categories of our communication with God. *Supplication* is simply asking for something. Prayer should never be all asking, but it should ask in bold confidence from God’s Word. *Prayers* is a broad word, referring to all communication with the Lord. *Intercessions* refer to the requests we make on behalf of others. As we pray, there should be time when the needs of other find a place in our prayer before God’s throne. *Giving of thanks* is an essential part of our walk with God. Those who lack a basic sense of gratitude in their lives lack a basic Christian virtue.

- v 1-2. Who does Paul say we should pray for? Why should we pray especially for those who are in authority? What kind of kings were in authority in Paul’s day? What kinds of persecution had he faced from the authorities? What should his commitment to pray for hostile authorities teach us about how to pray for our governing authorities? (see Romans 13:1-8)

NOTE: from Guzik:

All men: This tells us whom we are to pray for with these various means of prayer. The idea is that all men need prayer. You have never met someone that you cannot or should not pray for. Most Christians find it easy to pray for their family, friends, and loved ones, but it should not end there. We should also pray for our enemies and for those with whom we have conflict. We should pray for those who annoy us, and for those who seem to be against us. Each of these fall into the category of all men. To pray for all men also means to pray evangelistically. We should pray for our friends who need to know Jesus, for our coworkers, and for others we have regular contact with.

For kings and all who are in authority: Early Christians were often accused of undermining the state because they claimed a higher Lord other than Caesar. Yet they would point out that they supported the state by being good citizens and by praying for the emperor, not to him. We should give thanks for those who are in authority, because God has ordained government in society to keep order (Romans 13:1-7).

That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence: We should pray for a government and rulers that would simply leave us alone and let us live as Christians. Christians are to look for no special favors from the government. Our goal is a level playing field, unrestricted by state intervention.

- v 2. How does your life demonstrate “godliness and dignity?”
- v 3-4. Why is this kind of life “good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior?”
- v 4. What does this verse say God desires? Why does He want that? (see Ezekiel 18:21-23, 30-32; John 3:16-17; 2 Peter 3:8-9) How do people “come to the knowledge of the truth?” (see Romans 10:11-17)

NOTE: from Guzik:

(1 Timothy 2:3-4) The goal of prayer for all men: That they would be saved.

Who desires all men to be saved: On a human level, we can certainly say that God desires all men to be saved. There is no one in such high authority that they don’t need salvation in Jesus. However, from a divine perspective, we understand there is a sense in which we can not say that God desires all men to be saved - otherwise, either all men would automatically be saved, or God would not have left an element of human response in the gospel. God’s desire for all men to be saved is conditioned by His desire to have a genuine response from human beings. He won’t fulfill His desire to save all men at the expense of making men robots that worship Him from simply being programmed to do so. . . Because this is true (as seen from a human perspective), therefore the gospel must be presented to all without reservation

All men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth: Salvation is clearly associated with coming to the knowledge of the truth. One cannot be saved apart from at least some understanding of who Jesus is and what He has done to save us.

- v 5. What does this verse teach us about other world religions? How does Christ Jesus serve as a mediator between God and us? (see 1 John 1:8-10; 2:1-2)

NOTE: from Guzik:

One God and one Mediator: Through one Mediator, and One alone: The Man Christ Jesus. There is no valid way to God that does not come through Jesus. This statement of Paul simply echoes what Jesus said in John 14:6 : Jesus said to him, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*”

- v 5-6. Why does Paul emphasize that Christ Jesus came as a man? (see 1 John 4:1-3) Why did He have to become a human in order to be a ransom for us? (see Matthew 20:28; Galatians 1:2-3; 2 Corinthians 5:21) What does Paul mean by saying this was “*the testimony given at the proper time?*” (see Galatians 4:4-5)

NOTE: from Guzik:

The Man Christ Jesus: ... Jesus is still fully God and fully man, but His humanity is glorified and resurrected. It is the pattern of the humanity that we will experience in heaven.

- v 7. What did Paul see as the main reason for his calling as a preacher and an apostle? How should every Christian share a portion of this same calling? (see the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20)
- v 8. Why does Paul especially call on men to pray? What does it mean to “lift up holy hands?” (see Psalm 24:3-6; James 4:8) Why does he especially warn against wrath and dissension? How do anger and disharmony negatively affect our prayers?

APPLICATION:

- ✓ How dedicated are you to praying for those in authority? Why? What do your prayers for America consist of?
- ✓ How does your freedom affect the way you live and share the knowledge of the truth with others?
- ✓ Thank Jesus for being your mediator before God.