

When God's People Pray

1 Timothy 1:18-2:8

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In 1 Timothy 3:15, Paul told Timothy why he wrote the letter to him. He said, "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God." Paul was writing to Timothy so that he would set things in order in the church there in Ephesus and would know how they might behave. Scripture says that in the church all things should be done decently and in order. Paul is going to give them the order for how they should pray and worship as you move into chapter 2. Going back with me to chapter 1, Paul was warning Timothy about false teachers. He actually took a break (verses 7-17) and was talking about his testimony, the gospel, and the power of the gospel in his own life. We looked at that last week.

Paul comes back in chapter 1, verse 18, to the charge that he began in chapter 1, verse 3. Look at it with me in verse 18 where we pick it up. He says, "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; 19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: 20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." Then he goes into the prayer section in chapter 2, verses 1-8. In the third verse, he started by warning and charging Timothy that these false teachers not teach any other doctrine. He comes back to the charge, which is the theme of 1 Timothy, and says, "I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies," so the charge is a solemn obligation. It's kind of like calling someone into a courtroom and adjuring or charging them. It's a solemn kind of charge, "I charge you." It's very stern, and Paul is speaking with his apostolic authority, "I commit unto thee, son Timothy," this charge.

Paul then reminded him that there were prophecies that had gone before on him. This was, no doubt, when Timothy was ordained to preach; and there were prophets there in the church, and they spoke about the gift and calling on Timothy's life. Timothy was naturally timid and shy, so he needed encouragement. Paul was reminding him that God had called and equipped him and that God would enable him for the task that lie before him, "...that thou by them mightest war a good warfare." He alludes to the fact that there's false teachers in the church, and you have to confront them, stand up against them, and that there is spiritual warfare going on that you need to war with a good warfare. We are in a spiritual battle, and ministry is spiritual warfare. We are soldiers, and we need to stand against the false doctrine. He encourages him in verse 19, "Holding faith, and a good conscience." Those are the two weapons of every true minister of God. Faith there, by the way, without the "the faith" reference, is talking about his personal, subjective individual faith in God. It's not talking about "the faith," the body of truth we believe, he's talking about his faith in God, "Holding Faith, and a good conscience; which some," referring to the false teachers, "having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck."

It's interesting he alludes in imagery there to spiritual warfare—we're in the army. We're

standing against the enemy in verse 18. In verse 19, He draws an analogy to shipwreck and a kind of naval imagery there that the ship is actually breaking into pieces because they've swerved away or "having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck," he's referring to these false teachers. In verse 20, Paul names them, "Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander." Each one of these fellas is named, which is interesting. He isn't afraid of specifically naming names and calling out false teachers. I think a true pastor needs to warn the sheep of false teachers. Now, this is not popular today, and any man that does that is many times criticized; but Paul did it, and he encouraged Timothy to do it, and he labels them.

Hymenaeus is mentioned again in 2 Timothy 2:17-18 where it indicates what he was teaching. He was teaching "...that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some," of the believers. He's basically promulgating false doctrine—the resurrection's gone, we missed the coming of the Lord—and overthrew the faith of some. Then, there's Alexander. He's referred to again in 2 Timothy 4:14. It's possible that it's a reference to the same Alexander. He's called "Alexander the coppersmith," he was from Ephesus, who "did me much evil." Paul said in that context, "the Lord reward him according to his works." Notice what Paul had done with them (verse 20). He says, "...whom I have delivered unto Satan," which is our archenemy, "that they may learn not to blaspheme." With his apostolic authority, Paul disciplined them by actually excommunicating them out of the church and turning them over to the world where they would be, no doubt, buffeted by the world, maybe repent and come back to the Lord, and get right with Him. Notice that the discipline that he's trying to bring on them is for the purpose of learning something. He's not trying to damn their soul to hell, he's trying to wake them up to their need and bring them back. Church discipline is always with the goal of winning people, not disciplining them for the sake of sending them to hell but disciplining them so that they'll wake up and come back to the Lord.

We now move into chapter 2, and it's one of the classic, classic passages (verses 1-8) dealing with the subject of prayer in the church. It deals with men who pray. Then, in verses 9-15, we're going to deal with the women in the church and their role in ministry. Notice it with me in 1 Timothy 2:1. Paul says, "I exhort," and in 1 Timothy 1:18, "I charge," now I'm exhorting you. This is a strong appeal. "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men," he wanted them to pray, "For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; 6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. 7 Whereunto I am ordained a preacher," Paul says, "and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity," truth. "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands," and they do it, "without wrath and doubting."

I want to take this section and kind of unpack it. If you're taking notes, you might want to write them down. There are six facts about prayer in the life of the church and in the family of God that you can draw from this section. The first thing we discover is the priority of prayer. Notice it

in verse 1, “I exhort therefore, that, first of all,” before he tells them how to pray, he tells them that prayer is to be “first of all.” It’s to be the number one thing. You know, I believe that one of the most important things—if not the most important thing—that we can do as a body of believers and as a church is pray. It’s interesting, that’s usually our last resort. That’s the last thing we do. We can do potlucks, have picnics, have concerts, all kinds of fun things and people show up in droves, but you have a prayer meeting and no one wants to come. It’s interesting that in Acts 2, the church was born in a prayer meeting. At the end of chapter 1 they were in an upper room, and they weren’t playing bingo. (I just had to throw that in there.) Some churches play bingo. I’m thinking, Where is that in the Bible? You don’t have to go to church to play bingo. It’s really a shame when the church isn’t doing what the church is called to do and to be. You know, you can go to a country club and have a social event, but you come to church to worship God and to study His Word. The church has kind of left its number one calling.

All through the book of Acts in chapter 4, John and Peter were going to the temple. What were they going up to the temple to do? To pray. All through in the book of Acts 6, when there was the problem with the widows who were being neglected in the distribution of food, the apostles said, “It’s not right that we should leave the Word of God and prayer.” The priority was that they prayed and studied God’s Word, and that’s what the church is supposed to be about. This term, “first of all,” indicates not just that Paul is laying it down in his text the order of things he wanted to communicate, but he’s actually communicating in that term that this is of utmost priority. This is so very important. Billy Graham was asked, “If you had your life in ministry to do over again, what would you do?” One of those things he said, “I would preach less and pray more.”

It’s easy to be active. It’s easy to do things, and I must confess it’s easier for me to preach than it is to pray, but we can’t do much until we pray. Until we pray, we really can’t do anything. Someone said, “If we fail to pray, we fail along the most important line of life.” If you go through your life and you fail to be a man or a woman of prayer, then you basically have failed. God wants us to pray. It’s a priority of prayer. It’s so important that we learn to pray. When the church prays, it’s like E.M. Bounds described as little individual drops of water that come together to make a mighty ocean that defies resistance. Corporate prayer in the church does have power, and we wield great influence as we pray. Someone also said that apostasy generally begins at the closet door. I’ve never forgotten that. Another way to say that was that when you are starting to backslide, you know what is the first thing to go? Your prayer life. That’s when you’re backsliding, when you’re not praying the way you should or praying the way you once prayed and really seeking the Lord in prayer. The first thing we learn that as the family of God and a part of the household of God is that we are to pray.

The second thing we learn about prayer is the variety of prayers. This is kind of a how should we pray, what we should pray for. I want you to notice it there in verse 1 as well. Paul uses the term “supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks.” The word “supplications” conveys a prayer that is born out of a great sense of need. It’s prayer for yourself born out of need. Actually, that’s what prayer is. Prayer is born out of a sense of, “I need God. I need His wisdom. I need His strength. I need His help. I need His power. I need His forgiveness. I need His peace.” If you aren’t praying, it’s an indication that you’re proud and you think you can

do it on your own. Whenever I come out to preach, I'm always praying, "Lord, I need Your help. I need Your wisdom. I need Your strength. I need everything You can do to help me right now cuz I can't do it without You."

In a few weeks, we're going to have been married 41 years. When I think about being a married man, I think about, Lord, I need Your help. "Forty-one years and you still need the Lord's help?" More than ever! I'm still a Dad, and I'm a grandfather, and I need the Lord's help. I'm a pastor, and I need the Lord's help. I don't know about you, but I need God's help. If you know that you need God's help, then you're going to get on your knees and pray, "Lord, help me on the job. Help me in the home. Help me with my finances. Help me in every facet of my life."

Supplication is seen when Jesus went into the Garden of Gethsemane. I love it! He fell on the ground prostrate and began to sweat as it were great drops of blood. In earnest, He prayed to His Father and said, "Father, if it's Thy will, let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thine will." It was that strong crying and the tears and the sense of great need. If God brings you to that place of brokenness, it's a blessed thing where tears actually begin to flow and you say, "Lord, I need You. I need Your help and Your strength." In the book of James it tells us (James 5:16), "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man," or woman, "availeth much." That's supplication. That's earnest and fervent and broken prayer calling out to God for help in a time of need.

Notice it also uses, secondly, the word "prayers." It is a different word that's translated "prayers" there. It's a generic word used for the sense of worship and reverence to God. You can make supplication to a person, but you can't make this kind of "prayers" to a person. It's when you are worshipping and adoring and giving adoration to God, so he says, "supplications," and "prayers." It's a general term for worship. Another term is the word "intercessions," verse 1. Prayer is to have priority, and prayer is to have variety. We're to pray with supplication and worship and reverence, and we're to pray with intercessions.

This intercession in prayer is the idea that I pray for someone else, that I intercede. I stand in the gap. Someone else has a need, and what I'm doing is interceding. I'm bringing two people together. That's what intercessory prayer is. It's having a prayer list and praying for your husband and praying for your wife. If you're married, you ought to be praying for one another, praying for your kids, praying for your pastor—and he needs all the prayer that he can get—praying for missionaries, and praying, as we're going to see, for those that are in authority in our nation. We, as Christians, are to be intercessors. We're to pray for other people as we stand in the gap.

Then, Paul uses the term, "and giving of thanks," so "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks." You see the variety and the different kinds of praying that we should have. Remember when Jesus healed 10 leprous men? How many out of the 10 came back to tell Him, "Thank you." Only one. I think the ratio is about the same today, right? How very rarely do we just take the time to say, "Lord, thank You for all of Your blessings." I think it's good sometimes to just tell yourself, "You know, I'm not going to ask for anything. I'm just going to tell

Him thank you for all the things He's already given me." We're usually kind of reading off our little "want" list or our "need" list and kind of throw out, "In Jesus' name," and go running our merry way. Do you ever stop to say, "Thank you?" You know what it's like to have somebody that the only time they call you, the only time they come over, the only time they want to see you is when they need your help, right? Those are the people that you go, "Oh, no. Pull the drapes. Shut the door. Run to the back room. Hide under the bed. They're coming again." Aren't you glad that God doesn't do that when we pray? "Lord," He goes, "Oh, no, John Miller again," and wants to run. No. His ear is always open, and He's always ready to help us in our hour of need, but we ought to take time to just give thanks. (We're headed into Thanksgiving, and I really encourage you to come to Wednesday night of Thanksgiving Eve. We're going to celebrate Thanksgiving by giving thanks unto the Lord.) So, we ought to pray, and we ought to pray with variety.

Here's the third thing we learn from this text. We ought to pray, and he points out the objects who we pray for. Notice it in verse 2. He says at the end of verse 1, "...and giving of thanks," and he says that it, "be made for all men," (end of verse 1) and "For kings, and for all that are in authority," then he tells us why, "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." Notice in verse 1 he says that we pray for all men. That actually has the idea that we pray for believers and unbelievers. We pray for people we like; we pray for people we don't like. We actually pray for our enemies, and we don't pray like David who said, "Break his teeth in their mouths." Some of you have adopted that as your prayer. Jesus said, "...and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you," and "...bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you." This "all people" would be unbelievers as well as believers. We're to pray for all people.

Paul breaks it down a little more and says, "For kings, and for all that are in authority." When you read that you say, "Yeah, but he wasn't living in the United States and didn't have our President and our leaders. It was a different time." Yeah. He had Caesar Nero. The wicked Nero, and the persecution against the Christians was, no doubt, already beginning by the Roman government. He was a madman. He hated Christians. He murdered Christians.

I have to admit that it's difficult for me to pray for politicians. Even this past couple of weeks with this Supreme Court nomination situation. I heard one chaplain to the senate was asked, "Do you pray for the senators?" He said, "No. I first look at the senators, and then I pray for the nation." And really, that's what I was doing this week. I was thinking, These are our leaders. God, help our nation! God, save our nation! We, as Christians, need to be on our knees for those who are in authority—the President, his cabinet, his administration, senators, congressmen, governors, for those in the police department, fire department, mayor, city council, all of those in authority. I know it seems like kind of a hopeless cause, but I believe that there is power in prayer. Remember, the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous person avails much, so even living under the hostile Roman government, he tells them to pray for kings and for all that are in authority.

Then Paul tells them the reason why they should pray (verses 2-4). He tells them to pray. He

tells them the variety of prayer. He tells them the object of prayer—for kings and all that are in authority, those in government and rulers over you—then, he gives them the reasons for prayer. He says, “...that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” I want you to notice the three reasons here—this is so important—that Paul tells Timothy the church is supposed to pray. Reason one is in verse 2. He says, “...that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” I believe we get what we deserve. When we don’t pray, then we have the chaos, the confusion, the insanity. If God’s people will humble themselves and pray, then they’ll hear from heaven and God will heal our land, but the problem is we’re not earnest, we’re not needing. We’re not praying, so we need to pray more. I know that, again, is a difficult thing, but God answers prayer. So, if you want to live a quiet life, a peaceable life, quiet refers to our surroundings around us and peaceable refers to our inner tranquility, then we live in godliness and honesty.

Let me address this whole political issue right now. You’re not going to change the world by political action, although as a believer living in the United States you should pray, register, and vote. I’m not here to tell you how to vote; but if you’re a Christian, you ought to vote as a Christian. You ought to vote your conscience, and you ought to make moral issues a priority—issues like abortion and same-sex marriage, issues that are important and near to the heart of God. We certainly need to be engaged. We live in a government where we can vote and have an influence, so we get on our knees, we pray, and then we vote—and we vote our conscience. If you haven’t registered to vote, you need to register to vote and you need to pray and vote your conscience as a Christian, as a believer. Jesus said you’re the salt of the earth; you’re the light of the world, right? We need to be a witness for Him in this wicked world. Know this, only the gospel changes the heart of men. Laws aren’t going to change the sinful heart of man. Only the gospel can change men’s hearts. Even in this passage tonight, as we see it in its conclusion, it’s emphasizing the gospel, the power of the gospel, and the preaching of the gospel.

Paul is moving into telling them to pray evangelistically. Not only so that we pray, “For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty,” but secondly, (verse 3) “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour,” so it’s God’s good and acceptable and perfect will for us in the sight of God. Notice that when we pray, we’re doing it as unto the Lord and in His sight, an interesting reference (verse 3) to God our Saviour, but I want to get to verse 4.

This is the third reason we should pray, “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth,” so, we’re praying evangelistically. We should pray that our governmental leaders get saved. When I pray for the President and for those that are in authority, for senators, congressmen, and others in authority, the top of my prayer list is that they get born again, that they get saved, they come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior. I know that there are men and women in high office that are Christians, as even Daniel was in the Babylonian Kingdom, but that’s the big need. That’s the need, that they come to know Christ—that locally people come to know Christ, our local authorities come to know Christ, people

that we live around come to know Christ, people that we work around come to know Christ, that our neighbors come to know Christ. How much time have you spent praying for the person that lives right next door to you? How much time do you spend praying for the neighbors across the street from you? How much time do you spend praying that they'll be saved, the people that you work with? Instead of complaining about them, you should be praying that they come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

I want you to note (verse 4) that God's will is that "...all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Anybody that studies the Bible and reads this passage knows that this introduces us to quite a controversial issue as to whether God sovereignly chooses by election those who are going to be saved and whether or not atoning work of Jesus on the cross is limited to only the elect; and if it's God's will that all men be saved, then why aren't all men saved? I think that what Paul is saying here is that God has provided salvation for all men and that God's will is that all men be saved. Now, he doesn't mean that everyone is going to be saved because we know clearly from Scripture that not everyone will repent and not everyone will believe in Jesus Christ. I think that both are taught in the Bible, that we have a responsibility to repent of our sins, to believe in Jesus Christ, and to trust Him as Lord and Saviour; and God isn't going to force salvation on anyone. Jesus said, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door," He didn't say, "I stand at the door and knock, and if you don't open I'm going to kick it in because you're going to get saved whether you like it or not. You're either chosen or not."

In John 3:16 it says, "For God so loved the world," by the way, I think the world is the world there. It's the whole world of mankind. It doesn't say, "For God so loved the elect." It says, "For God so loved the world." I believe it's actually a reference to all of mankind; so I don't believe in limited atonement, and I don't believe in what's called irresistible grace. I believe that man, even though fallen, has the ability to resist God and to say, "No," to God, although salvation is provided for everyone. Remember when Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem? He said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate," judgment would come upon them. Notice, "...ye would not." He said, "I wanted to gather you under My wings. I wanted to bring you in, but you would not." Even though God has a desire that all men be saved, He wants us to preach the gospel to the whole world. Not everyone will be saved because not everyone will repent and believe in Jesus Christ. Although Paul says God wants all men to be saved, we know that isn't going to happen, but God's heart, God's desire is that everyone would come to repentance, that no one would be lost.

Notice what salvation involves in verse 4, another important statement. It involves coming "unto the knowledge of the truth." Salvation doesn't happen in a void. People don't just kind of get saved. You have to hear the Word. The Bible says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." It's literally, hearing by the gospel preached about Christ. As we share the gospel—we preach the gospel, we proclaim the gospel—God's Holy Spirit uses that to convict people. They turn in repentance and trust Jesus, and they're saved; but it involves a

knowledge, "I'm a sinner. I need a Savior. If I don't turn, I'm going to hell. Jesus died for my sins." It involves a knowledge of who Jesus is, what He came to do, that He died on the cross, was buried, and rose again from the dead. People don't just get saved because they want to try Jesus. They have to come under conviction and hear the gospel and know what they're believing in. I've heard so many times preachers calling people to believe in Jesus, but they haven't told them why they need to believe in Jesus or what the consequences are if you don't believe in Jesus or what it means to believe in Jesus or who Jesus is that we are believing in. You have to have this knowledge, so in verse 4 he mentions they "come unto the knowledge of the truth." That's the truth of God's Word, the truth about Jesus Christ, and who He is.

Let me give you the fifth thing we learn about prayer. It's in verses 5-7, that is, Paul gives the basis for prayer: how it is we can come to God, how we can approach God, and what's the foundation and the basis of prayer. I want you to notice it. He says, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," literally in the Greek it would be "Man, Christ Jesus," "Who gave himself a ransom for all," referring to Christ Jesus, "to be testified in due time. 7 Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity." This is actually a reference to truth. It's the Greek word veritas, the truth that God has given me in His Word.

I want to go back over this basis of prayer. I want you to notice it there in verse 5, "For there is one God," these amazing statements that Paul makes here in these verses. The Bible teaches that there is only one true and living God. It's monotheistic. It's not polytheistic. It's not pantheistic. There aren't many gods. God is one God. There is only one God. God said in Isaiah, "...before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me," which, by the way, is contrary to what The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teach. They believe that there are many gods and many lords, and that the god that we have in this world right now used to be Adam, that Adam obtained godhood and now our god is Adam; and one day if you are a good Mormon and are sealed in the temple, that you'll be able to be graduated up to be a god, have your goddess wives, have your own planet, and people will worship you kind of a concept. It's called the Adam-God doctrine. Your average, typical everyday Mormon doesn't really necessarily know that, but that's what The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teach.

We have many different religions that believe that there are many different gods and many different ways to God. Granted, if there were multiple gods, there might be different ways to get to that god, but there's only one God. Notice what it says next, "one mediator between God and men," so, there's only one way to get to God. There's only one avenue or one mediator. Mediator is a person that brings two people together. A mediator brings two people together. There's one God, and there's one way to come to God. Now, Who is that One mediator? It is Christ Jesus, "the man Christ Jesus." This emphasizes His humanity. He's a man.

Jesus came from heaven through the womb of the virgin Mary, came into this world taking on full humanity, never giving up His deity, so He was fully God and fully man and totally unique—no One like Him ever. Because He's God, He can lay His hand on God, and because He's a

man, He can lay His hand on man, and He's the perfect priest and bridge builder, also the prophet who represents God. So, He's a Prophet, Priest, and King. He's the perfect bridge builder. He is that "one mediator between God and men." Nowhere in the Bible does it teach that you can get to God through an angel. Nowhere in the Bible does it teach that you can get to God through a saint. Nowhere in the Bible does it teach that you can get to God through Mary—it's not taught in the Bible. Mary isn't the "one mediator," Jesus Christ is the "one mediator." If you want to pray, you have to go through Jesus.

I meet people all the time that say, "Well, I pray." I ask, "Are you a Christian?" "I'm not a Christian, but I pray." "Who are you praying to? How do you get to God? How do you get to God but through Jesus Christ?" The only way to get to Him is through Christ. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me," right? You know, the same thing is true about prayer? We pray to the Father through, in, and by the merits of the Son, in the power and the energy of the Holy Spirit. Any other prayer is vain and empty and just bounces off the ceiling. Now, certainly, God is omniscient and knows all things, and He knows when people pray; but God's not obligated to answer their prayer because they're not a child of God.

If neighborhood kids come knocking on my door and say, "Mr. Miller, would you buy me shoes?" "Go ask your mom and dad to buy you shoes." (I don't do that, by the way.) "Pastor Miller, you're mean." No. My first response is, "Don't you have a mom and dad? Don't you have a parent? Why are you coming to me with your needs?" I would never expect my children to go to the neighbors and ask them to feed, clothe, or take care of them. I take care of my own children, and God takes care of His. I have access as a child of God (we're going to learn this in Romans 8) that the Holy Spirit comes to live inside us and we cry, "Abba, Father." We have this prayer relationship with God. We are His children. When Jesus taught us how to pray the Lord's prayer, what did He say? "Our Father," our Abba, "which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." If you don't have a relationship, you can't pray. This is a powerful reference to the fact that not only is there one God, but that one God is approached through only one mediator, it's the man Christ Jesus.

Notice in verse 6, referring to Jesus, which gives us the basis of prayer, "Who gave himself a ransom for all," by the way, notice there's another "all" there. In verse 4, "Who will have all men to be saved," and now, again, verse 6, "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." The basis of our ability to approach God through the Mediator, Jesus Christ, is the atoning sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Notice, "Who gave himself," did you know that Jesus is both—listen carefully—the giver and the gift? Jesus is both the giver and the gift. I know that it says, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," but did you know the Bible also teaches that Jesus came voluntarily, that Jesus came willingly? He didn't come against His will. He actually volunteered for that rescue mission to actually save us from our sin, to be the Redeemer, as this text indicates. He's both the giver and He is also the gift, which is an amazing thought! He's both the Priest and the Lamb that is slain or sacrificed. What an amazing thought!

Jesus “gave himself,” which indicates that salvation is a gift; and He “gave himself” why (verse 6)? To be a ransom for all. Again, I don’t believe that the Bible teaches that the death of Jesus Christ was only for the elect. It’s what is known as limited atonement, that when Jesus died on the cross, He died only for those who are chosen by God and who would ultimately be saved. I believe in unlimited atonement, that the atonement is provided for anyone. I believe in a “whosoever” gospel—anyone who comes can believe. I’ve met people who say, “Well, I’d like to be a Christian, but I don’t know if I’m chosen.” “Well, have you repented and believed in Jesus?” “No.” “Well, if you do, you’ll find out you’re chosen. If you repent right now and trust in Jesus, I can guarantee you He will forgive your sins. He won’t say, ‘Sorry, sorry, sorry, you’re not on the list.’”

Doesn’t the Bible say, “...that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life?” Not only is John 3:16, “For God so loved the world,” the word “world” means the world, but the word “whosoever” means whosoever. It really does. Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. He gave His life as a ransom for everyone. You say, “Well, why isn’t everyone saved?” Because everyone doesn’t repent and believe in Jesus. You say, “Well, which is it? Does He choose us or do we have to choose Him?” The answer is both. You say, “Well, I can’t reconcile that. I can’t figure that out.” “Welcome to the club. Neither can I, but isn’t it awesome?” Jesus said, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you,” I can’t figure that out. But to know that Jesus chose me and that when I chose Him, the Bible says that I’m chosen before the foundations of the world, I just give Him thanks for it. I just worship Him. It’s an amazing thought!

I love these verses that God’s will is not any should perish but that “all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth,” (verse 4) “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,” it’s not denying His deity, it’s just focusing on His humanity, and as a man (verse 6) “Who gave himself,” He gave Himself to redeem us. The idea of redemption is that He purchases us and sets us free. He buys us. He’s redeemed us through His blood on the cross, and this is “to be testified in due time.” The translation there at the end of verse 6 is a little challenging in the King James Bible, but it’s conveying the idea that in the Old Testament God prophesied that it would happen, and then in the fullness of time it did happen, so it’s “testified in due time.” God said He would send a Redeemer, God did send a Redeemer, and it was fulfilled in the Man Christ Jesus.

How does this message get out (verse 7)? He says, “Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity,” truth. I want you to notice what Paul says, that “I am ordained a preacher.” In 2 Timothy 4, he tells Timothy to preach the word. The same word is used here. It’s *kerusso*. It means to herald or proclaim with gravity and authority, that you’re going out and proclaiming. A herald in the ancient world was an official messenger of a king, and he proclaimed the king’s message. Paul was a preacher, and we’re to be preachers. The Bible says, “...and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” You may not be a preacher in the sense of a pastor of a church, but you’re called to preach, to proclaim, and tell

the good news—not good views, but good news. Paul is an apostle, one sent with apostolic authority, and he says, “(I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;)” and he’s a teacher, so those who did get saved and believed the truth of the gospel, he would disciple and teach them. He was called primarily to the Gentiles. He was doing this in faith and in truth.

Last, but not least, is verse 8. Here’s the sixth thing that we discover about prayer and that’s the attitude of prayer. There’s the priority of prayer, the variety of prayer, the objects of prayer, the reasons that we pray, and the basis that we pray and approach God, and then the attitude. I love verse 8. “I will therefore that men pray ever where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” I’ve kind of come to the end of my time to teach and to the end of our text (and I won’t tarry on this), but I want you to notice (verse 8) that he comes back to men. “I will therefore that men pray,” the word “men” there isn’t a reference to mankind—I’m just telling you. Don’t shoot the delivery boy, okay? You say, “Are you telling us that women aren’t to pray?” No. Women are to pray, but that’s not what he’s saying right here. He’s saying men ought to pray. So, Guys, let’s man up! Let’s pray. Let’s be men of prayer. Let’s pray for our wives. Let’s pray for our kids. Let’s pray for our nation. Let’s pray for our church. Men ought to pray. Men should be leaders in prayer. You want to have a household that’s a house of prayer? Then, the men ought to be the ones praying. This is often not the case, sadly.

The next time we’re together (and it’s going to be a hot one, so you really ought to pray for me because) we’re going to deal (verses 9-15) with where Paul actually tells us that women ought not to teach or to usurp authority over the man but to be in subjection, for Adam was first born and then Eve. We’re not going to skip over those verses. We’re going to teach them. It may be only men here that night, but we’re going to teach it; and we won’t apologize for what I believe the Bible actually says here. It’s time for men to take charge in the church and to be men of prayer and to fulfill their calling.

I want you to notice three things about this “men praying.” They’re to pray, “lifting up holy hands,” they’re to pray with loving hearts, “without wrath,” and they’re to pray with believing minds, “without...doubting.” There’s a whole sermon there in that one verse. He says he wants men to pray “lifting up holy hands.” Do you know that when you pray, you have to have a heart that’s right with God? Jesus said, “If you come to church and you’re going to worship God and there’s something wrong in your heart towards someone, you need to leave your gift at the altar and go make reconciliation with your brother, then come and offer your gift to God.” Here’s another one for men. If you’re a married man, and you’re not treating your wife with all the respect that God wants you to, do you know that the Bible says that your prayers will be hindered? One of the direct reasons for unanswered prayers in the Bible is the way a Christian man treats his wife—your prayers will be hindered; God won’t hear your prayers. In the book of Isaiah, they would lift their hands and call out to God and God says, “Your hands have blood on them. I don’t hear you. Your hearts are far from Me.”

When we pray (and I would apply it to the women as well tonight), make sure your heart is right with God, that your hands are holy, and your heart is filled with love. It’s without wrath, that you don’t have any anger or bitterness or unforgiveness or ought towards someone. Again,

remember in the Lord's prayer, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." Forgive us as we forgive others who have sinned against us. We're to have loving hearts. Thirdly, we're to have believing minds, "without doubting." We're to pray in faith. James tells us, "If any of you lack wisdom...let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed."

Let me wrap this whole study tonight up with some thoughts about the gospel. I love the fact that throughout this epistle to Timothy that Paul keeps coming back to the gospel. There are three facts that we learn about the gospel, and I'll leave them with you. First, its inclusiveness (verse 4). God wants "...all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." The good news about Jesus Christ is for everyone. Amen? No one is outside of that gospel message. Secondly, we learn of its exclusiveness (verse 5), "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." So, it's for everyone, but there is only one way to get to God and that's through Jesus Christ. It's exclusive. Thirdly, we learn about the gospel, its essence (verse 6). Jesus "gave himself a ransom for all," so we have to have a sacrificial atoning death. Jesus, the perfect God-Man, gave His life on the cross to die for our sins. That is actually the essence of the good news.

When you go out and preach this universal message that there is only one way to heaven, the message is: It's Jesus Christ who died on the cross for your sins, was buried and rose from the dead, and only faith in Christ can get you to heaven. Amen? "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." We're saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. This is the message, like Timothy, that God has entrusted to us, that He has given to us for our family, our friends, our neighbors, co-workers, for everyone we meet—tell them the good news about Jesus Christ. Let's pray.