

1 Timothy, Chapter Two, Lesson One

ACCEPTABLE PRAYER 1 Timothy 2:1-4

STIMULATE

** At the end of chapter one, in our study of 1 Timothy, we learned the five forms of Satan's attack upon the church. Do you recall what they were?

- 1) Satan attacks the church by blinding the minds of unbelievers to the gospel.
- 2) Satan attempts to devastate those who are already saved by trying to destroy their faith and trust in God.
- 3) Satan attacks the church by attacking marriage and the family.
- 4) Satan attacks the church through her leaders.
- 5) Satan attacks the church through false religious systems.

** What were the three components of Paul's command to Timothy which are designed to prepare us for making a "**Conscientious Effort**" in representing and defending the truth?

"...**fight the good fight**..." It is warfare!

"...**keeping faith**..." Guarding the truth!

"...**and a good conscience**..." Living in obedience!

We need to correct error and faithfully represent the truth of the gospel to all that the Lord brings across our path.

MOTIVATE

** Up to this point in his epistle, Paul has been calling Timothy to the arduous task of instructing the false teachers in Ephesus not to teach strange doctrines. Here in chapter two he begins to give Timothy specific instructions on how he can set things right in the Ephesian church.

Over the next four studies we will see Paul explain:

ACCEPTABLE PRAYER - 1 Timothy 2:1-4

APPOINTED PREACHER - 1 Timothy 2:5-7

ADORNED PROPERLY - 1 Timothy 2:8-10

AUTHORITY PRESCRIBED - 1 Timothy 2:11-15

Where should Timothy begin? The answer comes from the "**Acceptable Prayer**" he and the Ephesian believers were to offer up to God. Let's read our passage together and set our hearts upon God's word.

Read Passage (V.1-4)

Opening Prayer

Acceptable Prayer

INVESTIGATE

V. 1 ** With so many Satanically inspired challenges present within the Ephesian church, what is the first thing that Paul calls his son in the faith to do?

He calls him to pray!

** Was this a cold-hearted command for stoic prayer?

No, Paul said, “I urge” you to pray. He knows that the answer to their problems begins with a heartfelt pray life.

** We will take a close look at the three different forms of prayer included in Paul’s instruction, but first; for whom are we to be praying? Do you see the answer at the end of verse one?

“...on behalf of all men...” To set things in order, there in the Ephesian church, Paul wants Timothy and the Ephesian believers to return to their former evangelistic pattern of prayer. This opening section of chapter two is polemical in nature; its design was to confront a problem of exclusivism which had grown to dangerous proportions within the church.

** Alright then, let’s take that closer look at the three forms of prayer for which Paul is urging us to become more involved with each day. What three words does he use for prayer?

entreaties (*deesis*) - the root meaning is “to lack”, “to be deprived”, or to “be without something”. This type of prayer arises from a sense of need. When a Christian looks upon the masses of lost humanity, the enormity of the need should drive us to our knees in evangelistic prayer. cf. 1Timothy 5:5

prayers (*proseuche*) - is a general word for prayer. It is used in Scripture only when in reference to God. It carries with it a unique element of worship and reverence. Prayer for the lost is directed at God as an act of worship, because the salvation of sinners causes them to give glory to Him. cf. 2Corinthians 4:15

petitions (*enteuxis*) - This word only appears here and in 1Timothy 4:5. It comes from a root word meaning “to fall in with someone” or to get involved with them. The verb from which *enteuxis* derives is used to speak of both Christ’s and the Spirit’s intercession for us. cf. Hebrews 7:25, Romans 8:26

This term not only describes advocacy, but also an expression of empathy, sympathy, compassion and involvement. Evangelistic prayer is not cold, detached, or impersonal. Understanding the depths of their misery and pain, we should cry out to God for the salvation of sinners.

** What forth element does Paul add to our pattern for prayer on behalf of the lost?

“**Thanksgivings**” - Our prayers should be with a spirit of gratitude to God that the gospel offer has been extended to the whole world and that by His grace we have been privileged to reach some with God’s saving truth. cf. Romans 11:13-14, 1Corinthians 9:22

V. 2 ** Paul has said that we should be praying on behalf of all men. Before we look at his specific example here in verse two, how does God feel about us praying for the salvation of all men?

God desires all men to be saved.

cf. 1Timothy 2:4

God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked.

cf. Ezekiel 33:11

God commands all men to repent.

cf. Acts 17:30

God offers His grace for salvation to all men.

cf. Titus 2:11

** So, here in our passage, to what group does Paul specifically refer as a target of our evangelistic prayers?

We are to pray “for kings and all who are in authority”.

** Who was the king for these Ephesian believers?

Nero! Although he was a vile persecutor of the faith, they were to pray for his redemption. Paul did not instruct them to pray for his removal or for some governmental reform, merely for God to meet his need.

** Can you think of other passages which enjoin us to be in submission to government, even if they treat Christians unfairly?

The apostle Paul wrote: Romans 13:1-2

"Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For **there is no authority except from God**, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves."

The apostle Peter wrote: 1Peter 2:13-17

"Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. For **such is the will of God** that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God. Honor all men; love the brotherhood, fear God, **honor the king.**"

** What will be the two fold impact upon the life of Christians as they faithfully pray for all men and especially for their governmental leaders?

God will allow them to lead a “tranquil and quiet life”. Tranquil (used only here in this passage) translates *eremos* which refers to the absence of outside disturbances.

Quiet translates *hesuchios* and is used only here and in 1Peter 3:4, it refers to the absence of internal disturbances. These two rare adjectives are used by Paul to explain that when the church pours itself into compassionate prayer for the lost, it will lessen the hostility that may exist, so that the saints may enjoy freedom from both external and internal disturbances.

** While we enjoy this protective environment provided by the Lord, what should be our preoccupation according to the apostle Paul?

We should live “in” godliness and dignity. The first term carries the idea of reverence toward God, while the second speaks of moral earnestness.

V. 3 ** Paul has pointed out that our compassionate, concerned prayer for the lost can have a very positive impact upon our environment as a church, which is existing within the governmental structure that the Lord has sovereignly put in place. How does God feel about this type of evangelistic prayer?

“This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior...”

“Good” translates *kalon* which refers to what is intrinsically, morally good.

** How does the word “acceptable” differ from “good”, in its importance to us as we stand before the Lord?

Our lives are to be “a living and holy sacrifice, **acceptable** to God” (Romans 12:1). When we develop this kind of evangelistic prayer life, it is not only morally good, but it is actually “**Acceptable Prayer**” to our Holy God. It is prayer after His own heart!

** Before we leave this verse, what word does Paul use to broaden the reader’s understanding of our God?

He calls Him “God our Savior”. That term defines the very nature of our gracious God. He sent His Son into the world to save the world (John 12:47). cf. Titus 1:3, 2:10, 3:4 with Luke 1:46-47

** Scripture clearly establishes that God is our Savior, what does it say about Jesus Christ?

He is our Savior!! cf. Titus 3:6, Philippians 3:20, 2Peter 1:11 and 2Peter 3:18

Therefore, if God is our Savior and Jesus is our Savior - **Jesus must be God!**

V. 4 ** What is the desire of our gracious God and Savior?

He “desires all men to be saved...” When He does that, He is being consistent with who He has been from eternity past.

cf. Isaiah 45:22, Isaiah 55:1-3, Ezekiel 18:23,32, 2Peter 3:9

** What phrase does Paul use as a synonym to salvation?

“...and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

** How does knowledge of the truth relate to a person becoming saved?

It is impossible without the truth! Paul uses the word “*epignosis*” for knowledge, meaning a true knowledge that brings about salvation based upon the truth of God’s word.

cf. John 1:14, John 8:31-32, John 14:6, John 18:37

EXTRICATE

** To pull the church at Ephesus out of the influence of false teachers, what is the first step put forth by the apostle Paul?

“**First of all**” they needed to get involved in compassionate, concerned prayer for all men to be saved.

** Beginning with praying for kings and those in authority, what were the three forms of prayer they were to employ.

entreaties - praying to fill the need of salvation

prayers - worship for the God of salvation

petitions - get involved in evangelistic prayer by developing more empathy, sympathy, compassion.

DELINEATE

** Our passage for this evening told us that God desires all men to be saved. What three additional things did we learn about our gracious God?

God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked.

God commands all men to repent.

God offers His grace for salvation to all men.

EVALUATE

** What is going to have to increase in my heart before I can offer the type of “**Acceptable Prayer**” which we have seen Paul urge us to pray this evening?

My heart must increase in its empathy, sympathy and compassion for the lost.

ACTIVATE

** Let's ask the Lord for that new heart right now!

Closing prayer