



The Priority of Prayer

By Jeff Bedwell on August 16, 2022

TODAY'S READING: 1 Timothy 2

As Paul continues his letter to Timothy, his purpose remains to share with Timothy and the church of Jesus Christ that, *"you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth"* (1 Timothy 3:15, ESV). To that end, Paul begins with the priority of prayer (vv. 1-7).

Prayer is to be a priority in our lives individually and in the church corporately. We are called to pray all types of prayers for all types of people, especially mentioned here is praying for those in positions of influence and authority. Those in authority in Paul's day were certainly not followers of Jesus Christ and some even opposed and persecuted Christians. Paul realized that God can use those in positions of authority to provide an "umbrella of peace" where the church can thrive and proclaim the gospel freely.

Paul's praying always had a gospel foundation and purpose. He was focused on the glory of God and the expansion of God's kingdom, and it impacted his prayers. He gives a three-fold, God-centered motivation for our praying in verses 3-6:

1. God desires the salvation of all people. This is God's will of desire, not God's will of decree. God's decreed will is what God has ordained to take place in the world. His will of desire is sometimes referred to as His "revealed or moral" will. It refers to what He has commanded for us in His Word. We may choose to rebel against or reject God's revealed will, but God will always ultimately bring about His decreed will.
2. We pray because God deserves the honor of all people. "For there is one God," who is worthy of the worship, praise, honor and adoration of all people.
3. We pray because Christ died for the rescue or ransom of all people. There is only one way to be reconciled to a holy God and that is through the mediator, Jesus Christ.

As we pray this way, God will work in us to increasingly lead us to live this way. Like Paul (vs. 7), we are called and commissioned by God to show and share the gospel.

Who are you praying for? Who is close to you but far from God? How may God want to use you to touch them with the gospel of Jesus Christ? How will you pray for them? How will you reach out relationally to them to love and serve in Jesus' name? How will you open your mouth to share the greatest news of all, the gospel of Jesus Christ?

PRAYER: Father, teach me to pray. As I pray for those near me and those in authority, change me even as You work in their hearts and minds. Help me pray confidently and share the gospel boldly and lovingly as You have given me the high and holy privilege and calling to do. Be glorified in my life, my prayers and my witness.

TOMORROW'S READING: 1 Timothy 3

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