

PRAYING FOR AUTHORITIES

Christian Character in Action: Lesson 27

26 August 2022

1 Tim 2:1-8 The Holy Spirit, through the Apostle Paul is urging every Christian to have a consistent prayer life. In this passage, he specifically exhorts that we pray for all who are in authority so that we might lead a quiet and peaceable life.

Vs 1 **Supplications:** praying for supplies. This includes food and clothing, employment, housing, good health so you can work a job, etc. Remember that God is the One supplying our needs.

Intercessions: praying on behalf of others. Asking God to meet the needs of other people.

Giving of thanks: Thanking the Lord for the many things He has done for us.

Prayers: Communicating with the Lord; talking with and spending time with God.

- Prayer time is not simply a time to ask for stuff. We are in a relationship with the Lord. We ought to look forward to spending time with Him in prayer.
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Vs 2 **For kings:** the kings who were in power in Paul's day were doing great harm to the Church.

All that are in authority: this includes many levels of leadership, including people who are ungodly. Government officials, police officers, schoolteachers, pastors, parents.

- Prayer is more beneficial than criticism. If leaders are making bad decisions, ask God to help them to make good decisions.

"...that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life." We don't ask God to ensure that a certain candidate gets elected. We might be wrong. Our candidate of choice might lead the country towards trouble. Pray, trusting God to choose leaders and to guide them in making decisions that will provide for us a quiet and peaceable life.

"...in all godliness and honesty." We pray, asking God to give us leaders who would make it easier for people to live godly lives and harder for people to be ungodly. We pray that our leaders will be honest in all areas of authority affecting us.

Vs 3-4 **"For this is good..."** It is good that we pray for them who are in authority and make intercession for all men. God wants all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth (vs 4). This begins with prayer.

- Our witnessing efforts will fail if we don't begin with prayer.
 - No amount of tract distribution, door-to-door evangelism, or public preaching can overcome prayerlessness. Your efforts are vain without prayer.
 - A church, strong in evangelism, and weak in prayer is lacking.
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- The wrong leaders in government can tie our hands when it comes to witnessing. That is why our first priority is to pray that those in authority will allow us to proclaim God's gospel truth peacefully and without conflict.
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Vs 5-6

Jesus Christ "**gave himself a ransom for all**" because God wants all people to come to Him through Jesus Christ.

"...**to be testified in due time...**" God's people can testify the gospel only where governments allow it. There are many places in this world where evangelizing is illegal. We must pray that our authorities will let us keep our religious freedoms (vs 1-2).

- God's solution to fix governments that are against Christianity and evangelism is not for His people to rise up in revolt and campaign against the ungodly authorities; the solution is for God's people to pray for those authorities.
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Vs 7-8

Paul uses himself as an example. As a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher, he boldly preached the gospel everywhere he went, and in many places, he was beaten and imprisoned because those places did not have laws allowing or protecting religious freedom. So, he said, "**I will therefore that men PRAY!**"

- Stop taking your current religious liberties and freedoms for granted. Those could be taken away tomorrow if you don't pray.

"...**lifting up holy hands...**" The picture is that of a little child desiring to be lifted up by a parent to be held close to their heart and comforted. The child simply lifts up their hands hoping to be picked up. That is what we do when we go to God in prayer.

- When things get tough, do your hands reach **up** to God, or do they reach **out** to a government, the news media, the internet, or a world organization?
 - Only God can calm whatever is going on in your heart.

"...**without wrath.**" Why pray without wrath? Because it is difficult to pray for somebody when you hate them.

- The people you need to pray for may be difficult to respect and love, but if you want God to help those people to do right, you need to put away your ill feelings toward them and ask God to work in their lives, so they'll do what is right toward His Church.

"...**and doubting.**" You may not trust the leaders that you are praying for, but you can trust (without a doubt) that God will move on that person's heart to do right when you pray.
