

The Church – The Prayers of the Church I Tim. 2:1-8

Thesis: To better understand the purpose and manner of the prayers of the church.

Introduction:

The idea and main points of this lesson comes from Tom Holland's book, "Conduct in the Church – Sermon outlines from 1 Timothy."

I. Paul tells us the nature of our prayers (2:1).

A. Our prayers should include "supplications."

1. "Supplication" means "a petition" and comes from a word that means "to beg" (Strong's).
2. Every time this Greek word is translated as supplication, it is in addition to prayer; signifying that it is more than just a simple prayer (2:1).
 - a. Eph. 6:18 - praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—
 - b. Phil. 4:6 - Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;
 - c. I Tim. 5:5 - Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day.
3. The idea is that a supplication is more than just a prayer.
 - a. It is a continuous prayer to God that reflects the idea of begging.
 - b. It is a strong, deep, continuous prayer.

B. Our prayers should include "intercessions."

1. Intercession includes the idea of the stronger helping the weaker.
 - a. It is when the stronger will speak up for the weaker.
 - b. It includes the idea of the stronger doing something of the weaker that they could not do themselves.
 - c. When we pray publicly (as the church), we are interceding on behalf of others.
 - 1) We are not able to intercede in the sense that we can ask God to forgive someone who is not willing to repent.
 - 2) But we do ask God to help those who are in the path of a hurricane, or who have lost loved ones, or for an opportunity to teach someone the gospel of Christ.
 - d. "Intercessions" should "be made for all men" (2:1).
2. This is exactly what Christ does for us (2:5-7).
 - a. Just as Moses interceded for Israel in the wilderness, Christ intercedes for us today.

- b. **Rom. 8:34** - Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.
- c. **Heb. 7:25** - Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

C. Our prayers should include the “giving of thanks.”

- 1. Our prayers should always include thankfulness.
 - a. In the context, Paul is speaking of giving “thanks...for all men.”
 - 1) The Greek word for “men” in this passage is “anthropos” (Strong’s).
 - 2) This word means “mankind” and is not specific to the male gender.
 - b. The point is that in our prayers, we should be thankful for everyone.
- 2. Our prayers should be full of thanksgiving.
 - a. **I Thes. 5:16-18** - Rejoice always, {17} pray without ceasing, {18} in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
 - b. **Col. 4:2** - Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving;
 - c. If nothing else, we are thankful for the gift of salvation.

II. Prayer should be made “for all men” (2:1-2).

A. In the immediate context, we are told to pray for those who are in authority (2:2).

- 1. We pray for the rulers so “that we lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.”
 - a. Our first goal in life should be to live a holy and godly life.
 - b. There is nothing more important in life than being faithful to God.
 - 1) **I Pet. 1:15-16** - but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, {16} because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”
 - 2) **II Cor. 7:1** (Paul reminding the brethren of the promises of God) - Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.
 - c. To achieve that goal, we must be devoted to prayer.
- 2. We must remember that we are to “pray for all men.”
 - a. This would include not only our leaders and those with authority, but also all others as well.
 - b. Jesus tells us to pray for our enemies
 - 1) **Mt. 5:43-45** - “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ {44} But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good

to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, {45} that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

- 2) Even though someone may not like us, we are still commanded to pray for them.
3. Remember, the purpose of our prayers is so that we can “lead a quiet and peaceable life” (2:2).

B. There is a reason why we are to pray “for all men” (2:3-4).

1. The simple reason to pray for all men is because God wants everyone to be saved (2:3-4).
2. This can only happen if we pray “for all men.”

III. Our prayers should follow specific guidelines (2:8).

A. It is the duty of the men to pray everywhere.

1. The Greek word that Paul uses is “aner,” which is gender specific to the male (Strong’s).
 - a. It is wrong for a woman to lead a public prayer in the church (where both men and women are present).
 - b. The reason for this is because of the sin of Eve (I Tim. 2:13-14).
2. This does not mean that it is wrong for women to pray.
 - a. Paul goes on to tell the widows to continue in prayer (I Tim. 5:5).
 - b. However, in the public assembly, it is the men who are to lead the prayers.

B. We should be reverent in our prayers.

1. Paul gives a posture to our prayers (“lifting up holy hands”).
 - a. It was a custom of the Jews that they prayed with hands lifted to God.
 - b. This was a sign that they were lifting their heart to God.
 - c. This is not a command on how we are to position ourselves when we pray.
2. The idea is that we are reverent in our prayers.
 - a. Throughout the New Testament, there are many different postures to prayer.
 - b. Some kneel, lift hands to God, bow, beat their breast, etc.
 - c. The point is that we are reverent in our prayers, just as lifting the hands was a sign of reverence for the Jews.

C. There should be no wrath or doubting in our prayers.

1. We do not pray with anger towards one another.
 - a. Remember, Jesus says to pray for our enemies.
 - b. We do not pray that bad things will happen to our enemies.
2. We should also be confident that our prayers will be answered.
 - a. **Js. 1:5-8** - If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. {6} But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who

doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.
{7} For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything
from the Lord; {8} he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his
ways.

- b. **Js. 5:16b** - The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Conclusion: