

1 Timothy 2:1-7 Prayer

One Point: Pray Tell

To get the full background of 1 Timothy, go to the refuel website: www.usfbc.com/refuel

Purpose of 1 Timothy: 1. To direct Timothy to give vigorous personal opposition to the false doctrine developing in Ephesus (1:3). 2. To instruct Timothy about the kind of behavior that should characterize Ephesian believers as members of "God's household. (3:15)"

We have moved from false teachers to the context of the Church. Not exactly church organization but how the church should function in light of the errors and heresies that were going on.

5 functions of the church

Evangelism: Telling the story of your changed life

Worship: A lifestyle of reverence toward God

Discipleship: Commitment to growing and raising others

Mission: Doing what God has called you to do

Fellowship: The unity of Christians as they follow Jesus

Transition: Paul begins this section with what is most important when it comes to the church...Prayer.

v. 1 - Paul's first emphasis right off the bat was for Timothy to lead his hearers to pray for the salvation of ALL people. The false teachers had been teaching that only the spiritually elite will be saved. Paul was telling Timothy to demolish the exclusivist idea by making the object of Christian prayer as wide as Christ's arms were open on the cross – for all people.

1 John 2:2 – "He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the **whole world.**"

Four parts/types of prayer:

a. Requests – Petitions to God based on a sense of deep spiritual need (James 5:16 Pray for each other) Highlights the element of insufficiency by the requester.

b. Prayers – Used for all types of prayers including general requests or specific petitions. Highlights devotion by the seeker. 1 Peter 3:7 – Husbands be considerate of your wives and treat them with respect so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

c. Intercession – used of Christ's prayers for believers in Heb 7:25 – Christ Intercedes for us. Underscores the childlike confidence of the petitioner.

d. Thanksgiving – Adds gratitude as a motivation for asking. Gratitude to God

Essentially they are all synonyms for prayer to communicate it's importance.

v. 2 – Paul urges believers to pray for political leaders; that they would repent of their sins and embrace the Gospel. To us, that's not a big deal but for the Christians back then that meant praying for the Roman emperor, Nero, who was cruel and vicious towards Christians, to the point that he even persecuted them. There also was a call to pray for non-Christian leaders in the OT with Jeremiah 29:7 and Ezekiel 6:10.

Peace – Paul also, had them praying for peace in religious freedom. In 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 Paul urged also urged the Thessalonian believers to live a quiet life in such a way to win the

respect of unbelievers. This is in reference to the strife going on within the church back then...and only happened back then ha! This goes directly in context with the behavior below.

Godliness and holiness – A call back to holy living as the false teachers had created an attitude that moved away from this.

v. 3 – In reference to v. 1 God is pleased to know that His church is praying for everyone and not just an elite group.

v. 4 - *thelō* – Desire - not the normal Greek word used here that conveys God's eternal purpose. Instead, this is a true desire because God does not want people to sin. He hates sin with everything He is (Psalm 5:4, 45:7) and He hates sin's consequences, eternal suffering in hell. Because of that desire (v. 5) God sent Jesus to bring the "knowledge of the truth." (Aka the Gospel.) Paul shows us that salvation is not just spiritual feeling but also a cognitive act on our part of "knowing" what God has done! That's stinking cool – if you remember the Sun Stand Still series from last fall – God takes our natural and adds His super to it making it a supernatural experience.

However, we know that even though God desires everyone to be saved that doesn't mean all will be saved. God doesn't make us believe in Him.

"The will of God does not function as a ruthless bulldozer crushing and forcing into obedience any who resist it. God urges us to repentance with his goodness rather than coercing us toward the truth by the application of power." Roman 2:4 – His kindness draws us to Him.

v. 5 – Paul describes the only way to God (John 14:6) because of the spiritual elitism going on. Because God is the ONLY way there is a need to pray for the lost to know the one true God. Isaiah 43:10-11

"You are my witnesses," declares the Lord, "and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me. ¹¹ I, even I, am the Lord, and apart from me there is no savior."

In one scene of The Avengers, Captain America is told that Loki and his superhero brother Thor are "like gods." Cap's response: "There's only one God, ma'am, and I'm pretty sure he doesn't dress like that." It was a funny quip and true to character for Captain America who represents traditional values and beliefs. The script even appears to acknowledge that our modern society could use some of those "old-fashioned" ideals and values again.

Mediator – someone who intervenes between two parties to resolve a conflict or ratify a covenant. Jesus Christ is the only mediator who can restore peace between God and sinners.

v. 6 – for all – Jesus died for all people – not just a few – however, not everyone will actually receive this grace because they will reject it as we have seen with some of our friends, people on this campus and throughout the world. We have the ability to pray for these people and tell them! This testimony came at the right time, the time for God to be glorified, the time is now, and your time is now!

The word ransom used here was a system of commercialism during this time. This was where people would pay a sum of money to free slaves from their owners. Jesus was the substitution, the

payment, for our sins. He stepped in and gave himself! It was voluntary, not a mandate. What a picture of grace, what we don't deserve we have received! "It is the fact that Christ died for all men, without any kind of favoritism, that makes it obligatory for Christians to pray for them all without distinction."

v. 7 – Most translations use the word preacher here. The Greek word is *kēryx* which means herald or messenger from a king or other royalty. Here it is used as a divine word for God's ambassador. Paul was commissioned based on verses 3-6 to speak publicly, to proclaim, the Gospel of Christ...and so are we! Matthew 28:18-20 tells us to go and make disciples to proclaim His name! (The local church's responsibility is not just to pray, v1 is where it begins and v. 7 is where it calls us to action)

Teacher of the Gentiles – Paul was called to spread the "mystery of the Gospel" which was that it was for everyone (John 3:16) and not just the "elite" or the Jews. It was for the Gentiles as well. This was central to Paul's calling in all of his letters.

So What

I feel like most of our prayers are for our sphere of influence: family, friends, our struggles, our desires, God using us to reach the people we know, etc. It is easy to limit our prayers to just this area of our lives, I mean that's what we know and see all the time. But, God wants us to petition him for more than just our sphere, he wants us to pray for leaders nationally, for governments, for people who despise us even to the point of hurting us, but most importantly for the whole world to know Him in a way that leads to salvation. We must intercede for the sick, needy, confused, and suffering because of the grace, mercy and peace we have received from our Lord!

Now What

How do we do that? We understand that because there is only one God and there is only one way to Him through Jesus we must intercede through prayer for the lost. Your prayers can change the world. Seriously! We can change the world through prayer, and then our prayer will change our hearts and lead us to action! As I've talked with people on this campus there are people here who do not even have the "knowledge" of the truth. There are many other places around the world that have the same issue, a lack of knowledge!

Romans 10:9-15

"⁹If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved.¹¹ As the Scriptures tell us, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced." ¹²Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. ¹³For "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." ¹⁴But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? ¹⁵And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, "How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!"

There is this phrase in the English language that drives me nuts. Maybe you have heard it "pray tell" it is used in some cases like this:

- By what, pray tell, do you mean?
- *But how, **pray tell**, do you "notice" something that happens when you're asleep?*

So I looked it up and here is what I came up with: From pray (“ask (politely)”) + tell (“explain”) It literally means “Please do tell”

So here is what I want you to do: pray tell – ask God/intercede for the lost and then tell them (explain the knowledge of the truth) Now I can actually like this word if used in this context!

So how do you pray tell? Here are some ideas:

- When you get up, first thing get on your knees or sit on your bed (not lay down) and intercede for the people you will come in contact with today to know Christ through your actions and words
- When you stop for lunch ask God to give you a passion for the lost...to see them how He sees them
- When you are walking to class pray for each person you walk by
- When you read your Bible finish the time by praying for the people in authority of your church, your work, your school and your nation
- Before you go to bed stop and pray for the world to know Christ!

We get to intercede for people who would never know God. We get to not just pray for them but also share the story of how Jesus saved us! Hallelujah!

We can pray for the lost with such a passion as people like John Knox who cried out “Give me Scotland or I die?” We can have an attitude like George Whitefield who prayed, “O Lord, give me souls or take my soul!” We can even say “I cannot endure existence if Jesus is to be so dishonored!” like Henry Martyn.

When we as the church begin to seek God in prayer for the lost of the world, we will start gaining compassion for people and seeing people the way God sees them. Our desire to reach the world will grow and we won't just talk about it but we will do it! We won't just see 9 people saved like we saw this past semester...we will see hundreds and even thousands saved for God's glory!

Scripture teaches Christians to submit to civil authorities and to pray for them, from the most powerful to the least. Such prayer brings stability to society and allows Christians to “live peaceful and quiet lives” and to serve the Lord in “godliness and dignity.”

Truth is synonymous with the Gospel

Paul talks about interceding for the salvation of others because the false teachers convinced the church that salvation is only for Jews and the Gentiles of Judaism (religious exclusivism/salvation only for the elite). There is no need to pray for the lost.

If God's primary objective for His church involved fellowship, knowledge of the Scriptures, or conformity to the image of Christ, His plan would be best accomplished by bringing us to heaven immediately. But there are not the central functions of the church on earth. God has left us here to reach the lost.

This begins with grasping this calling through praying for the lost. Evangelistic prayer.

Prayer topics?

- The Lost
- Government
- Obama
- Next President
- USF President Judy Genshaft
- USF Staff and Administration
- USF Faculty
- Students you know who don't know Christ