

The Need for Prayer – Part 3

Introduction

a. objectives

1. subject – Paul instructs the church through Timothy to seek the humility of prayer
2. aim – to cause us to pray for and lead godly and submissive lives as we seek the salvation of all
3. passage – 1 Timothy 2:1-15

b. outline

1. The Need for Prayer in Godly Living (1 Timothy 2:1-3)
2. The Need for Prayer in Evangelism (1 Timothy 2:4-7)
3. The Need for Prayer in Submissiveness (1 Timothy 2:8-15)

c. opening

1. a note of **gratitude** for the Pastor Appreciation gift
2. the **first imperative** of the letter
 - a. the things that Paul would have Timothy to do as the means to combat the false teachings in the church and to reestablish a sound footing in both orthodoxy and orthopraxy
 - b. Paul's advice to Timothy as to the first actions to be taken – in **chap. 2**:
 1. an exegesis of this passage demonstrates the *actual command* Paul gives to the church:
 - a. the church is to be a *praying* people, that it is to be praying *for those in authority* (with influence), that this prayer is to result in a *peaceful* and *godly* life, which God considers good, because he desires *all kinds* of people to be saved
 2. **Paul is concerned that the church not only be a praying people, but a people praying for opportunity to preach the gospel to every social class in every situation afforded them**
3. the **soteriological truth** of this imperative
 - a. **reminder**: Paul often includes theological indicatives during the course of his imperatives
 - b. in **vv. 5-6**, Paul includes a great soteriological truth:
 1. **note**: I *briefly* touched on these verses last week only to show *contextually* what is being said in **v. 4** – but the phrase is much too important to just “pass over” in that sense
 2. Paul pauses in these verses to explain in **v. 4** what it means “*to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth*” – **i.e.** when God says that he desires for all kinds of people to be saved, what does that actually *mean* to them?
 - c. so, **vv. 5-6** are extremely important:
 1. in seeing the importance of the Lord's Supper
 2. in having a keen grasp on what the gospel truly is
 3. in understanding a fundamental truth that stands forth in the **Protestant Reformation**
 4. in having a solid basis for evangelism – *driving us* to seek the salvation of others

II. The Need for Prayer in Evangelism (1 Timothy 2:4-7)

Content

c. the soteriological point of these verses

1. the *mediator* of salvation (**v. 5**)
 - a. “*mediator*” = to intervene between opposing parties to effect a reconciliation; to resolve a dispute
 - b. some characteristics of a *human* mediator
 1. usually, someone *from the outside* brought in to help; someone not *related* to the dispute
 2. usually, someone who does not *directly benefit* from agreement; a third-party representative
 3. usually, someone who does not *act on behalf of one side*; a *neutral* agent of participation
 4. usually, someone who acts *equally* for both parties; one who rises above the dispute
 5. usually, someone who works towards *compromise*; bringing both parties *to the center*
 - c. in the O.T., the priests acted as the mediators between God and the Israelites
 1. the people were *prohibited* from coming into the presence of God
 - a. at the mountain (**Exo. 19:12**), in the tabernacle, in the Temple (**i.e.** the Holy of Holies)
 2. the priests were the *only ones* allowed to enter the presence of God
 - a. and then, only once a year to make atonement for the people (**Hebrew 9:6-7**)

3. the priests were *limited* in their role as mediators between God and the Israelites
 - a. they were *human* and *sinner*s, and needed mediation too (**Hebrews 7:26-28**)
 - b. they offered an *imperfect* offering from animals under the Curse (**Hebrew 10:4**)
 - c. they offered their sacrifices *repeatedly*, because they perfected nothing (**Hebrews 10:1-3**)
 - d. they offered their sacrifice in a Temple, but not in the real *presence of God* (**Hebrews 9:24**)
 4. the priests were an *example* (or *foreshadowing*) of the perfect mediator to come (**Hebrews 8:5**)
 - a. **note**: the tearing of the curtain (**Matt 27:51**) = the *old system* had been done away with
 - b. **note**: why the Roman mediatorial priesthood and sacrificial Mass are so *abhorrently wrong*
 - d. some problems inherent in a mediation between humanity and God (**as seen in the priests**)
 1. **problem #1**: God *cannot* compromise
 - a. characteristics of *holiness, perfection, omniscience, etc.* are *destroyed* by compromise
 - b. this is *particularly* true of being *just*: to compromise the nature of *justice* (by overlooking the cause of that which *requires* justice, **i.e.** sin) destroys the very essence of justice itself
 2. **problem #2**: human beings have *nothing* to offer God
 - a. the indictment against humanity in its spiritual deadness shows that the *gulf* between us and God is fixed *by our own nature as sinners*, not by what we “fail” to offer him
 3. **problem #3**: there is no *neutral* third-party that can mediate between us and God
 - a. the universal nature of the Fall is such that every single element of creation was “marred” by sin, thus leaving no one in a position to mediate before God (**e.g.** even angels)
 - e. the solution created by God in a *divine* mediation

“It pleased God, in His **eternal** purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, according to the covenant made between them both, to be the mediator between God and man ...” (LBCF, Of Christ the Mediator)

 1. an *eternal* choice of God – the plan of God from *before* the creation to mediate *with* his creation
 2. the choice of *his own Son* – the choice of God to send the Son to act as a *perfect* mediator
 - a. one who would (in his incarnation) *perfectly understand* both sides (as one of them)
 - b. one who would (in his obedience) *perfectly offer* something *from* and *to* both sides
 - c. one who would (in his finished work) *perfectly create* a reconciliation between both sides
 - f. **Christ Jesus is the only eternal mediator established by God to affect our salvation, a truth that is core to the proclamation of the message to all class of people**
2. the *ransom* of salvation (**v. 6**)
 - a. this **work of mediation** is closely connected by Paul (and Jesus) with a **ransom** (**Mark 10:45**)

“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to *serve*, and to give his life as a *ransom* for many.”
 - b. the N.T. word-group (*lytron*) was formed to convey the idea of release on the basis of the payment of a ransom – not just purchasing “something,” but purchasing **someone**
 1. this is the mistake made in semi-Pelagian theology – assuming that Christ’s work was to purchase something *for* us (**i.e.** heaven, freedom [from oppression], prosperity, social good, etc.) rather than seeing it as the purchase of *rebel sinners themselves* (sin is unimportant)
 2. ransom is a *deeply entrenched* concept in the O.T.
 - a. at the heart of the Passover Festival (**Exod. 12-15**) – God *ransoming* Israel from the slavery of Egypt through the “redemption” purchased by a slain lamb
 - b. within the essence of the Law (**Exod. 21:28-30**) – a man being *ransomed* (a “redemption”) from the punishment of death if his animal escapes and kills another
 - c. foreshadowed in the deliverance of Israel (**Hosea 3**) – the “picture” of Hosea purchasing Gomer (his wife) from the slave market of prostitution
 3. ransom is carried over into the N.T. as a *central* component of salvation
 - a. the constant theme of humanity *enslaved* to sin (**e.g. John 8:34; Rom. 6:17; Rom. 1**)

“everyone who sins is a slave to sin ... you who were once slaves of sin”
 - b. *demand*s a sense that sinners need someone to *purchase them* from slavery
 - c. the solution created by God in a *divine* ransom
 - a. Jesus pays *with his own blood* the ransom price established by God for sin (**i.e.** death)
 - b. this price is paid *completely* – no further work on the part of the sin-slave is required
 - c. the result is *absolute freedom* from condemnation (even for further sin; **Romans 8:1**)
 - d. the Christ *continually* offers this ransom to the Father in his *continuing* role as mediator
 - d. **Christ Jesus, in his role as mediator, establishes a ransom which is given to the Father on behalf of sinners in order that he might completely free them from God’s righteous wrath**

3. the application of mediation and ransom to the church
 - a. **Paul is concerned that the church not only be a *praying* people, a people praying for *opportunity* to preach the gospel to *everyone*, but (specifically) a people who understand the core message of the gospel as *they preach it to all***
 - b. **the lack of focus by the church on the kind of prayer espoused by Paul here leaves the church *vulnerable* to a “watered down” version of the gospel – to just pray for “people to get saved” leaves many with a hollow faith that cannot stand the pressures of life**
 1. **note:** the kind of evangelism in synergistic churches is proof-of-concept here: true, they desire people to be saved, but the “salvation” procured is often too shallow to survive attack