

The Who, Why, And How Of Prayer (Part 2)

1 Timothy 2:1-8

Introduction:

1. Sometimes life can seem like a shipwreck. People can make shipwreck of their own lives. Paul gave an example of some who did this at the end of chapter 1. He even gave their names.
2. Paul opens up chapter 2 by saying, “*I exhort therefore that first of all...*” In other words, “Based on what I just told you about people having been made shipwreck, here is what you need to do first and foremost.”
3. What was that thing that Paul was exhorting Timothy to do? **Pray!** Read verse 1.
4. Paul was exhorting him to pray “*first of all.*” This means “first and foremost; above everything else; top of the priority list.” If you look it up, it means “first in time, place, order, and importance.” Prayer was to be a first resource, not a last resort.
5. I’m afraid that most of us don’t view prayer this way. Prayer is something that happens if we can squeeze it into our busy schedules. I’m convinced that prayer is one of the most important, but most often neglected, things in the Christian life.
 - It has been said, “Prayer does not fit us for the greatest work; prayer **is** the greatest work.”
6. Notice in verse 1 how Paul exhorts the believer to exercise a thorough prayer life.
 - *Supplications* – petitions or requests
 - *Prayers* – simply talking to God
 - *Intercessions* – prayers for somebody else who is discouraged, weak, or doesn’t see the need of prayer.
 - *Giving of thanks* – should be included in all of our prayers
7. I think most Christians want to have an effective and fruitful prayer life, but they find themselves asking questions like, “Who should I pray for?”, “Why should I pray?”, “How should I pray?”
8. Our text answers these important questions.

Why should we pray?

Introduction:

1. Many times, I believe we fail to pray because we simply view it as a waste of time. Not that we would ever **say** that out loud, but our lack of prayer demonstrates it. In other words, we aren’t convinced that our prayers are really accomplishing anything.
2. The Bible emphatically states the opposite. It says that our prayers are accomplishing much. God works on the earth through the believing prayers of His people.
3. Prayer is something that is cross-dispensational. In other words, you see it in your Bible from beginning to end. While certain aspects of the details of prayer change from dispensation to dispensation, prayer itself is always there.

4. Think about it. This isn't true of reading your Bible, witnessing about Jesus, going to church, etc. Many things in the Bible come and go depending on God's dealings with man in that time period. But prayer is always there!
5. Christian, why should you pray?

Because prayer results in peace in your daily life

- Verse 2 says, "...that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." Paul said this is one reason you need to pray. Pray for peace. A Christian should love, embrace, and seek peace.
- Romans 14:19 says, "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."
- Many times throughout the centuries, Christians have been at the center of controversy. On several occasions, Paul's preaching of Christ caused such a stir that it landed him in prison. Another time, it started a riot in Ephesus. But it wasn't Paul's purpose or desire for this to happen. It was the world's response to the preaching of Jesus Christ.
- The believer's desire should be to live a quiet and peaceable life as we live out our Christian lives and share Christ with others. Our desire is not to cause controversy or draw attention to ourselves.
- Of course, those in governmental positions set the tone for this, so Paul says to the believer, "You'd better pray!" cf. 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2
- Notice, he didn't say that we should pray for world peace to come, or "pray in the kingdom." We know that this will not occur until the King shows up! Christ is called the Prince of Peace, and when He returns to earth, peace will finally fill this earth.
- Right now, Christ lives in our hearts. As we pray, the peace of God rules our hearts - not anxiety, fear, depression, or worry. Peace is an inherent part of our birthright as Christians, but prayer is how it is realized on a daily basis.

Because prayer pleases God

- Paul says, "For this..." What is the "this?" Does he mean the prayer, or the godly and honest life? I think he is referring to both, because you cannot have one without the other.
- When a believer prays and seeks God, and then lives out what he is praying, this is so very special to the heart of God.
- Hebrews 11:6 sums it up. What is the context of this verse? The context is Enoch, and Enoch had the testimony that he "*pleased God.*" Genesis 5 says that he "*walked with God.*"
- God loves the fellowship, the praises, and the communion of His people. Your prayers are very special to God, and they move His heart. Revelation 5:8
- **Illustration:** Hezekiah – 2 Kings 20:3-5

- If God's heart was touched for an Old Testament king's physical life, how much more is He touched when we pray for people's spiritual life and spiritual healing? This brings me to my next point.

Because prayer impacts other people's lives

- We said that prayer touches the heart of God, but what is God's heart? Verse 4 reveals the heart of God to us. God's heart is to see people come to the knowledge of the truth.
- God's desire in this dispensation of grace is to see people saved and be reconciled to Him through Jesus Christ.
- Remember what we said earlier. It is futile to pray for world-wide peace because it is not God's will for world peace until Jesus returns to earth after the Tribulation.
- On the other hand, we **can** pray for our lost loved ones with confidence, knowing that it **is** God's will to save them. Verse 4 leaves us no doubt. Jesus has made provision for every person to be saved. vs. 6
- We should be bombarding God's throne with prayers for those that we know do not know Christ. This is what Paul did. Romans 10:1
- Paul knew that every man can be saved. Paul had an "*every man*" ministry. Colossians 1:28
- How many of you know that somebody was praying for you to be saved before you trusted Christ?

Because God hears and accepts our prayers

- I think one of the reasons that we don't pray more is because we simply do not feel that our prayers are "getting through." They are hitting the ceiling and bouncing back. They are just words in the air.
- The Word of God assures us that this simply is not true. We have somebody in heaven that is working for us every time we pray, insuring that our prayers reach God the Father.
- That person in heaven is not Paul, Moses, David, Mary, or a dead saint. That person is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. vs. 5
- A "mediator" is a "go-between." The job of a mediator is to intercede to one party on behalf of another. This is exactly what Jesus is doing for us. Romans 8:27, 34
- Jesus makes intercession for us! "To make intercession" means "to confer with; to entreat." Isn't it amazing that Jesus Christ would confer with God the Father on our behalf? Jesus entreats the Father for us when we pray.
- What a motivation to pray! Jesus Christ is our mediator! Not the pastor, your LIFE Group leader, Peter, Paul, James, Mary, the priest, or the preacher.
- "*For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*" **1 Timothy 2:5**

In Conclusion:

1. So what should be our response to these truths we have learned? Pray!
2. It does no good to know these truths if it doesn't motivate us to pray.