

## The Who, Why, And How Of Prayer (Part 3) 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. We’ve already answered the first two.

### Third, how should we pray?

- After giving Timothy all these wonderful principles, Paul simply exclaims in verse 8, *“I will therefore that men pray...”* It does no good to know **about** prayer if you don’t pray.
- What good is it to know **about** your car if you never drive it? What good is it to know all **about** your computer if you never use it?
- Prayer is simply talking to God. It is simply being real, and honest, being yourself, and talking to the Lord. It is being thankful, it is praying for others, and it is laying out your requests to God. Like the old Nike slogan, Paul says, “Just do it!”
- But in what manner should I pray? How do I pray? There are several helpful principles here in this text.

1. **First, we are to pray everywhere, at all times.**

- In verse 8, Paul says, *“I will therefore that men pray every where...”*

- The primary meaning here is that men can call on the Lord out of every nation and every tongue. Prayer is not just for an exclusive group of people. Men can pray from any place on this earth, and it is heard by God Almighty!
  - But a practical application to this is that you, as an individual child of God, can and should pray everywhere. You can pray at home, at work, in your car, on your porch, at the grocery store, while you mow your grass, at the beach, in the mountains, in the city, in the country, etc.
  - The Bible says to “*pray without ceasing,*” “*in everything give thanks,*” “*continue in prayer,*” “*praying night and day,*” “*giving thanks always for all things,*” etc.
  - We see people in the Bible praying in their homes, in a jail cell, on a beach, on a mountain, sitting on a well, in the belly of a big fish, and even on a cross!
  - As a child of God, you can pray anywhere, at any time. The blood of Christ gives you 24/7 access to God in prayer.
2. **Second, we are to pray with total surrender.**
- If a bad guy comes behind you with a gun, sticks it in your back, and says, “Stick ‘em up,” what do you do? You lift your hands up. It is a sign of surrender.
  - Notice the phrase in vs. 8, “...*lifting up holy hands...*” Lifting up hands seems to be a Jewish custom that commonly accompanied prayer (1 Kings 8:22; Psalm 88:9). This was Moses’ posture during Israel’s battle with the Amalekites. Exodus 17:11-12
  - The lifting up of hands is a sign of surrender and yieldedness. This is what God is looking for in the believer’s life. He is looking for a yielded spirit. God is looking for people who are willing and wanting to do whatever His Word says. Romans 6:13, 19
  - It has been said, “When you pray, don’t give God orders. Report for duty!” Romans 12:1
  - This should be the Christian’s heart. We are the soldiers, He is the Commander. It is amazing what He can do with a person who is truly surrendered to Him. Jesus is the supreme example of this. Matthew 26:39
3. **Third, we are to pray with a holy life.**
- Paul said to pray with “*holy hands.*” Your hands signify your manner of life - the way you conduct yourself in your daily living. Hands speak of your outward actions. We say, “That looks heavy; let me give you a hand.”
  - Paul said to pray with holy hands. In other words, pray with a holy manner of life.
  - What do we mean when we say a thing is “holy?” (**Examples:** Holy Land, Holy Bible, Holy City) For one thing, they all belong to God and are God’s property. It also carries the idea of consecrated; hallowed; purity.

- The Bible says that God is holy and, therefore, expects holiness from His children. 1 Peter 1:15-16
- If you are saved, you are God’s property. He bought you with a price and now lives within you. You are the temple of God. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19-20
- This is why the Bible says that, when we got saved, God called us with a “*holy calling*” (2 Timothy 1:9). He placed His **Holy** Spirit within us.
- Therefore, God has called us unto holiness. 1 Thessalonians 4:7
- God fully expects His children to live differently than this world system and to conduct ourselves in a holy manner (2 Corinthians 6:17-7:1). This is very clear – when we muddy ourselves with the filth of this world it will hinder our fellowship with God.
- When we come to present ourselves before the Lord in prayer, we need to do it in holiness. Romans 12:1
- It is interesting that verse 9 is continuing the principles about prayer, and it commands ladies to pray with “*modest apparel.*” This word “*modest*” actually carries the idea of being clean, neat, and orderly. In other words, a woman’s outward appearance reflects her seriousness about the Lord and prayer.
  - Israel washed their clothes that they might be ready to meet the Lord on Mt. Sinai, and they would wear their best clothes on the Sabbath Day.
- When Paul mentions the specific apparel in verse 9, he isn’t saying that there was never an occasion when a woman wouldn’t wear some of these things, but when it is time for public worship and prayer time, a woman would never want to wear anything that would take the attention off of Christ and bring it to herself.
- Instead, her adorning is one of good works, which ties in perfectly with the holy hands of the preceding verse. She has a “*shamefacedness*” (bashfulness) and “*sobriety*” (seriousness) about her that she decrease and not be noticed, and Christ increase and be exalted.

**In Conclusion:**

1. How are we doing in our prayer lives? Prayer is something that is talked about a lot in Christian circles, but seldom practiced with fervency.
2. Are you praying everywhere at all times? Are you praying with a surrendered heart? Are you praying with holy hands?
3. These principles have the potential to take our prayer lives to the next level, if we practice them.
4. Next week we will examine three more crucial keys that will enhance our prayer lives.