

## **START HERE**

As your Connect Group teaching time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

*What role does prayer play in your personal life?*

*What role should prayer play in a church's weekly gatherings?*

*Do you think our church does a good job of emphasizing the importance of prayer in our gathering times?*

## **40 Days of Prayer**



During the first 40 days of 2020 there will be an opportunity to join together in a time of prayer led by the pastors and ministers of Mobberly. From January 1 - February 9 everyone is invited to join us for a time of guided prayer as we ask God to speak to and move in us in 2020 through the book of Romans. We will meet at 7:00-7:30 a.m. **everyday** in the Longview Worship Center Hospitality Room.

The Book of 1 Timothy is a series of instructions from the apostle Paul to Timothy, a younger church leader Paul spent time discipling and training in leadership. The verses from 1 Timothy 2:1-8 include a portion of Paul's instructions on public worship, specifically regarding prayer. Through prayer, we commune with God and see Him at work in every aspect of our lives.

## **READ**

### **1 TIMOTHY 2:1-8**

*First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, <sup>2</sup>for kings and all those who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. <sup>3</sup>This is good, and it pleases God our Savior, <sup>4</sup>who wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

*<sup>5</sup>For there is one God and one mediator between God and humanity, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who gave himself as a ransom for all, a testimony at the proper time.*

<sup>7</sup>For this I was appointed a herald, an apostle (I am telling the truth; I am not lying), and a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. <sup>8</sup>Therefore, I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument.

## REVIEW

### Context/Commentary/Background

#### The Bible Knowledge Commentary

**2:1.** From his concerns about false teachers Paul turned to matters relating to the conduct of the church broadly (cf. 3:14–15). Paul began with what he considered most important: prayer. What too often comes last in a church's priorities should actually come first. Not much weight should be placed on the presumed distinctions between requests, prayers, and intercession. The terms are more likely designed to build on one another for emphasis. It should be noted, however, that thanksgiving should have a prominent place in the church's prayer life.

**2:2.** The Ephesian church was to pray "for everyone" (v. 1, lit., "all men"), but especially for the leaders of civil government. Paul did not specify here the content of these prayers, but almost certainly he was instructing that requests be made for the salvation of the populace and its governors. This can be seen clearly from the following verses. With Nero's growing resentment toward Christians—which came to full bloom after the fire in Rome in July, A.D. 64—and the general disintegration of the Roman Empire due to Nero's profligacy, Christians began to suffer persecution from the Roman authorities. Having recently been released from his Roman imprisonment, Paul was greatly aware of the deteriorating political atmosphere. Thus he urged prayer for the salvation of all men, but especially rulers, so that the stable, noninterfering environment of previous days might be recovered. This is the minimum requirement if Christians are to live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. (This is the first of 10 times Paul used the word *eusebia*, "godliness." These 10 occurrences are all in the Pastoral Epistles: 2:2; 3:16; 4:7–8; 6:3, 5–6, 11; 2 Tim. 3:5; Titus 1:1. Its five other usages are in Acts 3:12; 2 Peter 1:3, 6–7; 3:11.) Times of political and social upheaval are excellent times in which to die for Christ, but hard times in which to live for Him.

**2:3.** As in modern times, some in the Ephesian church were prepared to question the validity of a prayer for the salvation of all men. Thus Paul defended his instructions by pointing out that such a prayer is good, and pleases God our Savior (cf. 1:1). Literally, the Greek says that such a prayer is "acceptable before" (in the presence of) God. Many prayers are unacceptable to God, but not this one.

**2:4.** The reason this prayer is acceptable to God is that it is a prayer "according to His will" (1 John 5:14). God, who is by nature a Savior, wants all men to be saved. Paul repeated the words "everyone" (1 Tim. 2:1) and "all men" (vv. 3, 6). The same Greek word (*pas*, "all") is used in each case, referring all three times to the same group (cf. 4:10). God desires that

no one perish (2 Peter 3:9), that the entire human race come to know the truth through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, who is the Truth (John 14:6). (Of course not all do come to salvation; Paul was not teaching universalism.)

**2:5–6.** To further buttress his argument Paul cited the commonly accepted teaching about God and His work in Christ. Verses 5–6 may represent a fragment of a familiar confession of the first century. In any case, Paul cited these unquestioned truths of the gospel: (1) There is only one God. (2) There is only one way for men to approach Him—through the Man who was God in the flesh, Christ Jesus. (3) This Jesus gave Himself up to die on the cross as a ransom (antilytron; cf. lytron, “ransom” for a slave or prisoner, in Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45) for the human race. (Cf. the chart, “New Testament Words for Redemption,” at Mark 10:45.) This act is a clear testimony, offered at just the right time (Gal. 4:4–5; Heb. 1:1–2), of God’s desire to save all men (cf. Titus 1:3).

**2:7.** The exclusivists in the Ephesian church evidently felt that the gospel was only for Jews. This was a common problem, as seen preeminently in the case of Peter (cf. Acts 10:9–43; Gal. 2:11–13). Thus Paul cited his own commission as apostle ... to the Gentiles as a clincher. Paul had been appointed a herald (kēryx, “messenger”; cf. 2 Tim. 1:11) to take the gospel to the majority of the human race that the Jews had considered beyond the pale. Thus, as Paul reminded the Ephesians, it can be seen that God desires everyone to be saved. Paul’s assurances of his truthfulness were stylistic devices designed to stress the importance of his point (cf. Rom. 9:1; 2 Cor. 11:31; Gal. 1:20).

**2:8.** Undoubtedly Paul wanted all Christians to offer up prayers for a widespread spiritual awakening among the populace and its rulers. Yet in the public assembly Paul specified that men (andras, lit., “males”) everywhere are to lead the congregation in prayer. Moreover, these prayers were to be offered with lifted hands. This was a common Old Testament practice (cf., e.g., 1 Kings 8:22; 2 Chron. 6:13; Ezra 9:5; Pss. 28:2; 141:2; Lam. 2:19). It was also common in the pagan mystery religions of the first century and in the early church. Paintings on the walls of the catacombs in Rome portray this posture. The hands were to be holy (hosious, “devout, undefiled”), signifying an internal cleanness on the part of these spiritual leaders. Further, such leaders must be men of sound relationships, not characterized by anger (orgēs, “outbursts of temper”) or disputing (dialogismou). Broken human relationships affect one’s ability to pray (cf. Matt. 5:22–24; 6:12; 1 Peter 3:7), which would include leading others in prayer.<sup>1</sup>

## The ESV Study Bible Commentary

**2:1–15** Corporate Prayer and Issues Arising from It. In describing life that properly emerges from the gospel, Paul first mentions prayer for the salvation of all people. This also leads to a discussion of godly living and appropriate behavior in corporate worship, particularly unity, modesty, and proper submission.

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<sup>1</sup> A. Duane Litfin, “1 Timothy,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 734–735.

**2:1 supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings.** Paul's point is not to list all the ways to pray but to pile up various terms in reference to prayer for their cumulative impact. This is a call for all sorts of prayer for all sorts of people.

**2:2 Kings** and other authorities are mentioned as examples of the "all people" for whom Christians are to pray. The lifestyle encouraged here (**peaceful, quiet, godly, dignified**) corresponds to the goal of apostolic teaching in 1:5 and contrasts with the behavior of the false teachers. This sort of living commends the gospel, a theme that will recur throughout this letter (2:11; 3:7; 5:7, 14; 6:1) as well as in 2 Timothy and Titus.

**2:4** Evangelistic prayer for all people is rooted in the fact that God **desires all people to be saved**. It appears that Paul is countering an exclusivist tendency in the false teachers or at least their downplaying of the importance of evangelizing the Gentiles (along with their emphasis on the Jewish law). This statement figures prominently in theological disagreements over the extent of the atonement. It cannot be read as suggesting that everyone will be saved (universalism) because the rest of the letter makes it clear that some will not be saved (4:1; 5:24; 6:10; cf. Matt. 25:30, 41, 46; Rev. 14:9–11). Does that mean God desires something (all people being saved) that he cannot fulfill? Both Arminian and Calvinist theologians respond that God "desires" something more than universal salvation. Arminians hold that God's greater desire is to preserve genuine human freedom (which is necessary for genuine love) and therefore he must allow that some may choose to reject his offer of salvation. Calvinists hold that God's greater desire is to display the full range of his glory (Rom. 9:22–23), which results in election depending upon the freedom of his mercy and not upon human choice (Rom. 9:15–18). However one understands the extent of the atonement, this passage clearly teaches the free and universal offer of the gospel to every single human being; "desires" shows that this offer is a bona fide expression of God's good will. **Come to the knowledge of the truth** highlights the cognitive aspect of conversion, i.e., individuals must come to understand key truths in order to be converted. "The truth" occurs often in the Pastorals as a synonym for the gospel (cf. 1 Tim. 3:15; 4:3; 2 Tim. 2:15, 18, 25; 3:7, 8; 4:4; Titus 1:1, 14).

**2:5** Verses 5–6 provide the theological basis for the preceding statement that God wants people to be saved. **There** is only **one God**, therefore this God seeks "all people" (v. 4; cf. Rom. 3:29–30; Gal. 3:20). Various people groups do not each have their own gods, though they may imagine they do; all must come to the one true God for salvation. This means that Jesus, God's incarnate Son, Israel's Messiah, is the one and only mediator, the only way to salvation (cf. Acts 4:12). Furthermore, this verse allows no place for intermediaries between people and Jesus, such as saints or human priests. See Overview of the Bible.

**2:6 Ransom** (Gk. antilytron) refers to purchasing someone's release and describes a common Pauline and NT understanding of Christ's work as redemptive (cf. Gal. 1:4; 2:20; Eph. 5:2; and related NT concepts of "redemption" [Luke 1:68; 2:38; 24:21; Titus 2:14; Heb. 9:12; 1 Pet. 1:18] and "ransom" [Matt. 20:28 par.; cf. Rev. 5:9]). This language also

reflects Jesus' words, "the Son of Man came ... to give his life as a ransom [Gk. lytron] for many" (Mark 10:45). Since Jesus **gave himself** as this "ransom," the idea of substitution (dying on behalf of sinners) is also included.

**2:7** Paul defends his mission to the Gentiles on the basis of God's desire that all be saved (cf. v. 4).

**2:8–10** the men should ... likewise also that women. Paul addresses particular concerns in regard to each gender. The issue for men is anger and for women it is modesty and proper submission. not with ... gold or pearls or costly attire. Paul is not prohibiting the wearing of jewelry (see note on 1 Pet. 3:3–4); the principle is that women should not dress ostentatiously or seductively, but in a way that is **proper**. True doctrine produces good works (see note on 1 Tim. 1:5).<sup>2</sup>

## Content

*Have a volunteer read 1 Timothy 2:1-2.*

***What kinds of prayers did Paul say we should pray? For whom were the prayers to be offered?***

In verse 1 Paul mentioned four specific types of prayers that believers should focus on. Petitions are requests to meet our deepest spiritual needs. Prayers are other requests for ourselves made in reverence and humility. Intercessions are requests made on behalf of others. Thanksgiving is an expression of gratitude.

***Why did Paul specifically urge the church to pray for people in authority?***

***Do you believe "kings and all those who are in authority" have special God-given power? Why or why not?***

***What added pressures do Christian leaders face that non-Christian leaders might not deal with?***

According to Paul, we should pray for everyone (v. 1). This seems like a tall order. But after all, we pray because it is pleasing to God (v. 3). Paul also encouraged Timothy to pray for governmental authorities who could help provide an environment conducive to evangelism. In a time when Christianity was spreading rapidly, persecution was also on the rise. Praying for those in authority was a way for the people of the church to be actively involved in the church's evangelism efforts in Ephesus and other parts of the world.

*Have a volunteer read 1 Timothy 2:3-4.*

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<sup>2</sup> Crossway Bibles, *The ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 2327–2328.

***Based on Paul's words in these verses, what will be the result of our prayers?***

***What insight do these verses give us into the connection between prayer and evangelism?***

***What do we learn about God in these verses? How do these truths impact your relationship with Him?***

***How do you reconcile the fact that God wants everyone to be saved, while knowing that not everyone is or will be?***

Paul directly connected evangelism with pleasing God in this verse. Prayer for the lost pleases God because God wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. However, God's desire to save the lost does not mean that all will be saved. Each individual has to come to the knowledge of the truth of the gospel and respond to it in faith, a reference to conversion.

*Have a third volunteer read 1 Timothy 2:8.*

***What do you think Paul meant by "holy hands"? What is another term you would use for the same meaning?***

"Lifting up holy hands" was a typical posture for prayer in the Bible. Holy hands represented the repentant life, free from unconfessed sins, relational grudges, and so on. Timothy was calling for worship free of distracting disagreements with other people in the church.

Read Matthew 5:23-24.

#### **MATTHEW 5:23-24**

*So if you are offering your gift on the altar, and there you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled with your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.*

***What implications do these verses, Matthew 5:23-24, have for Timothy's instructions in 1 Timothy 2:8?***

***Why do anger and discord negatively impact our prayer lives, both personal and as a church?***

***When have you seen this to be true in your life? In our church?***

## APPLICATION

Help your Connect Group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

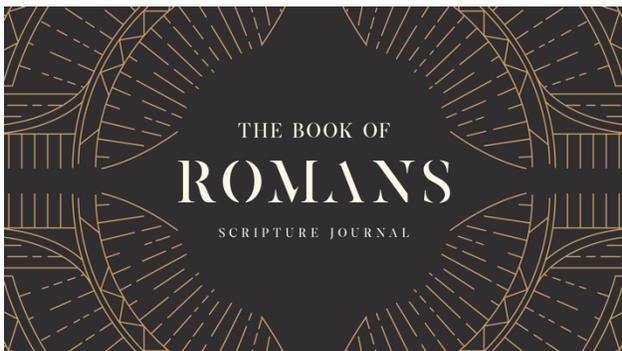
***Why is it often harder to remember to pray for people in authority when things are “tranquil and quiet” in life?***

***What are some things you can do to help you remember to pray for our leaders on a daily basis?***

***Of the four types of prayers mentioned in verse 1, which do you find yourself praying most often? Least often?***

## REFLECT

Spend a few minutes in each of the four types of prayers from 1 Timothy 2:1 — petitions, personal prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings. End by thanking God for inviting us to join Him in His work in the world through the power of prayer.



Pray as you continue reading and memorizing key passages in Romans. This year will be the beginning of a fantastic journey as the Holy Spirit guides us through His Word!