**An Exhortation to Pray**

*1 Timothy 2:1-8*

**Introduction**

1. Prayer is a vital part of our lives as the children of God.
2. It is also obvious that God wants us to utilize this incredible privilege to the advantage of those in the world who do not have such access to God.
3. It is a command of God that we pray, and that we do so in an acceptable way.
4. In 1 Timothy 2:1-8, Paul gives instruction concerning prayer.
5. What? **(v. 1)**
6. Prayer
	1. Children of God are people of prayer – **1 Thessalonians 5:17** – without ceasing, i.e. habitually, frequently.
	2. In observation of the Lord:
		1. His custom – **Luke 21:27; 22:39-40** – went to Mount of Olives, garden of Gethsemane, evidently to pray.
		2. Observed in awe by disciples – **Luke 11:1**
	3. Key in the apostles’ ministry – **Acts 6:2, 4** (when appointing 7 men to serve in the distribution of benevolent funds)
	4. Key in the 1st century church – **Acts 2:42**
7. Elements of Prayer
	1. A consideration of the different elements of prayer will expand and deepen our prayers.
		1. Truly all prayer, but especially different facets of prayer.
		2. Very subtle distinctions.
	2. Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions
		1. All synonyms speaking of only slight distinctions in our approach to God through the avenue of prayer.
		2. Supplication (deēsis) and Prayer (proseuchē) used interchangeably throughout scripture. Though, if any distinction:
			1. Supplication – primarily “a wanting, a need”, then, “an asking, entreaty, supplication,” (Vine)
			2. Prayer – prayer; by implication, an oratory. (Strong) (in a general sense, approaching God in discussion.)
		3. Intercession – *enteuxis* (used only twice in NT – 1 Timothy 2:1; 4:5) – an interview. (Strong)
			1. “it is a technical term for approaching a king, and so for approaching God in ‘intercession’” (Vine)
			2. “free, familiar prayer such as boldly draws near to God" (R.C. Trench)
			3. Notes especially the boldness of prayer as it pertains to entering the chambers of God – **cf. Revelation 5:8** (prayers of the saints ascend to God’s throne).
		4. Taking the English translations:
			1. “Supplications” – the request of a need.
			2. “Prayers” – the general discussion to God, involving any necessary topic.
			3. “Intercession” – an interview with God on behalf of another for Him to intervene in their life in some way. (Intercede)
			4. CONTEXT – all on behalf of another – **1 Timothy 2:1-2**
	3. Giving of Thanks – not necessarily a variation of prayer, but an activity of prayer.
		1. “thanksgivings” (ASV; NASB; ESV)
		2. As it pertains to the receiving of that which was prayed for.
		3. **Colossians 3:17** – always we need to give thanks to God.
8. Who? **(vv. 1-2)**
9. All Men **(v. 1)**
	1. Men – *Anthropos* – is used (a) generally, of “a human being, male or female,” without reference to sex or nationality. (Vine)
		1. In distinction from **(v. 8)** – men – *anēr* – male.
	2. Both brethren and otherwise – cf. Galatians 6:10
		1. Do good to all – praying for others is good – pray for all.
		2. Especially the brethren – **cf. Romans 1:8-9** (Paul prayed for brethren – especially concerning their spiritual state.)
10. Those in Authority **(v. 2)**
	1. God’s appointed ministers – **Romans 13:1**
11. Importance – why it is especially important for Christians to utilize their privilege of prayer on behalf of all men.
	1. Whose Prayer Does God Hear?
		1. His children – **Matthew 6:9**
		2. Those who hear God – **Proverbs 28:9** (so as to do His will), i.e. not sinners (**cf. John 9:30-31** – man given sight by Jesus concerning Jesus to the Pharisees.)
		3. The righteous – **James 5:16; 1 Peter 3:12**
		4. The obedient – **1 John 3:22**
		5. Those whose petitions are according to His will – **1 John 5:14**
	2. Those in the world, i.e. who are not God’s children, offer ineffective prayers. Our prayers are not, thus, pray for them.
12. Why? **(vv. 2-7)**
13. To Provide for Godly Living **(v. 2)**
	1. Regarding those in authority – **Romans 13:3-4** – God appointed them for the benefit of His people.
		1. Does not mean they will always do good – free-will.
	2. Expect persecution – **1 Peter 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 3:3**
		1. We can and MUST live godly in spite of persecution.
	3. It is right to pray for an environment that is conducive to worship and devotion to God.
14. To Please God **(v. 3)** – especially as regards His desire for all men.
15. To Effect the Salvation of Men **(vv. 3-7)**
	1. He wants them to be saved **(v. 3a):**
		1. **John 3:16** – loved the world.
		2. **(v. 5)** – Jesus is the ONE MEDIATOR:
			1. Men – *Anthropos* – is used (a) generally, of “a human being, male or female,” without reference to sex or nationality. (Vine)
			2. **(v. 6)** – ransom for all – died to redeem all from sin.
				1. **1 John 2:2** – propitiation for the whole world. (Difference? We have gained access through faith.)
			3. **(v. 7)** – Paul appointed to preach Him to ALL – Gentiles (everyone in addition to the Jews).
	2. How they are saved expresses the content of our prayers for them:
		1. **(v. 4)** – saved by coming to the knowledge of the truth.
			1. Knowledge – *epignōsis* – expressing a fuller or a full “knowledge,” a greater participation by the “knower” in the object “known,” thus more powerfully influencing him. (Vine)
			2. **Romans 1:5** – “obedience to the faith” – i.e. the gospel.
		2. Obedient knowledge of the truth discussed in chapter 1:
			1. **1:3** – doctrine.
			2. **1:5** – commandment.
			3. **1:10** – sound doctrine.
			4. **1:11** – glorious gospel of the blessed God.
			5. **1:19** – the faith.
		3. Prayer for them to know, and obey the gospel. (Requires our work – **cf. James 2:15-17** – God will use us to spread His word.)
16. Where? **(v. 8)**
17. Public Assembly **(v. 8)**
	1. It has been well noted that the context transitions to the proper behavior in the public worship assembly:
		1. **(v. 8)** – men – *aner* – male.
		2. **(vv. 11-12)** – the conduct of women – **cf. 1 Corinthians 14:34-35** – especially as it pertains to conduct in the assembly.
	2. When we assemble, we should regularly exercise our privilege of prayer on a collective level – Leading prayer – **1 Corinthians 14:16** – one prays, another says amen to the sentiment of the prayer.
		1. **Acts 2:42** – the church collectively continued steadfastly in prayer.
18. Everywhere **(v. 8)**
	1. In contrast to the OT worship – **John 4:19-24** – Samaritan woman concerning proper place of worship.
		1. Mount Gerizim or Jerusalem?
		2. Was Jerusalem – appointed place of God.
		3. Now? – anywhere true worshipers exist.
	2. Prayer should be a constant practice of the Christian, and we have the privilege of approaching God whenever, and wherever.
19. How? **(v. 8)**
20. In Holiness
	1. Not a prescribed physical posture of prayer:
		1. Standing; Hands spread out toward heaven; Bowing the Head; Lifting the eyes toward heaven; kneeling; falling down with the face toward the ground – all described in the Bible and accepted.
	2. Spiritual posture:
		1. Holy hands – because unholy hands prohibit communication with God.
		2. Cleanse your hands – **James 4:8**
		3. **Isaiah 1:15** – won’t hear the prayers of the guilty, whose hands are bloody.
		4. **Psalm 24:3-4** – must be right with God to have the benefits of prayer.
21. Without Wrath and Doubting **(v. 8)**
	1. Wrath:
		1. As it pertains to prayers for all men, especially those in authority.
		2. Not imprecatory – this is for their good **– (v. 4)** – God’s desire for their salvation.
		3. **James 1:20** – wrath of man is not in line with God.
		4. Rather – **Romans 12:19-21** – we should use this mindset in our prayers for all men.
			1. Not praying for their harm or misfortune, but for their well-being.
			2. **Matthew 5:44** – pray for enemies, but without wrath.
	2. Doubting:
		1. Also as it pertains to prayers for all men.
		2. AV (KJV) – thought 9, reasoning 1, imagination 1, doubtful 1, disputing 1, doubting 1
		3. *dialogismos*; discussion, i.e. (internal) consideration (by implication, purpose), or (external) debate. (Strong)
		4. “Wrath is, however, only a sample of sin in the heart; it is here combined with *dialogismos*, "wrong thought" of any kind…it covers all kinds of wrong thoughts regarding our fellow men or regarding God…All wrong thought of any kind must be repentantly removed from the heart when we pray.” (Lenski)
		5. We cannot expect for God to hear us as we approach Him in prayer with evil thoughts concerning our fellow man.
	3. Certainly, though, our prayers should be with the faith that God hears, and will work – **1 John 5:14-15**

**Conclusion**

1. We should acknowledge and take advantage of the tool of prayer God has given to His children.
2. We should recognize what power we wield with such and use it also for the benefit of others.
3. Let us pray and do so in a manner that is pleasing to God.