

## **PRAY FOR YOUR LEADERS** **(1 Timothy 2:1-2)**

### **I. Paul mentions the contents of prayers (vs 1a).**

- A. Paul begins by commanding, which is the true weight of the word “exhort” when used by an apostle, that prayers be offered in worship.
  - 1. The words “first of all” do not necessarily mean that the first thing done in worship is prayer.
  - 2. It simply means it is of such great importance that Paul wanted to mention it first when discussing worship.
- B. Paul then lists four different types of content in our prayers that could and should be offered on behalf of others.
- C. The first content type is that of supplications.
  - 1. This word means a prayer for specific benefits.
  - 2. Many times it is a request for protection.
  - 3. In the case of a leader, it the type of prayer offered up during a crisis the leadership of a nation is facing.
- D. The second content type is that simply called prayers.
  - 1. This is generally used when a need arises.
  - 2. Needs that are general that come up regularly are under consideration with this word.
  - 3. In the case of a leader, it would probably be used for the routine duties of governing.
- E. The third content type is intercessions.
  - 1. This is a plea made to God on behalf of another.
  - 2. You and I can go to God on behalf of someone else.
  - 3. We do this for those who are sick and for our leaders.
  - 4. We do this when we pray for others to be receptive to the gospel.
- F. The fourth content type is giving of thanks.
  - 1. We need to be people who are thankful for all things.
  - 2. We should express our gratitude to God for all the blessings we receive.
  - 3. When we offer the other types of prayers and that for which we pray comes about, or some crisis is avoided or dealt with, we need to thank God for that.
  - 4. When our requests are granted we need to be thankful.
- G. We can use more than one content type in a single prayer.
  - 1. We can ask God to be with our leaders during a time of war, intercede on their behalf in asking for wisdom to be granted to them and then thanking God for the good leadership they have shown in the past.
  - 2. Whichever content type we use, we must be sure to use it in our public prayers.

### **II. Categories of people for whom we should pray (vs. 1b-2a)..**

- A. After Paul describes the contents of our prayers, he then tells us for whom we should be praying.

- B. We need to pray for all men.
  - 1. There is not a person for whom we should not pray.
  - 2. Jesus died for all men and we should pray for the salvation of all while working toward that same end.
  - 3. Our neighbors are lost in sin, get sick, have bad things happen to them and we need to pray for them.
  - 4. As we pray for them, we need to make sure that we have in mind their eventual salvation.
  - 5. When someone is sick, we ought to pray for their recovery so that they would have the opportunity to obey the gospel.
- C. We need to pray for the President in our case.
  - 1. We don't have to agree with everything the President does or says.
  - 2. He is our leader and is in need of our prayers.
  - 3. The king in the days of Paul was Nero.
    - a. Nero was incredibly wicked.
    - b. That did not stop Paul from praying for him.
  - 4. Every leader needs God's wisdom, which only comes from His word and we should pray for leaders to have that wisdom and to make good decisions.
  - 5. We can and should pray for the leaders of other countries because they rule over Christians in their nations.
  - 6. So much of our ability to worship peacefully depends on him that we should always pray for him.
- D. We need to pray for all those in authority.
  - 1. This would include senators, congressmen, governors, mayors, judges and anyone in a position of authority.
  - 2. We know that most rulers don't rule alone.
  - 3. The President has to deal with the legislative and judicial branches of government and they are all three to work together for the good of the nation.
  - 4. Other nations have similar ruling systems.
  - 5. They all need our prayers, especially in the times in which we live.
- E. Paul commands that prayers be offered in worship for all men and especially those that lead us.

### III. **The purpose of our prayers (vs. 2b).**

- A. Some might wonder why Paul would have Christians pray for non-Christians, especially those in leadership positions.
- B. He lets us know that we are to do so in order for Christians to lead quiet and peaceable lives.
  - 1. We should live lives that are tranquil.
  - 2. We should always seek peace with others as Jesus commanded in the sermon on the mount.
- C. The reason for this is found in the last two descriptive words in the verse.
  - 1. Godliness refers to our actions towards God.
    - a. We want peace and tranquility so we can worship God without any repercussions.

- b. We don't have anyone ordering us to break up our meetings here as they do in other places.
    - c. We can be Christians, right now, with no fear of being molested for such.
  - 2. Honesty refers to how we live with our fellow man.
    - a. We are to treat them properly.
    - b. We aren't to harass them or fight with them over the right to worship.
- D. All of this is done so that we can lead lives that allow us to freely worship and spread the gospel to the lost.