

INTRODUCTION

Among the disciples of Jesus Christ, prayer is a matter of first importance!

Our great aim in prayer is that sinners be saved, and toward that wonderful goal, there is much praying to be done! Our Lord Jesus has set us the example; He prayed:

-Thy will be done: each person prays for himself, that God will help him obey, and will use that obedience toward the salvation of sinners

-Keep them from the evil one: we all pray for each other and for the whole church, that we will not fall from the faith, but will have such a loving unity that sinners will see our Savior truly was sent here by God

-Forgive them, for they do not what they do: we all pray for sinners, that they will hear the gospel, believe it, and repent of their sins, and so be saved in Jesus Christ

That is the kind of prayer to which our Lord's apostle exhorts us in 1 Timothy chapter 2. But in mentioning prayer, the apostle gives a very brief aside or digression, teaching us another reason for prayer, and exhorting us to it. We take that up today, in response to what happened in our country yesterday.

Yesterday afternoon, former President Donald Trump was shot, but not badly wounded. I decided to respond by exhorting the congregation to pray.

For me, the exhortation to prayer in 1 Timothy 2 provides a much-needed way of escape from the temptation to be anxious about what happened yesterday, along with what appears in every news headline: violent trends in our society, apparent severe corruption in our own governments, and the threat of all kinds of disruptions of the peace and freedom we have enjoyed for so long.

The word of God here teaches us an important part of how we in the household of God deal with such things: we pray!

TEXT

1 Timothy 2:1-6 (1) Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, (2) for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. (3) For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, (4) who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. (5) For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, (6) who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,

BODY

- I. We Aspire to Live a Life of Godliness and Honesty
 - A. We Christians, the disciples of Jesus Christ, the church, live a life that consists of two aspects: Godliness, the expression of our love for God, and honesty, the expression of our love for our fellow men.
 1. to express that first part here in this verse, “godliness” has been used consistently here over the centuries
 2. to express that second part, we have used a number of different words: honesty, gravity, dignity, holiness, reverence
 - B. And this life of love toward God and toward men, we seek to live in ALL godliness and honesty; we seek to live this life godly and dignified in every way
 - C. We know that until the Lord Jesus comes back, we will not live perfectly; but we aspire to it; we strive toward it with power of the Holy Spirit in us
 - D. Godliness: the expression of our love for God; He has loved us first, so we also love Him
 1. at home
 - a) read the bible
 - b) pray
 - (1) at meal times
 - (2) at bed time
 - (3) other times
 - c) have the children memorize
 - (1) bible verses
 - (2) Lord’s Prayer
 - (3) Ten Commandments
 - d) see that all of our children’s education is done in the light of God as Creator
 - e) post bible verses on the walls
 2. in the assembly on the Lord’s Day
 - a) take the day off from work, school, and other activities
 - b) assemble publicly in the congregation of our choosing
 - c) hold to what confession of faith we deem best
 - d) read the bible in our own language
 - e) pray what prayers we choose
 - f) sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs
 - g) preach and teach the bible, and listen to the preaching and teaching
 - (1) Jesus Christ has died for our sins, has been buried, and on the third day rose again
 - (2) now all who repent, turning from their sins to God, believing in Jesus Christ, receive forgiveness of sins from God, and everlasting life
 - h) we take the Lord’s Supper, stating what we understand it to mean
 - i) we baptize, as the bible says to do it, explaining its significance
 - j) we eat a fellowship meal together
 - k) we recognize new members; we expel misbehaving members
 - l) we freely move to some other church if we consider it necessary

- E. Honesty: the expression of our love for other people---all men, and our fellow believers in Christ especially; God has shown us His great love for us; we love Him; so we also love those whom God has created in his own image
1. we do them no hurt; we cause them to suffer no loss
 - a) neither by intentional actions
 - b) nor by negligence
 2. if we have abundance, and they are in need, we share with them
 3. we treat them as we would have them to treat us
 4. we do not condone their sins; we do not approve their evil; we do not join with them in sinning
 5. we love to pay them a fair price for what they are selling, and to charge them a fair price for what we are selling
 6. we tell no lies about them, neither on purpose, nor accidentally by repeating things we don't know to be true
 7. we submit to those who are over us, rendering to everyone what he is due
 8. we work faithfully in our jobs, so we give good service to our employers and our customers, and so we earn the living our families need
- F. We live this life of love toward God and toward men willingly, as those who have been born again by the work of the Holy Spirit in us

We aspire to live a life of godliness and honesty

II. We Desire This Life of Godliness and Honesty to Be Quiet and Peaceable

- A. As we, the disciples of Jesus Christ, lead this godly and honest life, we desire to be undisturbed in it.
 1. we desire this to be a quiet life, undisturbed by anything coming in from outside
 - a) we don't want anyone coming into our country, our state, our county, our city, our homes, and disturbing us
 - b) we don't want this to be done by an invading army
 - c) we don't want this to be done by a criminal cartel or syndicate
 - d) we don't want this to be done by individual criminals
 2. we desire this to be a peaceable life, undisturbed by anything rising up from within
 - a) we don't want any of our fellow citizens disturbing us with any kind of criminal activity against us
 - b) we don't want any of our own government officials disturbing us when we haven't done anything wrong, by corrupt abuse of the power with which they have been entrusted
- B. We desire this in both aspects of our Christian life
 1. we desire to be undisturbed from without and from within in our godliness, our worship of God
 2. we desire to be undisturbed from without and from within in our honesty, our righteous treatment of other people
- C. If we must, we can take drastic measures for our own safety
 1. appealing to first principles, such as "Thou shalt not kill," we can legitimately take action to secure our own rights
 2. we might
 - a) flee to somewhere else, hoping to be undisturbed there; or
 - b) take up arms against those disturbing us
 3. but there is not much peace and quiet in either of those options; there is so much trouble in doing those things, that we want very much to avoid them if at all possible

We aspire to live a life of godliness and honesty

We desire this life of godliness and honesty to be quiet and peaceable

III. Therefore, We Pray for Kings and All Who Are In Authority

A. It is their God-ordained job to keep people undisturbed

1. see scriptures

a) Romans 13:1-7

b) 1 Peter 2:13-14

2. their main function, as ordained by God, is to punish evil-doers; this produces at least two desirable effects

a) those who have proven themselves to be disturbers of the peace will be punished to make them not do it any more

b) those who are tempted to disturb the peace will be afraid of punishment, and so deterred from doing so

3. interesting that we even have the crime of “disturbing the peace”

B. We pray they will provide that we be undisturbed in our practice of godliness

1. that the worship we see commanded by God in the bible is not prohibited

2. that elements we see as unbiblical not be required of us in worship

C. We pray they will provide that we be undisturbed in our practice of honesty

1. that what we know we must do is not treated as something to be punished

2. that what we know we must refrain from is not treated as something to be required of us

D. One of the main things we pray regarding the government officials is that they not be murdered

1. whether any government official is someone whose policies we approve of or disapprove of, we do not want to see him murdered

a) first, of course, because it is wrong; it is wicked to murder a man, created in the image of God

b) but also because it interferes with the government providing that we be undisturbed

(1) the murdered man himself, of course, no longer can do it

(2) others in office may be intimidated from doing it

2. but the devil has been a murderer from the beginning; so of course he desires that those men charged by God with preventing murder are themselves murdered

3. whenever the devil, and men under his influence, desire to murder their rivals, but do not succeed in doing so, it is because God would not allow it

4. so we pray, in essence, “God save the king;” which is in our country, of course, the president, the congress, the supreme court, and all the lower officials with them

5. we don’t know how many prayers have been prayed for our presidents and other government officials, that they not be assassinated; but God answered them yesterday

6. let us thank God for that

7. let us continue to pray that

CONCLUSION

Since the news came in yesterday afternoon, I have been very agitated inside about what happened. The various news reports and commentaries I read gave me no peace of mind. The lines of thinking to which my flesh tempted me would take me nowhere good.

But in the word of God I find what I need: the exhortation to pray!

All our Lord's apostle has to do here is exhort us. It's not that we hate praying, and are against praying, so we need to be rebuked and corrected to get us to pray. No, we already know that we should pray; and

We love praying; we need only to be exhorted to do it.

We love God the Father, to whom we direct our prayers.

We love God the Son in whose name, and by whose mediation we pray

We love God the Spirit, who helps us as we pray

We love our fellow men, especially our own congregation and our own households, for whose benefit we pray.

We aspire to live a life of godliness and honesty.

We desire this life of godliness and honesty to be quiet and peaceable.

Therefore, in response to the violence we have seen in our country recently, we pray for kings and all who are in authority.

Alex - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Psalm 103:1

Dillon - Scripture Reading - Psalm 103:2-22

Nathan - Congregational Prayer

Benediction - Jude 21

Rita - Prelude

Rita - Trinity xvi "Doxology" + Trinity 1 "All People That On Earth Do Dwell"

Journey - Trinity 70 "Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven"

Ava - Trinity 431 "Just As I Am"

9:30 a.m. Bible Study 2024-07-14

Matthew 10:16-17 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. 17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

I speak to you of how we Christians are to live when the world around us is wicked and violent. We do not live in a situation where that is at an extreme. But that is essentially how our relationship with the world is.

- I. Be Wise as Serpents and Harmless as Doves
 - A. Be wise as serpents i.e. prudent
 - 1. Matthew 10:23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.
 - 2. Luke 21:20-21 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. (21) Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.
 - B. Be harmless as doves - GEN and ESV innocent - simple; pure; guileless
 - 1. 1 Peter 3:13 And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?
 - 2. Matthew 22:17-22
 - C. In being wise as serpents, do not be poisonous as serpents, but harmless as doves
 - D. In being harmless as doves, do not be silly as doves
- II. Beware of men
 - A. That you “not run unnecessarily into danger” Barnes
 - B. That you not think to please them as a means to advance the kingdom of God - Spurgeon
 - C. That you not trust them with your welfare
 - D. That you not be surprised when they mistreat you, and so be dismayed - Calvin

III. A Matter of First Importance

- A. There are two things that are in the first rank for the disciples and the congregations of Jesus Christ: the word and prayer; preaching and teaching, and praying
- B. This comes out clearly many places in the scriptures, both OT and NT
- C. So prayer is a primary activity for us

IV. A Means to Our Safety

- A. We all want to be safe from harm; consider the excellent way that is expressed here
 - 1. We Christians, the disciples of Jesus Christ, live a life that consists of two aspects: Godliness, the expression of our love for God, and honesty, the expression of our love for our fellow men.
 - a) to express that first part here in this verse, “godliness” has been used consistently here over the centuries; godliness: the expression of our love for God
 - (1) at home every day
 - (2) in the congregation on the Lord’s Day
 - b) to express that second part, we have used a number of different words: honesty, gravity, dignity, holiness, reverence; honesty: the expression of our love for our fellow me
 - c) And this life of love toward God and toward men, we seek to live in ALL godliness and honesty; we live this way in everything and in all things
- B. There are other means
 - 1. Matthew 10:16-17 "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. (17) But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues.
 - a) be wise as serpents

- b) be harmless as doves
 - c) beware of men
 - 2. Luke 22:36 Then He said to them, "But now, he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.
 - a) have some money saved up, some of it handy
 - b) have some extra provisions, some of it portable
 - c) have a weapon, even if you have to sacrifice something else to get one
 - C. But here is a powerful means by which we are kept safe
- V. A Means to Men's Salvation
 - I. We Are to Wage War (1:18)
 - A. A good warfare or fight
 - B. With two pieces of equipment
 - 1. faith
 - 2. a good conscience
 - 3. knowing what is true, and believing it; knowing what is right, and doing it
 - C. Having and holding both of those pieces of equipment
 - 1. don't let go; don't lose
 - 2. illus: You have two hands, and there are two things essential to have and hold. If you get interested in something else, and let yourself begin to long for it, you will let go with one hand to reach for that
 - II. We Wage War By Prayer (2:1)
 - III. We Pray for Those In Authority in the Government
 - IV. We Pray for Poor Lost Sinners