

In this Bible passage, God tells us through His servant, the apostle Paul to **pray...for all people...**

(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...

I want to focus on those last 2 verses (I Timothy 2:5-6): **(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...** Here we learn two main things about Jesus: 1) who Jesus is and 2) what he did to save us from our sins.

- 1) Who is Jesus? He is our **Mediator**
- 2) What did He do for us? He gave His life as a **ransom** for sinners.

1) Who is Jesus? He is our Mediator

a. A Mediator is the Bridge or the Middle-man between 2 persons or parties that are having a dispute. The big picture of this passage is that the one true God has a dispute (a conflict or controversy) with men – the whole human race – and He has appointed One, and only One, Bridge for this conflict to be solved. There's only one way for men to be reconciled to a holy God and return to Him. Jesus said: **I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.** (John 14:6)

b. So what is this dispute or conflict between God and men? Did God do something wrong to offend us, and now we have a huge problem in our relationship with God which requires a Mediator? Not at all! The problem is on our side. In the beginning when God created mankind, He placed in a perfect and harmonious relationship with Him. He created us holy, righteous and good. But in our first parents, Adam and Eve, we turned our backs on our good and holy God. We said "No" to God and "Yes" to sin. We thought that life would go better without God. What a lie! And what an offence against the Good, Holy, Loving, and Almighty God who created us!

c. What happened then? God became very angry with Adam and Eve and the whole human race that descended from them, and put us all under the curse of eternal punishment. We are now children of wrath under God's sentence until we pay for our sin and make amends with the infinite and eternal God we have offended. Every human being, as a child of Adam and Eve, inherits their sinful condition, and as a result, enters the world under this death sentence. We are in deep, deep trouble with God – and we caused it.

d. We need a **Mediator**! Maybe you know a little bit about mediators in a labour dispute. The management demands a wage *freeze*; they claim it's the only way to stay afloat in the competitive global market. The workers demand a wage *increase*; they claim it's the only way to pay the bills and maintain their standard of living. And the two sides are too far apart to come to an agreement so they appoint a mediator who can represent both sides well; and the Mediator or mediation team brings the two sides together and they come to a settlement.

e. But if there ever was a dispute that needed a Mediator it is the dispute between God and men: on the one side we have a pure and holy God who demands absolute perfection and complete payment for every sin, no matter how small. He is uncompromising in His standards because He never changes. If you sin even once you bring an entire avalanche of death upon yourself. Sin must get its proper punishment. Just one sin is worthy of eternal punishment for we have offended the eternal God. Sin against an infinite God puts us in infinite debt to Him.

f. On the other side you have **men: There is one God and one Mediator between God and men.** That means the whole human race. On our side we need to come up with the perfect righteousness that God requires and payment for all our unrighteousness. We must pay this infinite debt we owe to God. But we cannot possibly do this because we are limited, finite creatures and because every time we might try to pay God back, we just add to our debt because our payments have impurities and imperfections mixed in with them!

- 1) So what we really need on our side is God to forgive and cancel our debt and set us free from the death sentence that is on us.
- 2) But that leads to an even bigger problem in this dispute: God is absolutely holy and doesn't pass over sin and let it go. Justice must be done in His court. Our sin must be paid for in full.

3) So from our side we need someone to come up with this payment for sin in our place. We need this perfect righteousness and punishment for our unrighteousness to be given to us a free gift or else there is no hope for us, no way out of this dispute with God, and we will remain under His wrath. We need a Mediator!

g. Never were there two sides in a dispute so absolutely far apart from each other as the dispute between a holy God and sinful man! It would take a very special Mediator to represent both sides, "someone who could lay a hand on both sides." (see Job 9:33) And here is God's great news for us: when we owed a debt we could not pay, God, in His great love for us, sent His Son to be the One Mediator between God and men. What is so special and unique about this One-of-a-Kind Mediator is that He is God's Son - He is a divine Person - and He is also a Man because He by a great miracle of God entered this world as a true human being, conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary.

h. Thus, Jesus is the Mediator who can represent both sides in this dispute perfectly. He can represent God's side because He is fully divine. He can represent man's side because He is fully human. And this is exactly what Jesus did in His life of suffering and in His death on the cross:

(1) He represented God's side in that He took upon Himself all God's holy requirements. He took upon Himself God's requirement that man must be perfectly holy and righteous and that man must pay full, eternal punishment for all disobedience to God. All of God's demands came upon Jesus in His life and death. Jesus because of His great love for His heavenly Father said to God: **Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.** (Hebrews 10:7) He delighted to represent God in this dispute in order to display and fulfill God's perfect righteousness.

(2) And He also represented man's side when He suffered in His very own body and soul the eternal death penalty that had come down on the sinful human race. He was crushed under its weight. He was nailed to a cross which was a death penalty reserved for those under a curse. On the cross, Jesus cried out, **"My God! My God! Why have You forsaken Me?"** (Matthew 27:46). So He offered to God the full payment man owed to God for sin, and then rose again on the third day because when sin is paid for death is done! There's a true saying that goes like this: "He paid a debt He did not owe because we owed a debt we could not pay."

i. What great love that the Holy God should provide the human race with the wonderful Gift of a Perfect Mediator! When it was impossible for us to come back to Him because we could not pay the debt, He came to us in Jesus Christ to pay the debt for us!! In the Man Jesus Christ, in His suffering and death, the dispute is resolved and God and man are reconciled!

j. Whoever trusts in Jesus Christ as God's one and only Mediator has this promise: *God will forgive all your sins because Jesus paid for you, and He will take you back into His loving embrace. He will accept you as His holy child and bring you into His eternal kingdom. Not because of anything you have done, but only because of what Jesus has done for you!* Isn't that amazing love?! Isn't that Good News?! There is no other God. There is no other Mediator between God and men. There is no other way. **Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, you and your family!** (Acts 16:31)

2. What has the One Mediator, Jesus Christ done for us? He gave His life as a ransom for sinners.

Let's go back to our text to see what God's One and Only mediator did for us (I Timothy 2:5-6): **(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...**

a. Normally a mediator or a mediation team is an outside organization that is paid handsomely but puts no skin in the game. They are skilled negotiators and work hard at the art of compromise to bring two sides together. Usually the resolution is reached when both sides are willing to sacrifice some money and privileges. The best a mediator can do in a labour dispute is come up with a temporary solution that will hold for 5 or 10 years before it's back to the bargaining table.

b. But this Mediator, Jesus Christ, put His own life on the line. He purchased reconciliation between God and humankind not through bargaining and negotiation, nor through money, but with His own life! He paid the ransom Himself, and He paid it with His own Life as the Son of God who became a Man and lived and died on this earth about 2000 years ago in Palestine.

c. And there was no compromise. He represented all God's demands perfectly and completely; He represented all man's needs perfectly and completely, so His mediation holds forever for those who come to God by

trusting in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. Through Jesus we assured God is always for us, not against us. Through Jesus we are confident that God will always accept us and never reject us. Through Jesus God's Perfect Mediator we know without a doubt that God always loves us and will never turn His back on us.

(1) If we wander from Him into sin, He will discipline us for our good to call us back to closer fellowship with Him, but that He because He is a Father who loves His children forever, not because He is our enemy who is punishing us in wrath. Remember: God put all the wrath that we deserve on Jesus and it is gone forever, and now He loves us forever when we belong to Jesus by true faith!

(2) Or God may give us hard times (sickness, financial stress, struggles with our relatives, persecution) because He wants to strengthen our character and make us become more and more holy like He is. As our loving heavenly Father He does not pamper or spoil His children but is always at work for our good and for His own glory. The hard times he sends us are not punishments but purifications, just like gold is refined through heat and diamonds are formed under heavy pressure.

d. Jesus gave Himself as a **ransom**. God demanded a price for sin and that price was eternal punishment of body and soul of every sinner. The only way to become right with God is if we pay that price. And Jesus came as our Mediator and representative to stand completely in our place and pay that price for us. A ransom is a price that is paid to free 1) a hostage, or 2) a slave, or 3) a prisoner. Well, no one took us hostage because the human race in Adam and Eve, tempted by Satan, freely chose sin and death instead of life with God. Instead, we became slaves to our own sin and prisoners under God's curse of eternal death.

e. Who would pay the ransom price that will set us free? Who would offer to God the only fair price for rejecting, blaspheming, and spitting on His infinite majesty and eternal glory and goodness? This is what we have all done to God, if not outwardly in our words and actions, then inwardly in our thoughts and feelings. Who will pay the ransom? The Bible says: **Truly no man can ransom another, or give to God the price of his life, for the ransom of their life is costly and can never suffice, that he should live on forever and never see the pit.** (Psalm 49:7-9 ESV) We can't possibly pay even if we try our best for a whole life time to do good works. Our lives aren't big enough to pay an eternal price and every good deed we try to perform has sin mixed into it, only making things worse.

f. So God said: *I will send my One and Only Son to be the Mediator and pay the ransom for you. Jesus is the only one great enough and good enough to pay the eternal price we owe.* The Man Christ Jesus is both (1) divinely powerful so that He is able to pay the infinite cost, and (2) completely sinless so that His payment for sin in His suffering and death is absolutely pure and fully acceptable to God. Jesus is the only sinless human being ever to live, innocent of great transgressions and small, innocent of public sin and private sin. That's why God raised Jesus from the grave on the 3rd day after He died: The payment went through! His death was accepted and approved by God as payment in full. The ransom Jesus paid with His own unblemished life is forever good! No one in history besides Jesus has made such a sacrifice that is sufficient to make a full payment for sin.

g. And now in Jesus Christ everyone who believes is released from slavery and from the prison of sin and death, and from God's eternal anger and curse upon sinners. You are free! The text says: **He gave Himself as a ransom for all.** This does not mean that everyone will be set free, but that the ransom He paid is for everyone to believe in and receive as full payment for his own sin. No matter what religion or culture or colour or background or era we're from, no matter how terrible and shameful the sins we have committed: whoever believes in Jesus Christ will be saved. There is One Mediator between God and men, there is one ransom payment that sets us free, there is one gate that leads us to full and eternal reconciliation with God – and God calls the whole world, each and sinner, to turn in at that Gate named Jesus! This ransom is for me to take; I need it. It is for you to take; you need Him. The Ransom is a Person named Jesus: believe in Him and you will be set free.

h. There's one more thing I want to emphasize about Jesus, God's Mediator and Ransom for all: the ransom payment that sets you free from your slavery is a special kind of freedom. Our culture says that freedom is the right to do whatever you please, whatever feels right for you. That's not the kind of freedom Jesus gives. Doing whatever you please is not true freedom, it is slavery to self-love and evil passions like lust and greed and anger and bitterness and pride. But the freedom Jesus gives is the freedom to love God and to do His will. It is freedom to live for God and always make it your aim to please Him.

(1) In the Bible the ransomed believers sing a song to Jesus Christ that goes like this: **"You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us (= ransomed) to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us**

kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." (Revelation 5:9-10). Jesus ransomed us with His death to God, to offer our lives to Him as kings and priests!!

(2) So true Christian freedom is freedom in Christ not to do whatever we want, not to enjoy all the sin we please, but it is a freedom to fight our sin and to serve God with joy and gladness because He loves us and has set us free from our sin! The Bible says: Jesus **died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.** (II Corinthians 5:15)

Conclusion

The Bible says: **(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...** The apostle Paul and all the rest of Christ's apostles were called to testify of Jesus Christ to the whole world, and so are we called by God to testify of Him today. Don't serve God by trying to redeem yourself; you can't! Serve God by believing in Jesus whom He sent to redeem you, and by giving your ransomed and redeemed life to Him who gave His life for you!