

Thursday, September 22, 2022 • Read 1Timothy 2:1–3

Questions from the Scripture text: What four types of prayer does the apostle urge in v1? For which men? And for which ones, more specifically, in v2? For the sake of whose life? And what four aspects of our life? What is the great virtue of such a four-fold life (v3)?

Having driven home the importance of Timothy's reformational work in Ephesus, what is the first part of that work that the apostle urges?

1Timothy 2:1–3 looks forward to the second serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these seven verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **corporate prayer is the first part of participation in the work of God in our and others' lives**.

Prayer first. This brief portion begins with a "therefore," reminding us that the apostle has just been talking about preserving Timothy's faith, and the other believers' faith, from shipwreck. Now, he moves on to specific directions for what Timothy is to do, as he looks to Christ to bring reformation by His Spirit.

And that first, specific direction is prayer. Before restoration of proper teaching or overseeing (2:11–3:13), before reformation of doctrine (3:14–4:16), before reformation of the dynamics of church life (5:1–6:2) and personal life (6:3–19), the apostle first addresses prayer (2:1–10).

If we know our Bibles, this is not very surprising. All battling by the armor of God (cf. Eph 6:10–17) is pursued and maintained by prayer (cf. Eph 6:18). As the apostles ordained deacons in order to maintain their own ministry, the first part of that ministry was prayer (cf. Ac 6:4), even before the ministry of the Word.

Four types of prayer. Scripture gives us instructive examples of many different types of prayer. What a great variety there is, just in the Psalter! Here, the apostle commands four types, and the list is almost certainly representative rather than exhaustive: "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks" (v1). "Supplications" refers to requests or petitions for things that are needed. "Prayer," just as it sounds, translates a more general word for talking to God. The word translated "intercessions" appears only here and in 4:5; both it and its verb form are usually used of praying with regard to (sometimes in behalf of, sometimes against) another. "Thanksgivings" is the common word for expressions of gratitude—recognizing and appreciating to God that He has been gracious.

Taken together, the four words give us a 3-D portrait of coming to God in faith and hope, humbly recognizing that only He can give what He says that we need, while acknowledging and adoring Him for the fact that He gives it. When the rest of our life, or of church life, is bathed in prayer of this sort, we begin to experience it as it truly is: an interaction with our gracious God.

Prayer for all men. Realizing the good that prayer is, we are not surprised that we are to do it for all, and especially for the household of faith (cf. Gal 6:2–10). The word for "men" in v1 is the generic one, meaning for all humans. It draws a contrast with the word in v8, which is male-specific, but it is joined to the words "men" and "Man" in vv3–4. God is God, and men are men, and men's only hope is for God to be gracious to us.

This is especially true of those who least acknowledge it: kings and all who are in authority (v2a). Their "high position" (a better translation than "authority") has put them in a position not of less need but more. Even within the church, the apostle is going to recognize the increased spiritual neediness of those who are "rich in this present age" (cf. 6:17), something our Lord taught His disciples in Mat 19:23. If we love all of our neighbors, then we ought especially to pray for kings and those in high position, for they are spiritually imperiled by their earthly blessings.

Prayer that aims at four things. But there is another reason to pray especially for them: in God's ordinary providence the just and wise exercise of administration of earthly authority is a means by which God facilitates our own right and wise living. So, when we pray especially for those who are in authority, it is a manner of praying that is "especially for the household of faith." This mirrors God's own work in all providence, doing all things for the good of His church, and especially in how He has ordained to use authority to do so—especially the authority of Christ (cf. Eph 1:19–23; Col 1:15–18).

But what is that good that we hope for, from earthly authority? The opportunity to live a righteous and wise life. The apostle describes this life with four words. "Quiet" and "peaceable" translate rare (in the NT) words that complement each other. The former refers to one who is not disruptive toward others by his conduct; the latter to one who is not inwardly disturbed by what others do. Note that there is an implication here that if authorities behave in an ungodly manner, believers' godliness will become disruptive to others. And, whether by our remaining weakness and sinfulness, or by a rightly grieved or indignant outward response, the worse our authorities get, the more inwardly troubled we will be.

The second pair of words about the Christian's life are similarly related: the first indicating an inward religious devotion and weightiness, and the second indicating an outwardly religious and reverential manner. Though both of these aspects of our life are offered unto God, the first word has more of a nuance at being aimed at Him, while the second is nuanced slightly to others' experience of us and observation of us. Taken all together, these four words form a portrait of a man whose life is one of steadfast, wholehearted love unto God and neighbor.

Prayer that participates in God's work. Of course, it is not so much that our earthly authorities enable us to do this, or even that they facilitate our own self-enabling. As we come before God in the manner described in v1, it already begins to produce the behavior and mindset of v2 even without any difference being made in the authority. For, it is God Who is our Savior (v3), and in His salvation He is not only counting Christ's goodness and acceptability for us, but also reshaping us to be like our good and acceptable Redeemer.

God is the One Who uses the kings and authorities. God is the One Who uses our praying for them. And when He commands us to pray, He invites us into participation in His work as He sanctifies us (v3). In the next passage (v4–7), we'll be considering how great is our privilege that He is also inviting us into participation in His work in saving all sorts of men. What a great privilege prayer has as a participation in God's own work. What a mercy that He has been pleased to work in and by stirring us up to prayer, which He uses in us and to which He responds in others!

What is the first part of walking with God in your life? How do your daily habits reflect this? How do the reflexes of your hearts reflect this? For whom, especially, should you be praying? What sort of life should you be trying to lead? Who, especially, loves this sort of life and produces it in us?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for the privilege that You have given us of participating, by prayer, in Your work in our lives and in others' lives. Forgive us for how often that which You command "first of all" is for us instead an afterthought or mindlessly performed. Grant that we would aim at the godliness which You desire for us: steadfast, wholehearted love unto You and our neighbor. Forgive us for how infrequently and weakly we pursue this godliness, and make us more like Christ, who Himself has been perfectly godly in our place, and in whose Name we ask it, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP2 "Why Do Gentile Nations Rage" or TPH520 "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"

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First, Timothy 2 verses 1 through 3. These are God's words. Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men for kings and all who are in authority that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence For this is good and acceptable in the site of God our Savior So far.

Reading the So far, the reading of God's inspired and eternal so far the reading of God's inspired and inerrant word.

So in the first chapter, The Apostle has been telling Timothy about the importance, the urgency, the necessity of the work of Reformation that he needs to do and oversee and seek from God by his labors. In Ephesus. The doctrinal error that has crept into the church. The immorality, the immoral living that has been justified by that false doctrine and has grown up in the church have come in part.

As a result from disorderliness in the church, the chaos of not operating. The church, the way the Lord Jesus has said to. So one of the reasons we have the pastoral epistles for the proper organization of the churches, that the way that Jesus operates, the church is the way that he keeps the doctrine sound.

So, that both the faith in Christ will be sound and the living for Christ that will be sound. So the proper organization of the church is not a unimportant or peripheral manner. And so these three things, especially the doctrine, the morality and the organization of the church Timothy's being cold too.

In order that he won't suffer shipwreck of his own faith, like Hymanas and Alexander have. And those who's spiritual care is entrusted to him and to those elders. Whom he is to a point that they won't suffer spiritual shipwreck of their faith. And so, what is the first step?

Then in the Reformation that Timothy is supposed to be overseeing and pursuing in Ephesus.

The first step was prayer. Therefore, I exhort first of all that and then he gives four types of prayer. This is actually should not be. That surprising. Remember when the apostles were saying the reason for the deaconate the reason that a jacket was necessary so that they could continue the spiritual ministry in the church.

They said, but we will devote ourselves to and it was prayer that they said, first mentioned first and the ministry of the word, only secondarily. And so that minister ministry that they have of bearing, the people up in prayer that ministry that they have of leading the people in prayer, which is actually something that needs to come out of study of the scriptures.

And to be someone who is exercised in practiced in the engagement of God and leading, then the people in shepherding them that the not only will the people's way of reading and understanding their Bibles be properly, shaped by the ministry of the word. So also, the people would learn how to engage God, which is one of the things that that you want to be learning in our family worship times as we come before God and engage him from his, from his word.

And one of the things that helpfully, hopefully several men who are, well, practiced and others who are growing in practice, and exercise, and leading their own families in prayer, calm, and they lead the congregation. And you hear how the scripture has been shaping the praying and you learn to pray well in a biblical way That design in the prayer meeting.

Isn't something that I came up with. It's actually in in this chapter, I think we're gonna take one more to go through versus four through seven. And then we'll pick up in verse 8 up, on which that practice is based. So it's not surprising that the first part of Timothy's Reformation work would be prayer.

You also see, for instance, in Ephesians chapter 6, as he talks about the spiritual battle and standing in, in the midst of it, and the armor of God, and he goes through the different parts of the armor here, think well, prayer, isn't one of the parts of the armor and then you get to the end and it says, in all things by prayer and by all prayer, actually the word all is attached to prayer in that word praying.

Always in all things that prayer is the essence necessary condition and the proper manner of use of things. Like the the Word of God, the truth, the gospel of peace salvation, righteousness, that all of these things are laid hold of in our interaction with God as we pray and that we seek from God.

The benefit of all of those things because the the Christian life and having our minds and hearts changed and having our our speech and behavior sanctified made more and more holy, it's it's not transactional. It's personal, It comes from God. Himself. It comes from Christ Himself. Yes. There are means that he is appointed and and they are mechanisms that he uses.

But they don't operate mechanically. They operate personally. And so prayer is the first part of Timothy's leadership in the church. Prayer is the first part of the elders leadership in the church that he is going to be the elders that he is going to be appointing. Prayer is the first part of your leadership of your future families.

My dear sons prayer is the first part of all of our engaging, with and relating to God. We don't just pray at the beginning of family worship because, you know, somewhere along the line. Someone thought all this is really good way to start the thing. We're gonna, we're gonna have the call to worship and then we're gonna pray.

But because everything that we do with God and everything every blessing that we look for from God, God Himself has to make effective. God Himself has to give. And so prayer is the first part of the Reformation. He mentions four different types of prayer which is helpful to us to remind us.

That there are many different. There are many different types of prayer, model to us in the Bible. And if you want to see a an obvious example to of that, you can go look at the Salter, which our songs and prayers, and all the different types of praying that we see in the Psalms.

So, he mentions these four types. And this is I would say representative, not exhaustive but they are the four that he chooses here. Supplications asking God for those things that we need, the word prayers here is as general as it sounds, it can refer to any sort of speech by which you address God.

Intercessions here, Praying on behalf of others, although the word here can also be used for praying against others. In this case, I think it is probably praying on behalf of others. Although sometimes we do pray for kings and those who are in authority and we ask for the Lord to convert them to save them.

But we also say, don't we? And yet, if you will not save them, have mercy on us by replacing them. But in intercession is sort of like supplication, but with reference, not now to ourselves but to, to others. And then giving of thanks, which is very closely related to the word grace.

It's not just an acknowledgment that God is the one who has given us everything. But as acknowledgment that God has been gracious, in giving us everything that he did not owe it to us, but that it comes from his generosity, His goodness is His mercy. So yes, he is the one who gives us from his power and his and his resources, but he does.

So because of what sort of God he is, because he's good and he is generous. And so that relationship between in the Greek between the word for grace and the word for thanks. We actually have in English. If you use a different word for thanks, which is the word for gratitude, You can almost see can't.

You the relationship between the word grace and the word gratitude? Well, that's an important connection because it means that when you offer Thanksgiving, you're not just acknowledging God as the only source of any power or goodness that you have your acknowledging that the reason that he gives himself and his power to be for us and his and his resources to be for us.

And his goodness to be for us is because he himself is generous that there is a mercy and generosity a grace involved in in his having done. So And so he joins together these four different parts of prayer in not just to tell us that we make sure that we do each of these things.

But reminding us that our praying is not to be this kind of it's another word for perfunctory. This kind of mindless thoughtless. Just exercise that we learn to do and check the box and say, okay, I did the Christian thing but that there is an actual recognition of who we are as needy and who God is as not needy but almighty and all good, and with all resources, sovereign overall.

And all wise there is recognition of who we are and who God is and that he hears us. So we address him, second word prayers, and that it is, especially those who are his through Christ who have this audience with him. That if all men are to be prayed for, then we need to be praying for them.

Because all men do not yet. Know. God. And there are men who will never know have not in a saving way. And so there is this necessary work of intercession by the church and that all of it needs to be done with Thanksgiving this recognition. Not only that God alone is able to answer, but that the reason he answers is because of the goodness that is in him.

So he's saying pray but you know, to take something that is heavenly and sublime and and say it in a really month. Pray for real Pray. For real Address, the living God, as a needy man whom he has redeemed by grace, recognizing who he is and engaging with him.

As someone who is genuinely in your position, The sacrifice we see for whom this praying is to be done and it is for all men, this all men is different than the word men that we're going to get to in verse 8. The word men in verse 8 is a gender-specific sex specific means.

He's talking about people with Y chromosomes, in verse 8, but the all men up until then is using a generic word for humans. Everyone who is descended from Adam by ordinary generation and so we're to pray for all men because God desires, all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth, verse 4.

We'll deal with that next week. He's the god. Who says, why will you die Israel? Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked? So this the one God and one mediator between God and men in verse 5, same word minute. So we are to pray for everyone.

But, as we pray for everyone, he mentions especially kings and all who are an authority? And this is for two reasons. One is that kings? And those in authority are the most needy and two kings and those who are in authority are instrumental in God's good to the church.

So, just as Galatians, 6 tells us that we are to do good to all, but especially to the household of faith. So also, as we pray, we pray for all, and especially for the household of faith. And as we look at for, whom we are to pray, we see this for kings and for all who are in authority with the purpose that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

So there's four types of prayer for all men and especially kings were an authority. Said that we may live a life that is characterized by four things here in, verse 2. Now kings and those who are, who are in authority, will have more to answer for It is very difficult for them.

In particular to be saved by the end of this letter, when he gives application to the Christian life in chapter 6, he's going to focus, especially on the rich, those who are rich in this world and the danger that, that is to their souls and the necessity of their being able to navigate, what is an earthly blessing from God without doing themselves spiritual harm?

Because of that earthly blessing Jesus himself said that it is very difficult for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. And he means difficult by comparison. Not just that it's difficult for everyone to be to be saved, but the disciples they didn't, who then can be saved.

They thought the rich guy must be. The guy who has an easiest to get into heaven, and the Lord was was teaching that having authority and having wealth in this world puts us in the position of of danger puts us in the danger of not seeing that. Jesus alone is mediator, and God, alone has power and goodness in him.

And so that's tied to verse 5. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, and, and so forth. So those who are in a position of security or a position of prosperity in this world, They actually need our prayer more than others because they're neediness as hid from their eyes.

And they are in great spiritual danger of being of trusting in their earthly riches rather than in heavenly riches. So, maybe helpful just to read, what the Apostle says in chapter 6 and beginning in verse 17, command those who are rich in this present age, not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches.

But in the living, God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. So he's not saying, you know, tell them, they should be miserable and poor, he's telling them. Don't let your earthly prosperity harm. You by hiding God from your eyes by hiding. His goodness from your eyes. Let them do good that they may be rich and good works.

Ready to give willing to share, storing up for themselves. A good foundation for the time to come that they may lay hold on eternal life. And that's actually the last instruction for the care of the church and and then he concludes the letter in chapter 6, So they really need our prayer.

But we really need for our prayers for them to be answered because the life of a believer, the life of the church is much helped when God gives godly authority in the land in in the state in the civil government. So he says for kings and all who are in authority that we may lead and now he gives these four things about the type of life that we believers.

Hopefully, that it be quiet. Peaceable godly reverent, Quiet and peaceable. Both are very rare words in the New Testament, the first one talking about external turmoil that we don't become those who are disruptive Notice what that implies that implies, that if the government is ungodly, Then those who are godly will be more and more disruptive in the society not that we will be belligerent, but just our godliness and our non-conformity will turn us into a problem and Ahabs will

come to Elijah's and say, is it now, is it?

You thou troubler of Israel? I say no. Does you have troubled Israel? But if we are obeying first, Timothy 2, and if Timothy follows, what Paul's instruction for what to do in Ephesus, we say it is you who have troubled us, it is you who trouble the nation, but we've been praying for you, that you wouldn't.

We've been praying that you would know yourself as one, who needs a mediator one. Who needs forgiveness, one, who needs submission to Jesus Christ. One from one who's authority. Comes from Jesus Christ and who are not at the top of the chain of command. But to, who exist as an under minister, a lower level authority in the administration of Jesus, They've been praying for that for you.

So the word quiet here talks about how the Christians live the Christian desires, not to be someone who brings attention to himself or his disruptive. Outwardly The word peaceable refers to our inward life. Now, when there is ungodly government we have you know, weakness and remaining sin. So there are things that are incorrect that disrupt the piece of our inward life such as anxiety and fear worry, But even even in our new nature that comes from Christ, When there's ungodly government, there are things like grief and indignation and wrath.

Jesus was grieved over and wept over and was strongly indignant act. The, the shepherd-less sheep condition of the people of Israel, and those who were, especially spiritually abused by those who are over them in the churches. And so he says, pray for kings. And for all who are in authority, one of the reasons is that we will neither be troubling to others that we may be quiet.

Nor will we be troubled by others? That we may be peaceful. The last two. There's a similar relationship between those words as there was between the first two In all godliness, that that's a word that has more to do with our interaction, with God himself that it would be reverent worshipful dignified.

That we would always be recognizing from the heart, who God is and living unto him. That we wouldn't live light flippant, sarcastic lives or lives. That aim at continually being amused or just pleasure for the sake of pleasure. But even that our pleasures, our joys would be weighty and profound as received from God himself.

Like he says to the rich, people towards the end of chapter 6, Recognizing that, whatever genuinely good things, they have have been given to them by God to enjoy. And so this thing that you enjoy suddenly is so much more grand than then, you had thought it was as a gift from God.

Whether it's, you know, the big house in Iowa or boxed macaroni and cheese, which I know we live in a We worship with a congregational. Many of whom think that's probably a sin, But the, the super tasty creaminess and the cheap price are also gifts from God and you can enjoy it, and it gets a wonderful weightiness.

When you say this is a gift to me from God, it's not as great as Jesus. He is the greatest gift. Of course because God has given himself in Christ, but the giver of it and the giving of it are the the giver of it is God and the giving of it is God's giving.

And so when we live all of life before the face of God, aware of God, you receive everything. You have as a gift from him, You receive everything you do as an assignment from him to be done as unto him for his glory, for his pleasure participation in His work, which of course is infinitely greater than ours, our greatest works are tiny, tiny, tiny little pieces.

Almost infinitesimal pieces in and what God is doing. Our least work. Isn't that much smaller of a piece can't get much smaller. Can you than infinite? Decimal. And yet everything we do is done as a participation in what God is doing and we can't wait to see what he's going to do through it.

We no longer buckle and give in to pragmatism, which says, oh I really need to do differently to make a better outcome. You don't even make outcomes. Stop it. God has in his wisdom and in the ordinary working of his providence, made certain things to lend themselves to certain outcomes.

But the outcome is always from the Lord, right? So there's a lot involved in this in this word that's translated godliness here, but it basically boils down to living life from the heart before the face of God. Well, that's the inward component, The word that translated reverence actually has a same kind of emphasis of weightiness, and and dignity, but it's aimed more.

Now at that with other can people can see that you live in a weighted and dignified manner. Some people just have dignity. They the Lord has built it into their character or they have learned it at something that you can learn and grow and you don't get get out of reverence free card by saying that's not my personality, right?

If a child in the royal family in Britain and some of them have messed up and you know that, you know, lots of people get paid to take pictures and write stories in public tabloids and, you know, those kind of thing. But if a child says, that's not my personality, what does huh?

Grandma? Queen or whoever's training you on behalf of the gram of the Queen say. So no your royalty. You have to act in a dignified manner. They teach you how to retain composure and how to be gracious and wise and live in this dignified and weighty way. It's something that's despised in our culture, Our cultural loves lightness and sarcasm and thinks that that somebody who, as always dignified in their manner, even if their joyous but dignified because it's not light and flippant, they are considered like a wet blanket or someone who doesn't know how to have fun or, but godliness has both that heart towards God from inside and that manner.

Where even if you it's kind of like one of those scenes for one of those epic books, where someone is going to turn out to be the high king. That was, you know that they've been waiting for for centuries. But when you first meet them, they're in the middle of a large social situation but you can already tell by the wisdom and the restraint and not entering into lightness.

But when they are glad, they are glad with a deep gladness and and just just the, the dignity of conduct the dignity of we're supposed to live like that. That's that's what it should look like on the outside. If God has our hearts from the inside yet, if we're constantly under pressure and constantly under attack, and the more civil society breakdown there is the more in our remaining sin, we are prone to things like worry and anxiety.

And the the inner reverence for God, we are distracted from and the less inner reverence for God. We have the less outer, reverence, The less godliness to use the word, have the third term here, describing the Christian life in verse 2. The less outer reverence. We will have. So why do we pray for all men and especially for kings?

And all those who are in authority and these four ways in order to live in these four ways. Well, because God is the one God is the one. Who makes that the the one the fruit of the other For this is good and acceptable and the side of God.

Our Savior, It's good and acceptable on the side of God. He wants us to be non troubling to others quiet. He wants us to be non troubled within peaceable. He wants us to be godly before him from our hearts and reverential. In our manner, those things are good and acceptable to Him.

And so we pray for those things because we want those things that are good and acceptable to him, but we pray to Him before for those things because he's the one who gives us the things that are good and acceptable. So he says for this is good and acceptable on the side of God and then he concludes with our Savior.

So you don't have to produce quietness, non troubling nest others or none, or peacefulness, not non troubledness in yourself. You don't have to produce that in yourself, you have to labor for it, but God is the one who will give it. You have a Savior, you have one who gives you the things that are good and acceptable in his sight.

If you're not just praying for all men and for kings, and those who are in authority, so that we may lead this kind of life because if they do it, then we will you're praying for them. Because it is God, who will help who alone can help then and as God who alone can produce the fruit in our lives that we hope that he will produce by that mechanism.

Which means that even if he doesn't give us converted kings and converted authorities who are wise and, and equip themselves well in their authority. Even if he doesn't, he can still give us the four things that we were looking for as a result in our lives, right? So even without the, the king and the authority, having our prayers for them answered, we can still have the quiet life.

The peaceable life, the godly life, the reverend life, because it is God, who gives them not the king who and the authority and not us ourselves. So one of the one of the first things that Timothy is commanded by the Apostle to lead in this prayer and it's implied here.

He's not just supposed to train elders to pray so that they could train congregations to pray applied here that the first part is for Timothy to pray. He's the one who's going to be laying hands on people to ordain them to authority but he must be praying first himself for them and for himself.

Well, let's as would be appropriate here. Pray.

Our Father in heaven. We thank you for this portion of your word, just three verses long and yet. Oh Lord if you would give us to live according to this passage that engaging, you lifting our hearts to you crying out to, you would be That which colors and shapes the rest of our life.

Before you, that we would seek from you that godliness of heart towards you, that we would always live before your face that it would produce this outward manner of reverence, that we would, neither be troubling to others or troubled by others. Oh, Lord. Grant that this would be the character and the conduct of our life.

And we do pray for those who are in positions of authority and are in such spiritual danger in their authority O Lord have mercy granted to them that they would recognize Christ Jesus. As the one mediator, the authority who is over them but also the one who has given himself for sinners like they are and we pray that you would one after another and many altogether.

Take the positions of authority. In the civil society, the positions of authority in the church and convert those men. And whomever you will not convert replace O God. We pray for your honor in the land, for your honor in the church. And for the facilitating of Christians living, the sort of life, we look to you to make us to live.

Pray Lord, that you would still work in my children that when they come into the majority in their middle age and they're older age that when others read and think about what reverential manner looks like and living before you looks like that these boys and girls would be first children and then later especially men and women who are examples of what it looks like when you have done this work.

And so we pray O God that you do this work in them for, we ask it in Jesus name. Amen.