

Sermon or Lesson: 1 Timothy 2:1-3 (NIV based)
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: The Priority Of Intercessory Prayer

READ: 1 Timothy 2:1-3, with vv.1:18-20 for context

BACKGROUND:

- - Within the discussion so far in 1 Timothy chapter 1, Paul has given Timothy an instruction to confront the teaching of false doctrines, myths, and genealogies in his church.
- - At the end of chapter 1, the discussion focused on maintaining comprehensive personal integrity and godliness when confronting persons who have shipwrecked their faith through believing and teaching false doctrines or speaking in a way that in reality is blasphemous and hostile against God.
- - Let's look at the next verses to learn the dynamics of what else believers are instructed to do, in light of the reality that the world has plenty of people oppositional to the Lord Jesus Christ, the gospel, Scriptures, or sound doctrines.

v.1 - READ

[Lesson Question: Develop both the stated and implied dynamics of this activity and their value. Remember to consider the context of this passage.]

SECTION POINT: Believers are to be interceding in prayers for others, which pleases God and serves purposes in the advancing of His Kingdom.

- - In light of the reality that there are persons in the church who are shipwrecking their faith through blasphemies and false doctrines, therefore the first response of believers is to pray for the persons who are or have shipwrecked their faith.
- - This response to pray for them is to have high priority, be "first of all".
- - God wants believers to be "interceding" in "prayers" for others, which is an extension of the command to "love your neighbor" - a love that comes from maturity in faith. (v.1:5)
- - Believers are to make prayers that contain requests and petitions that appeal to God to take some kind of intervening action "on behalf of, for the sake of", for the benefit and betterment of other people. (Strong's #5228)
- - Of course, the intention and thereby the main content of the prayers for those shipwrecked-faith people should be for them to move away from sinfulness, blasphemies, false doctrines, myths and towards "godliness and holiness", which can be achieved in fullness only through believing and holding sound doctrines. (v.2; v.1:6; cf. Ephesians 4:22-24)
- - An implication here is that those persons who have shipwrecked their faith need God's help in order for them to escape their shipwrecked-faith condition. (2 Timothy 2:24-26)

- - And when a person is in some way successfully moved from sinfulness to godliness, then "thanksgiving" is rightfully to be made to God because His hand and Spirit were somehow active in that person's moving towards godliness and holiness.
 - - So apparently, God has purposed and designed that the activity of believers praying on behalf of other sinful people plays a significant role in the process God uses to move people from sinfulness to godliness.
 - - Therefore, these kinds of intercessory prayers tangibly contribute to the furthering and advancing of God's Kingdom.
 - - It is "good" for us believers to pray in this manner, and we are being "urged" to do this, suggesting to do this often, plentifully. (vv.3,1)
 - - God invites and wants all of these kinds of prayers made to Him - this "pleases" Him. (v.3)
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vv.2-3 - READ

[Lesson Question: Why should believers be praying for everyone? Develop the dynamics of the concepts stated here and what potential they hold for the Kingdom, both helpful or damaging.]

SECTION POINT: Believers are to live peaceful and godly lives among their authority and community people, which likewise pleases God and serves purposes in the advancing of His Kingdom.

- - These kinds of intercessory prayers are to be made "for everyone", which is all-encompassing and not just solely focused on those persons who have shipwrecked their faith. (v.1)
- - Therefore, these two realms of impact require that believers in churches and ministries possess and maintain a dualistic perspective - prayerful concern simultaneously focused on the proper healthy functioning with wayward persons within their ministry group, and with everyone outside in the community that surrounds their ministry group.
- - The goal being cited here is that conditions prevail that will foster living in these two realms or environments in "peacefulness and quietness".
- - Within a church or ministry group, living in peacefulness and quietness can be a major challenge, especially when teachers of false doctrines and blasphemies become combative, contentious, and divisive when being confronted.
- - But there is value to God, to ministry group members, and to the surrounding community when problems and difference issues are resolved in peaceful and quiet ways.
- - Therefore, every church and ministry group should be well-educated and skilled at conflict resolution, and diplomacy, and public relations that prioritize the use of intercessory prayer.
- - "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone" - Romans 12:18.

- - People who hold positions of authority have the ability to either facilitate peaceful and quiet relations with you or your ministry, or they can bring harassment or adversity upon you or your ministry.
 - - Believers visibly bear witness to their faith and to the object of their faith within the relations they have with authority people over them, and with neighboring people surrounding them. (vv.3-4)
 - - This visible witness that believers bear within authority and community relations can either help to draw unbelievers closer to saving faith in "God our Savior", or it can help to drive them away. (vv.3-4)
 - - So "living peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness" tangibly contributes to the furthering and advancing of God's Kingdom in a similar way just like intercessory prayer does.
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BIG IDEA: Believers are to engage in intercessory prayer for everyone, which will facilitate living peaceful godly lives, and thereby both will contribute to the furthering of God's Kingdom.

APPLICATIONS:

- - Is prayer a valued priority in your life? Or is it a bothersome obligation?
 - - Are you praying regularly for "everyone" around you? (v.1)
 - - Are your prayers intercessory and purposed - on behalf of someone for their salvation and spiritual growth?
 - - Do you regard your intercessory prayers as somehow being effective for the Kingdom? Or do you regard them as essentially being a waste of time because they seem to bounce back down off the ceiling?
 - - Can you right now select some persons and commit to regularly praying for them in an intercessory way?

 - - When you are involved in a conflict, do you take a calm approach? Or do you quickly become irritated, agitated, upset, and combative?

 - - Do you put in extra effort to establish and maintain good relations with authority people and with other people in your community? Or do you quickly blurt out scathing rebukes at them when they exert their authority over you or treat you inappropriately?

 - - Resolve to henceforth make intercessory prayer a priority.
 - - And resolve to henceforth "live a peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and holiness".
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Works Cited:

Bible. "The Holy Bible: New International Version." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

"Strong's Greek Dictionary." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

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