

Living on Mission: Evaluating Prayer & Witness

1 Timothy 2:1-7

11/14/20

OUTLINE

WELCOME: (1 minute)

INTRO: (3 minutes)

- **Illustration:** Olympics represent countries
 - In Olympics, teams divided by country
 - Athletes are known by their country
 - Athletes represent their country
 - A win/loss impacts world's view of their country
- **READ:** "When you pull on that jersey, the name on the front is a heck of a lot more important than the name on the back." — Herb Brooks, *USA '80 Hockey Team*

RECAP & CONTEXT: (4 minutes)

- **Where we started:** Timothy to lead Church of Ephesus
 - Called to **PROCLAIM** the Gospel
 - Called to **GUARD** the Gospel
 - Called to **CELEBRATE** the Gospel
 - Called to **FIGHT** for the Gospel
- **Where we are going** (purpose for letter): Book Overview

- ****Instructions on Prayer****
- Roles/function of men & women
- Choosing Leadership (Qualifications)
- Reality of Spiritual Warfare
- ****How the Church is to point people to Jesus****
- **Where we are now: Current Situation**
 - **WHAT** we are to do → PRAY (v.1)
 - **HOW** we are to pray → TYPES OF PRAYER (v.1)
 - **WHO** we are to pray for → EVERYONE (v.1-2)
 - **WHY** we are to pray → WITNESS + SALVATION (v.3-4)
 - **BECAUSE** we point people to... → GOSPEL (v.5-7)
- **Sermon Title: (hence title below)**
 - “Living on Mission: Evaluating Prayer & Witness”

BIG IDEA:

(1 minute)

- **Big Idea: Prayer is critical for an effective Christian life**
 - *“Prayer is **NOT** preparation for the battle; prayer **IS** the battle!”*
 - **A:** Evaluate your life, today → Don’t tune out

PRAY:

(1 minute)

READ:

(1 minute)

- **Text: 1 Timothy 2:1-7**

*First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings **be made for everyone**,² for kings and all those who are in authority, **so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity**.³ This is **good**, and **it pleases God** our Savior,⁴ **who wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth**.⁵ For there is **one** God and **one** mediator between God and mankind, **the man Christ Jesus**,⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all, a testimony at the proper time.⁷ For this I was appointed a herald, an apostle (I am telling the truth;^[a] I am not lying), and a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.*

PREVIEW:

(1 minute)

- **Main Points:**

- 1 – **Prayer impacts Christian witness**
- 2 – **Prayer leads to glorifying God**
- 3 – **Prayer points others towards Jesus**

PILLAR 1: **Prayer impacts Christian witness**

(15 minutes)

(v.1)

- Paul connects new instruction to past warnings
 - Opening words *“First of all, then”* (or *“therefore”*) connects Paul’s new instructions (ch.2) to past warnings in v.18-20
 - **WHAT** → Avoid spiritual shipwreck
 - **WHY** → to “fight the good fight”
 - **HOW** → Through prayer

- **WHO** → Every Christian (for everyone)
- Paul states importance of new instruction
 - “*First of all...*” = Level of importance / most significant
 - Critical for “fighting the good fight”
 - Christians must begin with prayer
 - “*I urge...*” = **PLEASE DO THIS!**
 - Points to Paul’s desire for them to succeed
 - **ILLUSTRATION:** Contrast between “I *think* you should” and “I *know* you should!”
- Christians are to **PRAY!**
 - **(1) Petitions / Supplications** = Request / Begging
 - Reveals human insufficiencies
 - Need for God to intervene for us
 - **(2) Prayers** = Devotion / Reliance
 - Both general & specific conversation(s)
 - Ability to speak with God about anything
 - **(3) Intercessions** = Confidence / Going to bat for
 - Trust that God hears us and will answer
 - Knowing God can take action at any point
 - **(4) Thanksgiving** = Gratitude
 - A constant heart-check
 - Reminder to thank God for everything
- ****Prayer = Trust in & Reliance on God****

JOHN PIPER → “*Prayer is the open admission that without Christ we can do nothing. And prayer is the turning away from ourselves to God in the confidence that*

He will provide the help we need. Prayer humbles us as needy and exalts God as wealthy.

- Prayer is the admission we can't, but God can!
- Christians are to pray for **EVERYONE!**
 - “*Everyone*” = Everyone (enemies included!)
 - “*For kings & all those in authority...*” = Everyone
 - Paul emphasizes “everyone” (x2)
 - Reiterates the importance of “EVERYONE”!
 - **CONTEXT:**
 - Jesus’ life = Romans ruled over Jews
 - Paul’s life = Christians being persecuted
 - (Emperor) Nero = leader of empire
 - Nero murdered Christians & beheaded Paul
 - **THEREFORE:**
 - **NOT** easy to pray for these people
 - **BUT** → called to pray for them regardless
 - ****Stems from heart for the lost****
 - **Q:** Do you obey or disobey directives?
 - Matthew 5:43-45 (Sermon on the Mount below)

READ: ⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, **Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.** ⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ **so that you may be children of your Father in heaven...**” —

Jesus

- **Q:** What does being a “child of your Father [God]” mean?
 - **A:** Paul tells us in (v.2) → “*So that we may...*”
 - (1) Lead a TRANQUIL / PEACEFUL & QUITE life

- Exhibits the peace & love of the Gospel
 - Protect personal witness
 - (2) In all **GODLINESS & DIGNITY**
 - To be set apart from the world
 - Points others toward the Gospel
 - **CONTEXT:** Pax Romana
 - Paul's life was during the "Pax Romana"
 - General peace throughout empire
 - Building of roads + common language
 - Peace was helpful to the Church
 - Peace was helpful w/ sharing the Gospel
 - The Gospel will spread + Church will grow regardless, **BUT** peace is to be pursued & desired
- The 4 characteristics impact **INTERNAL** + **EXTERNAL** person
 - Prayer impacts who you are (your mindset & heart)
 - **Who you are (internal), reveals your witness (external)**
 - Your *witness* speaks loudest to others → NOT *words*
 - **ILLUSTRATION:** Mahatma Gandhi quote

- *"I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ."* — Gandhi
- AGAIN → Called to pray for **EVERYONE** + **LEADERS**
 - Leaders include those in power we disagree with
 - **Q:** Where do we often see this take place?
 - **A:** **ILLUSTRATION:** U.S. Politics
 - Great division/problems (DNC vs GOP)
 - Constant bickering & maligning of each other

- Fueling the political fire vs. pointing to Jesus
- **APPLICATION:**
 - **Q:** Are you leading with prayer?
 - **Q:** What is most of your time/energy spent on?

PILLAR 2: Prayer leads to glorifying God

(10 minutes)

(v.3)

- *“This is good”* = Paul’s instruction to **PRAY + BE** (witness)
 - The call for Christians to pray
 - The call for Christians to pray for others
 - The call for Christians to live out their faith
- Prayer pleases God b/c...
 - Prayer reveals our need for God
 - Prayer reveals our trust in God
 - Prayer reveals our obedience to God
- Prayer grows us to be more like Christ b/c...
 - Prayer = mind & heart focused on God’s will & way
 - Prayer impacts our beliefs + actions
 - Prayer for everything + everyone
- *“It pleases God”* = our worshipful obedience (prayers + witness)
 - “Worshipful Obedience” means...
 - Rest in God
 - Represent God
 - Proclaim God
 - Stems from **LOVE + DESIRE** for God

- WHY → ****So other people come to know Jesus!****
 - Witness = words + action
 - A godly witness *reveals* a heart for God
 - Heart for God *results* in Living for God
 - Living for God = **glorifying God**

(v.4)

- Your witness impacts others
 - Called to **PRAY + BE** to show world **JESUS!**
 - Christians are Christ's ambassadors to the world
 - **Matthew 28:16-20** (Great Commission)
 - **2 Corinthians 5:20** (*read below*)

READ: *Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us. We plead on Christ's behalf: "Be reconciled to God."*

- God wants people "to know Him" & "be saved"
 - **Ezekiel 33:11** (*read below*)

READ: *Tell them, 'As I live—this is the declaration of the Lord GOD—I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked person should turn from his way and live. Repent, repent of your evil ways! Why will you die, house of Israel?'*

- **REMEMBER:** Your actions speak louder than your words
 - Must safeguard your witness
 - Must be intentional and methodical
 - Must proclaim **AND** live out

○ *"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."* — President Theodore Roosevelt

- **ILLUSTRATION:** Abusive vs. Healthy Relationship
 - Man says he loves wife, but hits her
 - Says one thing, but *does* another (hypocrite)
 - True love is proven, not *just* spoken
 - Authentic Love = Heart + Action
 - Similar to how many Christians live...
 - Say one thing, but do another

- **THEREFORE** → Christians must be prayerful & intentional
 - Christians must live out their faith
 - Must be real-deal example to world

- **2 Corinthians 2:15** (Aroma of Christ) → *“For to God we are the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.”*

- **Ephesians 6:18** (Fruit of the Spirit) → *“Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request, and stay alert with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints.”*

- **APPLICATION:**
 - **Q:** Does your life point others toward the Gospel?
 - **Q:** Are you intentionally guarding your witness?

PILLAR 3: Prayer points others towards Jesus
(v.5-6)

(10 minutes)

- The basis of prayer is rooted in Jesus
 - (v.5) → “*There is one God and one mediator...the man Christ Jesus*”
 - Confidence is found in Jesus
 - Hope is found in Jesus
 - Only through Christ is this relationship possible
 - Jesus was fully man + fully God
 - **Fully man** = can empathize + pay penalty
 - **Fully God** = stand as mediator + forgive
 - (v.6) → “*who gave himself as a ransom for all...*”
 - Reveals God’s love
 - Reveals Jesus’ sacrifice
 - Reveals Jesus’ perfection (only he was able)
 - Reveals God’s greatness (“*a testimony*”)

(v.7)

- The Gospel reveals **HOW** + **WHY** we are saved
 - To share Christ w/ others!
 - “*For this I was appointed a herald, an apostle, and a teacher...*”
 - Herald = To *proclaim*
 - Apostle = To *go*
 - Teacher = To *explain*
 - **ALL** 3 point to what you DO
- Focus on Christ (prayer) = life change (witness)
 - **CANNOT** live for Jesus w/o showing it
 - **ILLUSTRATION:** You talk about your passions
 - Met Lauren & told parents about her

- I built Lauren up b/c of love for her
 - Parents saw how Lauren impacted me
 - My talk + actions caused interest
- **Good News** → “**EVERYONE**” includes “**GENTILES**” (v.7)
 - **CONTEXT:**
 - Church of Ephesus = heavy Jewish influence
 - Paul states Good News is for Gentiles, too
 - Reminder Christians are to **pray for everyone** and **live on mission**
- **APPLICATION:**
 - **Q:** Does your life draw people in, or push people out?
 - **Q:** Are you excited about the GOOD NEWS for all?!

REITERATE MAIN POINTS:

(1 minute)

- 1 – Prayer impacts Christian witness
- 2 – Prayer leads to glorifying God
- 3 – Prayer points others towards Jesus

CLOSE:

(2 minutes)

- This is an opportunity to...
 - Recalibrate (your life)
 - Remember (your calling)
 - Focus (on your walk)
 - Live (on mission)
- **Q:** Are you seeking the Lord’s direction?

- **Q:** Are you praying for God's peace?
- **Q:** Are you living with a missional mindset?
- **Q:** Does what you do match what you say?

PRAY:

(1 minute)