

This message is an excerpt from a larger message preached by Pastor Alex Lindsay at Northland Bible Church, Tomahawk, Wisconsin on November 3, 2024. It was the Sunday before the national election. That larger message is entitled “*What Effect Does the Gospel Have on You? – Part 4.*”

“Prayer and Social Concerns.”

Scripture Reading: I Timothy 2:1-8

We are in the World, but Not of It! – Galatians 1:3-4; Romans 12:1-2, 19-21; Matthew 5:43-48

I Timothy 2:1 – “*...First of all...*” implies a priority, that this should be a first and not last resort, a continual practice that is not neglected until there is a crisis. Previously, in chapter one, Paul was talking about his call to the ministry of the glorious gospel, about Christ’s mission to save sinners from this world, and about Timothy’s ministry to fight well in spiritual warfare (I Timothy 1:11-18, etc.). In view of those things, the number one priority is a call to prayer:

- Supplications – To ask for those who are in need (emphasis on salvation, discernment, guidance, strength, etc.)
- Prayers – Part of the act of worshipping God. Done with reverence. See Matthew 6:9-10.
- Intercessions – To ask God, with intimate and personal concern, as if you had interviewed or investigated that person and are now sharing that with God.
- Giving of Thanks – Another reverent approach to God. Mindful of God’s order and instruction, we come to God cheerfully or at least in faith and humility, being grateful to God and His providence. See Psalm 100:1-5; Ephesians 5:15-21; I Thessalonians 5:15-24; Philippians 4:6-7 cp. Romans 13:1-5; Titus 3:1-2; I Peter 2:13-17; II Peter 2:10; Jude 1:8.

The glorious gospel, the work of Christ, the call to spiritual warfare demands that we all rally around the throne of grace to “*obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*” (Hebrews 4:16 cp. Ephesians 6:10-20). That prayer is to “*be made for all men*” is to say that there is no discrimination. As all men should hear the gospel (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15), even so all men should be the subject of our prayers. “*All men*” also implies all kinds of men. In I Timothy 2:2, Paul specifically listed those in authority. These are people that were often making life hard for others (I Timothy 2:2). Yet without them, there would be chaos and confusion in the world. Those in authority need the help and grace of God to do their jobs (Romans 13:1-8; Proverbs 21:1; Daniel 4:35). Therefore, pray for them. Political and social involvement has its proper place, but seeking the God of heaven about the affairs of this life is the priority.

I Timothy 2:2-4 – Seek God, rather than men, to bless our lives (Psalm 118:8-9). Live to please God, rather than to be in service to men (I Corinthians 7:23; Galatians 1:10). Our sovereign God is not going to save all people (as Universalism teaches), but through the gospel God has shown good will towards men. He takes pleasure in saving people from sin. He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He calls all men everywhere to repent.

See I Timothy 4:10; Luke 2:8-14 (KJV, NKJV); Ezekiel 18:30-32; 33:11; John 3:17; I John 4:9-14; Acts 17:30; I Corinthians 1:21; Titus 2:11; Revelation 22:17.

I Timothy 2:5-7 – The gospel reveals only one Savior, one mediator between God and men; one redeemer who paid the price for sin, and one vital message for us to be declaring to all men.

See I Corinthians 2:1-2; Luke 24:44-48; Romans 1:14-16; Isaiah 45:21-25 cp. Philippians 2:5-11,14-16.

I Timothy 2:8 – Prayer is the priority for how we shall be effective in reaching all men for Christ. Our **“hands”** are **“holy”** in that we have been set apart for the work of the gospel, to present salvation to all men (Romans 1:1-6; II Corinthians 5:14-21).

“Lifting up holy hands” can also mean to intercede and support others who are involved with gospel ministry (Exodus 17:8-12 [Aaron and Hur with Moses]; II Thessalonians 3:1-2; Ephesians 6:18-20).

“Without wrath and doubting / quarreling” – this kind of work cannot be done if we are angry, argumentative people, causing dissention (Titus 3:1-8; Romans 12:17-21; Philippians 2:1-16; 4:4-9 cp. Romans 8:26-39).