SESSION 2
ON MISSION

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-15

1 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 humanity, 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; I am not lying), and a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. 8 Therefore, I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument. 9 Also, the women are to dress themselves in modest clothing, with decency and good sense, not with elaborate hairstyles, gold, pearls, or expensive apparel, 10 but with good works, as is proper for women who profess to worship God. 11 A woman is to learn quietly with full submission. 12 I do not allow a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; instead, she is to remain quiet. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and transgressed. 15 But she will be saved through childbearing, if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with good sense.

EXPLORING KEY WORDS

A “Pray every way you know how” (The Message). Emphasizing the necessity of prayer remained an urgent matter for Paul (see 1:3).

B Paul wanted Christians to be respected by people in power and for church leaders to behave in a manner worthy of respect (1 Tim. 2:2; 3:4,8,11).

C “This [kind of praying]” (AMP) makes a difference.

D God wants people to be born again (John 3:16) and to grow in their understanding of Jesus Christ.

E “One who brings God and human beings together” (GNT)

F “Jesus, who offered himself in exchange for everyone held captive by sin, to set them all free” (The Message)

G Those “dedicated to God” (GNT) show a gesture of complete surrender and devotion to Him.

H Godly actions; whatever they did would call attention to or detract from God living in them.

I The term isn’t meant to belittle women but suggests the need for “humility” (GNT).

J Paul used Adam and Eve to explain his approach to orderly behavior for Christians who gather together to worship and serve Him (1 Cor. 11:7-9).

K Crossed the line drawn by God’s clear instruction

L Men and woman alike are saved by giving their lives to Jesus. However, a Christian woman embraces her unique role in bringing children into the world and strives to grow toward spiritual maturity.
1. THROUGH PRAYER (1 Tim. 2:1-7)
   • Paul called on Timothy to lead the church to pray for the salvation of all people.
   • This type of prayer focus is borne out of God’s desire for all people to be saved through faith in Jesus.
   • Emphasize that salvation comes only through faith in Jesus.
   • Remind believers to pray for those in authority for the benefit of all those who seek a quiet and godly life.

2. LED BY GODLY MEN (1 Tim. 2:8)
   • Paul called on male believers to set the example through prayer with love and unity.
   • Refrain from making the posture of prayer the emphasis, focusing on the quality demanded for the lifted hands—holiness.

3. SUPPORTED BY GODLY WOMEN (1 Tim. 2:9-15)
   • Paul gave directions to women, encouraging them to be mindful of their dress and actions especially when gathered for worship.
   • Affirm that men and women are equally created in the image of God, but made differently and with different roles.

SUMMARY STATEMENTS
Believers are to be mindful of how they represent God in this world.
• Believers are to pray with a focus on the lost.
• Godly men are to set the example when it comes to praying for others.
• Godly women are mindful of how their dress and actions impact the witness of the church.
FOCUS ATTENTION

What distinguishes a Christian from an unbeliever in the world?
• A faith mind-set: Christians see the world through a spiritual prism that colors our thoughts and influences our ways.
• Behaviors: Believers engage in a curious and peculiar mix of spiritual and religious rites. They go to church, worship, pray, tithe, and fast.
• Outward appearance: Our choices, for example, in clothing or entertainment often signify that we’re different.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE
1 TIMOTHY 2:1-7

What kinds of prayers do you think the world most wants? What would God want for mankind?
• Prayer is universally recognized as the language that captures God’s ear.
• As Christians, our prayers should seek to benefit and bless others. Despite the seeming rejection by popular culture, prayer represents a direct way to provide deep support to a broad group of people with a myriad of needs.
• Praying on behalf of others with every manner of prayer shows them we view God as broadly accessible, deeply caring, and intimately involved in every detail of our lives.

How does praying for our leaders change our view of them?
• By praying specifically for people in positions of authority, we release God’s power to influence the influencers and usher in peace and stability for all.
• Praying for those in leadership deepens our appreciation for the responsibilities they carry; we better empathize with those we attempt to understand.
• By calling on the authority of the Lord with humility, we wield real, personal influence over those in positions of power.

Why is praying for others so strategic for God’s kingdom?
• Just as God breathed life into humans and then planned a way to salvage those broken lives, breathing prayers for others offers them a lifeline to salvation.
• While the only way to attain salvation is through faith in Jesus, our prayers, uttered in His name, supernaturally guide others to Him.

1 TIMOTHY 2:8

What qualities of leadership does God expect faithful men to model?
• Paul directly addressed men and their leadership roles in the faith.
• God needs male prayer warriors, but initiative in prayer means more than being ready and willing to offer up eloquent words.
• God wants all men who confess faith in Jesus to display a godly temperament of love and unity.
• The correct posture for prayer is much less about an outward display of submission than a humble heart that seeks to become increasingly Christlike and manifests that desire through the pursuit of holiness.

1 TIMOTHY 2:9-15

What does God’s call for women to represent Him in the world look like?
• By nature of their God-given sex and gender, women who follow God have unique responsibilities for dress and demeanor as well as distinctive, powerful privileges, such as childbearing and influencing other women and children.
• Be sensitive to women who may be unable to have children or who may be called to singleness.
• Demonstrating a life-changing relationship with God requires that women practice good works as a lifestyle.

How do men and women represent God differently?
• Although men and women are created equally in the image of God, they have been assigned to different roles.
• Paul identified male leadership as important to the church, but women maintain vital roles in reaching people for the gospel as well.
• Understanding one’s respective roles by trusting God’s directives means we represent God well to a culture that needs clarity about who God is and how He loves.

SUMMARIZE & CHALLENGE

How would adopting a missionary mind-set enhance your ability to represent Christ?
• Missionaries live with intentionality. They maintain an acute awareness that they represent Christ to a culture that may not yet know Him but still pays attention.
• Taking to heart God’s call to pray for others offers them God’s care and love.
• Men who adopt the holiness required for earnest prayer lead others to Christ through their examples.
• Women who willingly clothe themselves with faith, good works, and humility lead others to Christ by their own examples.

• Personal Challenge: Grade yourself on your ability to represent Christ. Are you praying for others as you should? Have you accepted the role God assigned to you for representing God and leading others to Jesus? To what degree are you a reflection of Christ?
  Whether you need to make major or minor adjustments, start with daily prayer. Start with yourself and then, just as Paul directed, pray for others in small and big requests with thanksgiving, including asking for wisdom, direction, and protection for authority figures.
CUTOUT LETTERS AND PINS

Prepare for the object lesson by printing and cutting out the letters J and W on card stock, making sure to have one letter and one safety pin for each group member. Use a large font size so the letters are easily seen across a room.

Hold up one of the J letters, and ask if they know what it stands for (Jesus Christ). Invite half the group to pin on the letters for Jesus. Explain that the letter W represents the world, and invite the second half to wear the W letters. Say: Those of you who are on God’s team are now visible representatives of Christ. Those of you who represent the world are the watchers. Whether God’s team realizes it or not, the world is watching to see how they perform. Instruct the “watching world” to observe the members of the group representing Christ.

Encourage the group to discuss what would be fitting behaviors for a representative of Christ during the session (positive actions like smiling, praying aloud, and verbal encouragement). Discuss potential negatives (being unfriendly, complaining, yawning, arguing, etc.). Ask: What actions would make you have trouble seeing a J person as someone who takes faith seriously?

A CALL TO PRAYER

Jesus told believers that we are “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world” (Matt. 5:13-14). Being salt and light can be difficult and at times dangerous. Yet Jesus called us to embrace His command to live as citizens of the kingdom of God in a world that’s hostile to Him. Believers today face growing opposition as we try to honor Him with our lives. The longer we serve Him, the more we appreciate Peter’s description of Christians as resident aliens (“exiles,” 1 Pet. 1:1). Indeed, we’re God’s people who have been placed in the world to extend the reach of His kingdom, but this world isn’t our home.

While we may find ourselves experiencing a measure of discomfort in the world in which we serve the Lord, our struggle can’t begin to match the difficulties faced by first-century Christians. They lived in a day when a powerful Roman emperor ruled over them with an iron hand. Any allegiance to anyone other than the emperor would be put down with brute force. Accordingly, when Christians expressed their devotion to the Lord, they ran the risk of being persecuted by any number of pagan people in power at the time.

How did Paul direct Timothy to address the problem in Ephesus? He didn’t direct Timothy to encourage Christians to run for cover or to take up arms against their pagan rulers. Instead, he urged them to pray. He directed them to petition God for the very individuals who had the power to harm them: “I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone” (1 Tim. 2:1).

Paul’s approach may appear to us to be quite extreme, but it turns out to be the best way. We may be persecuted for following Christ, but our safety and security can’t be our main goal. What matters most to growing believers is the good news of Christ. Wise Christians eagerly want the gift of salvation through Christ to be taken seriously. For that reason, we pray for the powerful leaders in our land. With grateful hearts, we pray for them in the hope that they will honor Christ too. We ask Him to shine the light of the gospel through us. Even when we feel the pain of a lost world’s hostility toward God, we keep on praying, and we don’t give up until He comes for us.