

great discoveries, and great wealth all have their place, BUT! Great living is His chief delight! It is something which is at once good and in accordance with the perfect will of God. His vision of this activity of godliness and deportment is satisfying to His own heart. He is, in fact, the Saviour from all things which are not in agreement with Himself and His will.

Proverbs 14:34 once was known by many nations. Today it is all but faded from the national concerns. With waves of moral delinquency, what can be done? The remedy lies in a great burden of intercession which would secure for us all that direction morally and that grit, gumption, and grace to glorify God as a nation. With the devil's destructive tactics one can only counter-attack with the offensive of prayer!

Conclusion

Prayer is a vital force which must be reckoned with. God has included it in His orderly universe. How we should pray, for whom, and with what goals in mind are all clearly provided for us. It is up to us to take up the torch and now pray! God help us to heed the Word of the Lord in this hour of our world's perplexity.

Amen.

THE BOOK OF FIRST TIMOTHY

"PRAY FOR WHOM?"

Introduction

1. One of the most tremendous themes of our Bible is prayer. It has attracted the concern and interest of all believers, but it has never lost its brilliance.

2. Outstanding amongst those who have exhibited the power of prayer is George Muller, whose orphanage stands as an imperishable text-book on prayer. Myriads of Christians have proven that prayer is one of the basic laws of the universe! It has an enormous part to play in life.

3. So, Timothy on the verge of his ministry and life's work is urged by Paul to grasp how great a role prayer should play in his life. He provides two specifics on prayer. Here they are:-

1. The DESCRIPTION of prayer.

a. Different words used.

Several different words are used by Paul to identify the ministry of prayer:

- 1) Supplications. This refers to prayer rising from needs. Special crises are in view here.
- 2) Prayers. This is prayer toward God. It suggests devotion to Him.
- 3) Intercessions. Petitions are what Paul has in mind here. It expresses child-like confidence in HIM.
- 4) Thanksgiving. Although last in order or rank, there is no need to suppose that Paul minimizes thanksgiving. It is the natural concomitant of all one's seeking the face of God.

b. Diverse people listed.

Mention is made of those for whom prayer is to be made. This is not exhaustive, but it is suggestive:

- 1) All men. The generic term for man is used here. Not merely for all Christians but for

humankind. You can't feel hatred towards those for whom you pray.

- 2) All kings. This is a major breakdown of the general sphere of all men. The plural of the noun suggests many nations and not merely one's own. Not that kings are to be prayed for personally, but in their official position that they might expedite their affairs properly.
- 3) All authorities. Really this means all those in "high places." It refers to any who have any kind of constituted authority. It is a wide-range word and certainly includes all from the local level through federal positions.

NOTE: The great expositor Bengel noted that "Wherever there are men there are to be found those by whom and for whom prayers are made." What would be the change in the affairs of men IF God's people everywhere were to heed this call to world-wide prayer?!

c. Definite conditions stated.

- 1) Men pray. The word for the masculine gender is used here. For public worship it is undoubtedly the rule of thumb for God's people. The antithesis of this word to the "women" of v. 9 is patent.
- 2) Holy hands pray. It was the Jewish manner to lift the hands with palms upwards to receive the answer (cf. 1 Kings 8:22; Psa. 134:2). Holy suggests purity of motivation and purpose (Psa. 24:3,4). There is no suggestion whatsoever that hands must be lifted in prayer!
- 3) Hearts pray. Two general conditions of the heart are excluded from prayer: a) Those who have wrath. The word used as sin of the temper. One who has irritations towards others will find it most difficult to pray properly! b) Those who have doubts. If there is no con-

fidence towards God, one cannot properly pray. (cf. James 1:6).

Note: There are hinderances to prayer. Let no one feel that prayer is just an activity which can be entered into without real concern and consideration! Think! Then pray!

2. The DIRECTION of prayer.

Prayer has purpose and design. It leads somewhere. It has an aim. This is its direction. Mark what the text states about this:-

a. That leaders be led.

It is not stated like this in the text, but this certainly is the reason for asking prayer for kings and men in authority. The problems of the government are too much for a man. He needs divine wisdom. Consider what Solomon prayed (2 Chron. 1:7-12). It is happy to know that some leaders pray for themselves, but here the injunction is that believers pray for them!

b. That lives be lived.

The kind of life to be lived is quiet. This is the idea of tranquility without. No disturbances there. How this is desired today! "Peaceable" expresses the desire for tranquility within. How much this is needed in our day too!

There is a further word here. This tranquility is to be enjoyed "in all godliness and honesty." The former word piety whereas the latter term means deportment which is right. So the direction for prayer is for right behaviour toward God and right decorum toward men. Actually, these two ideas are handmaidens. The latter is the visible expression of the spiritual frame of mind.

c. That lessons be learned.

Here is a point which is so practical and apropos for today. Great conquests, great industries,