

To Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, <sup>2</sup> for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. <sup>3</sup> For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup> For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, <sup>7</sup> for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle – I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying – a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

Text: 1 Timothy 2:1-7 A 5/10/26 Numbers 21:4-9 John 16:23-33 Psalm 66 Resp. Ps.: 146  
Hymns: 199, 188, 498, 578

### **GOD WANTS US TO PRAY FOR EVERYONE**

Dear fellow believers in Christ,

Our text begins, *“I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.”* God wants you and me to include everyone in our prayers. God specifically tells us to pray for our earthly leaders. Having good relationships with others and having good leaders makes for a more peaceful world. As we look at all the problems in the world, at how much power the wealthy and those in authority have over us, and at the problems and troubles we and those we care about have, we can feel pretty powerless to help ourselves and others. But our Lord reminds us to look away from ourselves, and look to Him for help.

God tells us to make *“supplications”* for others in our prayers. Sometimes we can do a lot to help someone. Sometimes there’s little or nothing we can do to help someone. But as the Bible says, *“With God all things are possible”* (Mt. 19:26). What greater help can you and I give someone than to ask our almighty, all-wise, all-loving God to help him? *“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea”* – Psalm 46:1-2.

God tells us to make *“intercession”* for others in our prayers. Moses interceded for his fellow Israelites when they would rebel against him and God, asking God to have mercy on them and forgive them; and God kept His promise to Israel and spared their race. On the cross Jesus interceded for His enemies: *“Father forgive them, for they do not know what they do”* (Lk. 23:34). Jesus says, *“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you”* (Mt. 5:43-44). Have you never had a problem praying for someone who has hurt you, and sincerely desiring that God help that person? As Jesus interceded for His enemies, and for you and me who also

caused His suffering and death, so Jesus helps us to intercede even for bad people. We can pray that God would help them to change – to repent of their sins and believe in Jesus and be saved. As we’re told, “*God our Savior ... desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*” We hate the evil some people do, but we also pray that God would save them. When there’s someone we don’t like or who doesn’t like us, praying for that person greatly helps us to be able to let go of hard feelings toward him or her.

God tells us to offer “*giving of thanks*” for others. In your prayers, remember to thank God for the members of your family, for your friends, for fellow Christians and everyone else who is a blessing to you in your life. When God gives them help or healing in time of need, don’t forget to thank and praise Him for it. When God blesses them in special ways, instead of being jealous and envious of them, be happy for them and rejoice with them. Thank and glorify God for His goodness to them.

God tells us that He wants us to pray for “*all*” people. We pray for those we can think of, by name, and ask God to also help and bless those we may be forgetting. Jesus loves everyone so much that He died for all of us. It’s not right for us to purposely leave anyone out of our prayers.

God wants us to pray “*for kings and all who are in authority.*” When I was in seminary, some of us were complaining about someone in government. Patrick Udo, a seminary student from Nigeria, asked why we were complaining about that government official, since, he reminded us, God gives us our leaders (cf. Ro. 13:1). Nigeria periodically experiences government takeovers, which sometimes result in innocent people being killed. Patrick had lived through one or more of them, yet he still felt as he did about government. Certainly we have freedom in America to express what we think about those in government office. At the same time, we need to take to heart what Patrick said about God giving us our leaders.

Romans 13:1 says, “*Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.*” We want to pray for “*all who are in authority,*” that God would give them wisdom and strength and integrity to do what’s right and just and good, and that God would bless them when they do. We pray that God give all in authority humility in the realization that, as Jesus told Pontius Pilate, they would have no authority unless it had been given to them from God (Jn. 19:11). In praying for those in authority, let’s also remember to pray that we don’t place too much trust in good leaders, or despair over bad leaders. The Bible teaches us, “*Do not fret because of evildoers. ... Trust in the Lord*” (Ps. 37:1, 3). We confess with the psalmist, “*Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.*” (Ps. 124:8)

God wants us to pray “*for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.*” We pray that God would give us good leaders so we can have peaceful lives. The Lord tells us, “*Be angry, and do not sin*” (Eph. 4:26). If someone is doing something God says is wrong, we should say so; and we should stand up for what God says is right. At the same time, God doesn’t want us to go around with an angry, anxious attitude. James says, “*The wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God*” (1:20). If we’re often angry and anxious, we can’t have the “*quiet and peaceable life in all*

*godliness and reverence*” that God wants us to have. The Lord tells us, *“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!”* (Ps. 46:10)

God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change;  
Courage to change the things I can;  
and wisdom to know the difference.

To that we would add, “God, help me to place my trust, not in earthly leaders, but in You, the *“King of kings, and Lord of lords”* (Rev. 17:14). As God answers such a prayer, even as we have to live in the midst of this crazy world, He enables us to live a *“quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.”*

We’re told, *“God our Savior ... desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. ... [He] gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”* Because of Adam and Eve’s sin, the devil and death and hell held you and me captive, doomed for eternity. But God sent His Son, Jesus, to rescue us (Gal. 4:4). Jesus paid the price of His holy, precious blood, and His innocent suffering and death on the cross to set you and me and all people free! As we pray for all people, the most important thing we can ask God to do for them is save them. In spite of the problems we have with some people, and in spite of the fact that there are some people who are truly evil, Jesus died on the cross for them, too. An evil person who dies in his unbelief brings upon himself God’s just punishment in hell. But, as John 3:17 says, *“God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”* Jesus rescued you and me from damning unbelief, and gave us saving faith instead. He wants to do the same for everyone. Pray that Jesus rescue everyone, the evil people included, from hell, and give them faith in Him so that they, too, can go to heaven. *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”* (Jn. 3:16, my emphasis)

Paul says in our text, *“For this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle – I am telling the truth, I am not lying – and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles.”* The Apostle Paul is proof that God wants all people to be saved. Paul had been a blasphemous unbeliever who absolutely hated Jesus Christ and Christians. But the Lord converted Paul so that he came to believe in Jesus as his Savior. Paul then loved Christ and his fellow Christians, and spent the rest of his life preaching and teaching about Christ to the world. Remember the Apostle Paul. Never give up praying that God would save someone. Never give up praying for the success of the Gospel.

Everyone needs our prayers – the people we love, the people we like, the people we don’t like, the people who don’t like us, the good person in authority, the bad person in authority, the evil people in the world – everyone. As God answers our prayers for others, in particular those in authority, He blesses us with peace and godliness. Pray that God cause His Word that we Christians speak to others to bear fruit in their hearts and they come to believe in Jesus as their Savior. Dear Christian friends, **GOD WANTS US TO PRAY FOR EVERYONE.** Amen.