



Praying For Our Nation and Trusting God

Summary and Goal

God is sovereign over all things and human governments are intended to reflect His desire for order and justice. However, we live in a sinful world, and the men and women who have been entrusted with earthly power and authority need Jesus just as much as anyone else. That's why we must heed Scripture's counsel to pray for those in authority—that they might know Jesus and do what's right. When politics and election cycles stir our emotions and fuel our passions, we must remember that when Jesus returns, He won't be riding on the backs of elephants or donkeys.

Main Passages

1 Timothy 2:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-14,17

Session Outline

1. Oriented Toward the Kingdom (1 Tim. 2:1-2; 1 Pet. 2:13-17)
2. The King of the Kingdom (1 Tim. 2:3-4)
3. The Key to the Kingdom (1 Tim. 2:5-7)

Theological Theme

Those redeemed by the King of all kings and Lord of all lords are called to live as citizens of His Kingdom by orienting their lives around the purposes of the Kingdom.

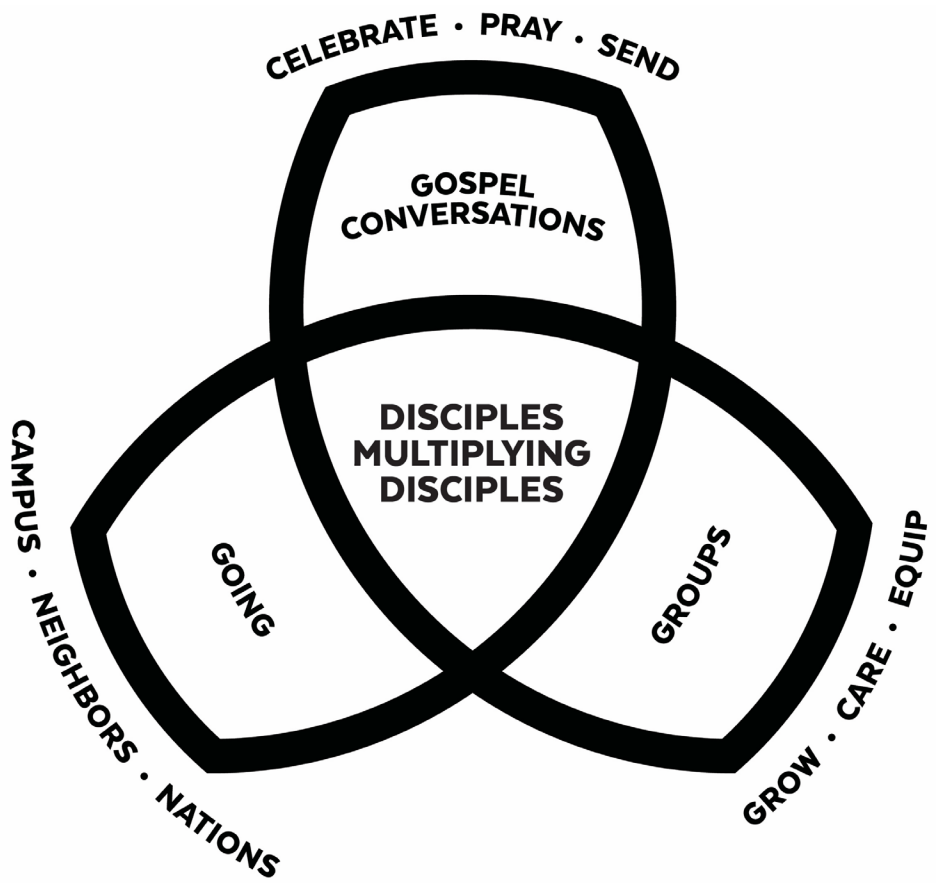
Christ Connection

In Christ, God has redeemed and will continue to redeem people from all of the families of the earth.

Missional Application

Until the return of Christ, Christians are to conduct their affairs on earth as citizens of His kingdom. This means that all of their lives are shaped and informed by the gospel. The advancement of the gospel (and with it, the Kingdom) is to be their primary concern.

Disciples Multiplying Disciples



1

Session Plan

Praying For Our Nation and Trusting God

Introduction

- ? If you were going on a five-day hike through snow-covered terrain, what would you wear?
- ? What kind of footwear would you choose? Why?

Christians are on a journey not unlike an arduous trek through the wilderness. In this passage Paul's purpose was to give a general description of how Christians should live and what their orientation toward the realities of this present life ought to be. Paul's counsel is especially relevant to Christians today who seek to live faithfully in their interaction with government. First, Paul explained what Christians ought to do, then he explained why they ought to do it.

1. Oriented Toward the Kingdom (1 Tim. 2:1-2; 1 Pet. 2:13-17)

Paul told Timothy that the Christians in Ephesus should pray for those who rule over them. No doubt, Paul intended that they pray for all people, but he especially named "kings and all those who are in authority." This is a striking exhortation if we take time to consider it, as this isn't well fitted with what our modern Western culture holds in high regard.

- ? What was Paul's exhortation in 1 Timothy 2:1-2? What is noteworthy about this?
- ? What does it mean to be oriented toward the Kingdom of God as a citizen of the United States (or any other country)?
- ? According to 1 Peter 2:13-17, what counsel did Peter give in regards to a Christian's posture toward governing authorities?

2. The King of the Kingdom (1 Tim. 2:3-4)

We might say that Paul instructed the believers to pray in that way because there were many lost people in Ephesus who needed to be saved, which would be true. Or, we might say that they should have prayed that way so

? For Further Discussion

Application: If you placed one marble in a jar for every 30-minute period you spent praying for the government and did the same for every 30-minute period you spent talking about, watching, or reading about politics, how would those two jars compare? How are you challenged by this picture?

that the church in Ephesus, which Timothy led, would grow larger. We may even say that Paul wanted to see that Kingdom of God expanded.

- ① According to verses 3-4, why did Paul want the believers in Ephesus to pray with a focus on gospel conversations?
- ① How can citizens of the Kingdom of God know how to live in accord with the will of their Sovereign?
- ① Application: If you are a citizen of the Kingdom of God, do you cherish and pour over the Scriptures? What hindrances prevent you from reading the Scriptures as you should? What habits have you developed that help you be attentive to God's Word?

3. The Key to the Kingdom (1 Tim. 2:5-7)

Finally, Paul explained the motivation for praying toward gospel conversations. The Bible teaches that only those who have been justified by faith in the shed blood of Christ on the cross will spend eternity with God in heaven. The Scriptures are clear that Christ is the exclusive way to the Father. This exclusivity compels Christians to tell others about Christ.

- ① Would you say that Paul described a gospel that is inclusive or exclusive in verses 5-6? Why do you answer as you do?
- ① What does the exclusivity of the gospel of Jesus Christ have to do with preaching the gospel?
- ① Application: Are you a herald of the gospel? How might you share the gospel with someone this week? Today even? What hinders you from being a witness about Jesus Christ? Why must the gospel be primary in our conversation with others over all things including political discourse?

Conclusion

- ① What effect does politics have upon your soul? Do you spend as much time praying about those matters as you do watching the news or fretting about them?
- ① What are some practical steps you can take to be a person of prayer in matters of government and politics? Which citizenship is more important to you, your earthly or eternal citizenship?
- ① How often do you have gospel conversations others? What contributes to this reality? What needs to change?



Expanded Session Content

Praying For Our Nation and Trusting God

Introduction

- ❓ If you were going on a five-day hike through snow-covered terrain, what would you wear?
- ❓ What kind of footwear would you choose? Why?

If you were leading a group of people on a difficult hike and a young lady showed up in a prom dress and high heels, what would you do? The group would probably think that outfit was comical for the setting, and they would be right. But the situation is actually much more serious than that. This young lady is in real danger if she tries to make her way through the forest, over rocks, through creeks, and over mountains in that attire. Her fancy clothes will actually hinder her. They aren't made for the kind of journey that she is embarking on.

Christians are on a journey not unlike an arduous trek through the wilderness. Christians are pilgrims in a strange land. They are citizens of a Kingdom that is not of this world, and their treasure and hope is not found in the things that this world can offer.

When Christians seek to make money, careers, property, popularity, comfort, success, or politics their hope and security, they are like a hiker in inappropriate footwear. The cares of this world will only serve to slow down their progress on the straight path toward the narrow gate. They will only cause them to become distracted from the plans and purposes of the King in their lives and in the world.

Session Summary

Our passage today makes up part of Paul's first letter to his young protégé, Timothy. During that time, Rome ruled the world, and the Roman emperor was considered to be divine and demanded homage. Furthermore, local magistrates were Romans and pagans and were interested in the advancement of Roman interests, and not primarily the security and well being of Christians.

In this passage Paul's purpose was to give a general description of how Christians should live and what their orientation toward the realities of this present life ought to be. Paul's counsel is especially relevant to Christians today who seek to live faithfully in their interaction with government. First, Paul explained what Christians ought to do, then he explained why they ought to do it.

1. Oriented Toward the Kingdom (1 Tim. 2:1-2; 1 Pet. 2:13-17)



What was Paul's exhortation in 1 Timothy 2:1-2? What is noteworthy about this?

Paul told Timothy that the Christians in Ephesus should pray for those who rule over them. No doubt, Paul intended that they pray for all people, but he especially named "kings and all those who are in authority." This is a striking exhortation if we take time to consider it, as this isn't well fitted with what our modern Western culture holds in high regard.

Paul's counsel here made several things clear. First, prayer is powerful and effective. Paul exhorted Timothy to pray because he believed that it would bring about a result ("so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity"). Prayer is powerful and effective only insofar as it is made by those who are in Christ and as it is in accordance with the will of God. Furthermore, prayer is powerful and effective because He who is being petitioned is mighty and able, not because there is inherent power in the petitioner.

Secondly, Christians are instructed that their primary involvement with government and politics is to be through the practice of prayer. This isn't to say that Christians shouldn't run for office or vote. To the contrary, Christians should contribute to the well being of their communities in practical and legitimate ways. However, to do so without prayer is to act in one's own strength. A Christian who doesn't pray is an impotent, prideful, misguided Christian. Those who claim Christ yet lean on their own understanding and do what is right in their own eyes would be better off not to claim the name of Christ at all.

Thirdly, Christians are to be oriented toward Kingdom purposes as they consider how they might interact with governing authorities.



What does it mean to be oriented toward the Kingdom of God as a citizen of the United States (or any other country)?

Christians cherish and pledge allegiance to the Kingdom of God above all. This means that they look to the priorities and values that accompany their citizenship in heaven (Phil. 3:20-21) in order to determine how they live as temporary citizens of an earthly kingdom.

Everyone

Paul said that the “everyone” of 1 Timothy 2:1 includes even secular authorities—kings and all those who are in authority. But the purpose of such prayer is clear: so that believers may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.

Notice that Paul instructed that prayers be made for rulers so that the Christians in Ephesus might live godly and dignified lives. This served two purposes. First, the believers would live in accordance with God’s Word, thus pleasing their true King. Secondly, their godly and dignified lives would prepare the way for an unbelieving world to hear the gospel message. Diligent prayer and personal godliness are integral to the faithful preaching of the gospel.

To be a Kingdom-oriented citizen of the United States (or any other country) means that Christians pray for open doors for the advancement of the gospel even through pagan rulers. It also means that Christians’ most important political activism takes place in their prayer closets through agonizing prayer.



According to 1 Peter 2:13-17, what counsel did Peter give in regards to a Christian’s posture toward governing authorities?

Peter instructed Christians to “submit to” and “honor” governing authorities. He reasoned that Christians would “silence the ignorance of foolish people by doing good.” In other words, Christians who honor and live in godly submission to the mayor of their town, the governor of their state, and the president of the country will silence ignorant people. Submission to governing authorities is tied to the advancement of the gospel.



Application: If you placed one marble in a jar for every 30-minute period you spent praying for the government and did the same for every 30-minute period you spent talking about, watching, or reading about politics, how would those two jars compare? How are you challenged by this picture?

2. The King of the Kingdom (1 Tim. 2:3-4)



According to verses 3-4, why did Paul want the believers in Ephesus to pray with a focus on gospel conversations?

We might say that Paul instructed the believers to pray in that way because there were many lost people in Ephesus who needed to be saved, which would be true. Or, we might say that they should have prayed that way so


that the church in Ephesus, which Timothy led, would grow larger. We may even say that Paul wanted to see that Kingdom of God expanded.

Paul gave the reason in verse 4: God desired for people to be saved. Remember, those Christians in Ephesus were citizens of Rome, yes, but they were foremost citizens of the Kingdom of heaven. Further, the King of that Kingdom desired that more people in Ephesus would repent of sin and place their faith in Christ. Remember, citizens of the Kingdom of heaven live in a way that is oriented toward the purposes of their eternal King, regardless of their own desires or the purposes of the temporal, earthly kingdom in which they live.

 How can citizens of the Kingdom of God know how to live in accord with the will of their Sovereign?


Citizens of the United States look to and cherish their founding documents as a means by which they may structure and govern society. The Constitution, of course, is the primary of these writings. This document has been preserved so that the mind of the founders might be preserved in regard to the ways in which the government of the United States should be carried out today.

Similarly, the King of Christians has preserved for them a founding document by which they might know the mind of their King and how to live in a way that is pleasing to Him. Here we see “it pleases God our Savior” that people would “be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” The Scriptures are a lamp to the feet of Christians and a light to their path (Ps. 119:105). It is for this reason that Christians cling to and cherish the Bible, their founding document. In it they find all that they need for all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience. The Scriptures are sufficient and inerrant.

 Application: If you are a citizen of the Kingdom of God, do you cherish and pour over the Scriptures? What hindrances prevent you from reading the Scriptures as you should? What habits have you developed that help you be attentive to God’s Word?

3. The Key to the Kingdom (1 Tim. 2:5-7)

Finally, Paul explained the motivation for praying toward gospel conversations.

 Would you say that Paul described a gospel that is inclusive or exclusive in verses 5-6? Why do you answer as you do?

The gospel of Jesus Christ is exclusive in that the only way to be reconciled to God the Father is through the person and work of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6). And John wrote, “And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. The one who has the Son has life. The one who does not have the Son of God does not have life” (1 John 5:11-12).

The Bible teaches that only those who have been justified by faith in the shed blood of Christ on the cross will spend eternity with God in heaven. The Scriptures are clear that Christ is the exclusive way to the Father. This exclusivity compels Christians to tell others about Christ. If heaven is so good and Jesus’ sacrifice is the only means to be reconciled to the Father, then the gospel message should be on the lips of Christians at every opportunity.



What does the exclusivity of the gospel of Jesus Christ have to do with preaching the gospel?

Let’s consider an illustration: Suppose you come upon a house that is in flames and you can see on the second-floor balcony that there is a young woman trying to escape. Furthermore, you can see that the inside of the house is consumed with flames, and there is no way for her to escape except by jumping from the balcony. She, on the other hand, can’t see what you see and she is about to try to make her way through the house looking for an escape. You, of course, will call to her pleading with her to jump. You would try to communicate to her that there is no other escape, even if she thinks differently.

Heralds of the gospel, as Paul was and as every Christian is called to be, are like the person calling to the woman on the balcony. Christians know that there is no escape from the punishment and condemnation of sin except through Christ. Every other door is locked. All other avenues are dead-ends.

This is the reason that Jesus’ final teaching to His disciples was, “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations” and “you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Matt. 28:19 and Acts 1:8).



Application: Are you a herald of the gospel? How might you share the gospel with someone this week? Today even? What hinders you from being a witness about Jesus Christ? Why must the gospel be primary in our conversation with others over all things including political discourse?

Conclusion

To be a Kingdom-oriented citizen of the United States (or any other country) means that Christians pray for open doors for the advancement of the gospel even through pagan rulers. It also means that Christians' most important political activism takes place through prayer.

Furthermore, Christians seek to please their eternal King and live according to His purposes before submitting to the purposes of the earthly kingdom in which they find themselves. This means that they are people of the Book.

Finally, citizens of the Kingdom are to be about the business of announcing the good news of the Kingdom to all those within their sphere.

- ❓ What effect does politics have upon your soul? Do you spend as much time praying about those matters as you do watching the news or fretting about them?
- ❓ What are some practical steps you can take to be a person of prayer in matters of government and politics? Which citizenship is more important to you, your earthly or eternal citizenship?
- ❓ How often do you have gospel conversations others? What contributes to this reality? What needs to change?

Prayer of Response

Begin the time of prayer by acknowledging the sovereign power and authority of God over all kings and kingdoms. Praise Him, adore Him, and exalt Him. Pray for federal, state, and local governing authorities. Pray that God would use them for the advancement of the Kingdom. Finally, pray that you and your fellow church members would be bold to proclaim the gospel message to all of those in your sphere of influence.

Additional Resources

- *One Nation Under God* by Bruce Ashford and Chris Pappalardo
- *Faith in the Voting Booth* by Leith Anderson and Galen Carey
- *How the Nations Rage* by Jonathan Leeman

For Next Week

Session Title

- The Church: Better Together

Main Passages

- 1 Peter 2:1-10

Session Outline

1. Fitting Living (1 Pet. 2:1-3)
3. Real Identity (1 Pet. 2:4-5, 9-10)
4. A Stone in Zion (1 Pet. 2:6-8)

Memorize

¹³ Submit to every human authority because of the Lord, whether to the emperor as the supreme authority ¹⁴ or to governors as those sent out by him to punish those who do what is evil and to praise those who do what is good.

- 1 Peter 2:13-14

Daily Readings

- Monday - 1 Timothy 2:1-7
- Tuesday - 1 Peter 2:13-14, 17
- Wednesday - Romans 13:1-7
- Thursday - Proverbs 21:1
- Friday - Matthew 22:17-22
- Saturday - Psalm 33:10-12

Historical Context of 1 Timothy

Purpose

In 1 Timothy Paul directed Timothy to actively oppose false teaching. He also gave instruction on the type of behavior that should characterize those in the church.

Author

As stated in the opening of each letter, these letters were written by Paul (1Tm 1:1; 2Tm 1:1; Ti 1:1). However, many scholars today assume that Paul did not write them. This opinion is based on the differences from his other letters in vocabulary and style, alleged differences in theology, and uncertainties about where these letters fit chronologically in the life of the apostle. But the differences in style and vocabulary are not troublesome when one considers that authors often use different vocabulary when addressing different groups and situations. Rather than addressing churches in these letters, Paul was writing to coworkers who were in unique ministry settings. Hence we would expect different vocabulary. Also, the traditional view of the historical situation in which Paul wrote these letters is reasonable and defensible. Therefore, in spite of significant opposition by some scholars, there is a solid basis for accepting the Pastoral Epistles as Pauline.

Setting

Paul most likely wrote these letters after the time covered in the book of Acts. Acts closes with Paul in prison. Traditionally it has been believed that Paul was released from this imprisonment, then continued his work around the Mediterranean, perhaps even reaching Spain (Rm 15:22-29). During this time, he visited Crete and other places. First Timothy and Titus were written during this period of further mission work. Timothy had been left in Ephesus to handle some problems with false teaching there (1Tm 1:3-4). Titus had been left in Crete after the initial work to set up the church there (Ti 1:5). Eventually Paul was imprisoned again, and this led to his execution. During this final imprisonment, Paul wrote 2 Timothy to request another visit from Timothy and to give final exhortations as he anticipated his martyrdom.

Special Features

First Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus have been referred to as the “Pastoral Epistles” since the eighteenth century. It is reasonable to consider these letters together since they have striking similarities in style, vocabulary, and setting. These letters stand apart from the other Pauline letters because they were the only ones written to Paul’s gospel coworkers. The Pastoral Epistles deal with church structure issues and, unlike Paul’s other letters, were addressed to men serving in pastoral roles rather than to churches. But we must also recognize these are separate letters with their own distinctives. They were not written primarily to describe church structure or pastoral ministry (contrary to popular opinion), but to teach Christian living in response to the gospel.

Extended Commentary

1 Timothy 2:1-7

2:1-2. Paul had just written of the wonderful grace of God exhibited in Christ who “came into the world to save sinners” (1:15), followed by remembrance of two men who had professed Christ (1:20), and yet whose faith became “shipwrecked.” It must have reminded him of the many people who still had not heard of Christ, and also of the dangers inherent in the life of faith. He told Timothy that the first order of the church is to pray for all people: that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority.

We need not make too much of the various words which Paul used: requests (entreaties), prayers (reverent, worshipful conversation), intercession (confident, familiar talk rather than the popular notion of speaking on behalf of another), and thanksgiving (often linked with holiness and therefore proper every time we bow before God). Paul labored the point in order to spread before us the comprehensive nature of prayer and also to underscore this serious command.

In our public worship, prayer should be our first order of concern and participation. Prayer is not to be a filler between hymns or a routine before the sermon. Paul wrote to the Philippians, “In everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (Phil. 4:6). He urged the Colossians and us, “Devote yourselves to prayer” (Col. 4:2). Prayer is a uniting with God. It is to be entered into with awe and joy, with respect and a sense of responsibility. We are engaged in the worldwide mission of glorifying God, especially as demonstrated through the spread of the gospel as people come to salvation through Jesus Christ.

It should be remembered that God has instituted government for our benefit. When government operates well, it is a significant ally to the gospel.

Knowing that the mission of the church is to reveal and disperse the truth of Jesus Christ, Paul emphasized the need to pray for those in authority. This was written during the reign of Nero as emperor of Rome. Even under his degenerate and harsh rule, the Roman Empire provided a useful structure for extending the reach of God’s truth.

In our own time, we must also recognize that corporate prayer is not only a central expression of worship, but a requirement. Regardless of political loyalties or persuasions, churches should pray for national and local governmental leaders, uniting the hearts of many for these influential people.

Governmental leaders and bureaucratic policies have a direct bearing on our freedom to live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

Peaceful literally means “tranquil.” This word refers to the absence of outside disturbances. Quiet refers to a composed, discreet order. Certainly we desire our nation to be peaceful and quiet. Paul implied that God is willing to help us achieve this. “The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases” (Prov. 21:1).

The point of desiring a benign environment, however, is not for our own comfort. It is for the expression of godliness and holiness; it is for Christian witness. Paul still had in view the observing community and world, the spread of the gospel, the salvation of the lost. This became apparent as he continued.

2:3-4. The full expression of our transformed lives and faith in God is good, and pleases God our Savior. God is not silent about what pleases him and glorifies his name. Such lives are used by God who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

God's desire is for everyone to be saved. But this is not an issue of sovereign will. It is not an edict handed down regardless of what people think, believe, or do. God's desire may be one thing, but he has subjected it to our willful responses. The second half of God's desire for all people is the universal availability of the truth. This shows the expansive nature of the church's mission. God's plan is for the evangelization of all nations and peoples.

2:5. Paul then pointed to the critical claims of the gospel: there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

The great football coach Vince Lombardi stood in front of his team, the Green Bay Packers, after a horrendous loss. The players expected a strong diatribe. Instead, Lombardi went to the center of the classroom and picked up a football. He held it up and said, "Gentlemen, this is a football." The coach took the players back to the basics.

Paul did the same for the Ephesians and us. The declaration of the exclusivity of God and Christ is basic to the Christian message. Yet it is a point on which many people stumble. Even those who agree that there is one God often refuse the claim of Jesus as the only way to knowing God.

For some people the chief virtue of the day is tolerance, and the great hope is pluralism. They discard truth for sincerity. Certainly we honor the freedom to believe whatever one wishes, as long as it does not hurt another person. That is fundamental to democratic self-rule and civility. But it is quite another matter to say that everyone is right simply because they "believe" something. That makes faith instead of objective truth the test for validity. We must go back to the basics.

The revealed, divine word through Paul is that there is only one way to forming a relationship with God, and this is through the man Christ Jesus. This underscores the universality of the gospel—all people come the same way to God. Not only must they come the same way, through Jesus, but salvation is available to all, Jew and Gentile alike.

Salvation comes through the man Christ Jesus. He is fully God and fully man. "The Word was God. . . . The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:1,14).

Jesus is not one among many. He is the One and only.

He is the answer to Job's ancient cry about God: "He is not a man like me that I might answer him, / that we might confront each other in court. / If only there were someone to arbitrate between us, / to lay his hand upon us both" (Job 9:32-33).

Jesus bridges the gap between sinful humanity and the righteous God. He settles the legal demand for justice.

2:6. In Job's lament, he longed for "someone to remove God's rod from me. . . . Then I would speak up without fear of him" (Job 9:34-35). Again, Jesus is the answer to Job's cry.

Paul, having announced Christ as the mediator/arbitrator, then told how this Anointed One (the Christ) removed the rod, allowing those who trust in him to approach God in confidence: He gave himself as a ransom for all men.

Christ's gift to the world was a self-giving sacrifice. He explained to his disciples, "No one takes [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again" (John 10:18).

The word for ransom is *antilutron*. The root word signifies a loosing or freeing. It was often used in reference to buying a slave's freedom. Paul's attachment of a prefix to this word added to it the significance of the vicarious nature of Christ's payment. He is the substitute, the "instead of payment for sin.

In his perfection and sacrificial death Jesus satisfied the holy laws of God which stated, "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Heb. 9:22). Over and over the scene is replayed through the histories of the Old Testament and throughout the life of Christ—people choosing a spotless lamb to be sacrificed on the altar of the temple in order that their sins might be forgiven. But then Jesus became that substitute sacrifice for all. We can hear John the Baptist shout with joy as he saw Jesus walking along the banks of the Jordan River: "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

This coming of Christ and his death for all humanity, according to Paul, is the testimony given in its proper time. Christ is the witness of the Father's love, the pursuing desire of God to bring his creation back to himself. Christ came "when the time had fully come" (Gal. 4:4)—when the timing was perfect for his revealing and the salvation of all people.

2:7. Paul knew who he was; he knew his calling. Such understanding is a great dynamic for a good life. He was a herald and an apostle... a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles.

Paul knew his message of the universality of God's salvation would be challenged, as would the claim that Jesus is the sole means to that salvation. So he backed his message with his own integrity: I am telling the truth, I am not lying. He wanted three things to be very clear: (1) all truth comes from God, (2) salvation is available to all, and (3) the church and its people are God's means of spreading the truth of salvation to all people.¹

References

1. Larson, Knute, and Max E. Anders. *I & II Thessalonians, I & II Timothy, Titus, Philemon*. Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2000.

Author Bio

Knute Larson (I & II Thessalonians, I & II Timothy, Titus, Philemon)

Knute Larson coaches pastors and churches, majoring on leadership, pulpit, making changes, and daily grace — drawing on 43 years as a pastor and eight as a pastoral coach.

Max Anders (I & II Thessalonians, I & II Timothy, Titus, Philemon)

Dr. Max Anders is the author of over 25 books, including the bestselling *30 Days to Understanding the Bible*, and is the creator and general editor of the 32-volume Holman Bible Commentary series. He has taught on the college and seminary level and is a veteran pastor. Max provides resources and discipleship strategies at www.maxanders.com to help people grow spiritually.

Bruce Ashford (One Nation Under God)

Bruce Riley Ashford is Provost and Professor of Theology & Culture at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, NC.

Chris Pappalardo (One Nation Under God)

Chris Pappalardo is Lead Researcher and Writer at The Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, NC.

Leith Anderson (Faith in the Voting Booth)

Leith Anderson serves as president of the National Association of Evangelicals. For thirty-five years he was the pastor of Wooddale Church in Eden Prairie, Minnesota. He is a graduate of both Denver Seminary and Fuller Theological Seminary. Anderson is the author of more than 20 books.

Galen Carey (Faith in the Voting Booth)

Galen Carey is Vice President, Government Relations, for the National Association of Evangelicals and is responsible for representing the NAE before Congress, the White House and the Courts. Before joining the NAE staff, Carey was a longtime leader in World Relief, the relief and development arm of the NAE. Carey is a graduate of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and McCormick Theological Seminary.

Jonathan Leeman (How the Nations Rage)

Jonathan Leeman is the editorial director at 9Marks, a ministry that helps church leaders build healthy churches. He teaches theology at several seminaries and has written a number of books on the church. He is also a research fellow with the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission. He has degrees in political science and English, a master of science in political theory, a master of divinity, and a doctorate in political theology. Jonathan served for years as an elder at Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, DC, but has since left to plant a nearby church. He lives in the DC area with his wife and four daughters.