

CHAPTER 2

In this chapter Paul treats,

- I.** Of prayer, with many reasons for it (v. 1-8).
- II.** Of women's apparel (v. 9, 10).
- III.** Of their subjection, with the reasons of it (v. 11-14).
- IV.** A promise given for their encouragement in child-bearing (v. 15).

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-8

UNIVERSAL PRAYER RECOMMENDED

Here is,

I. A charge given to Christians to pray for all men in general, and particularly for all in authority. Timothy must take care that this be done. Paul does not send him any prescribed form of prayer, as we have reason to think he would if he had intended that ministers should be tied to that way of praying; but, in general, that they should make *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks*: supplications for the averting of evil, prayers for the obtaining of good, intercessions for others, and thanksgivings for mercies already received. Paul thought it enough to give them general heads; they, having the scripture to direct them in prayer and the Spirit of prayer poured out upon them, needed not any further directions. Observe, The design of the Christian religion is to promote prayer; and the disciples of Christ must be praying people. Pray *always with all prayer*, ~~418~~ Ephesians 6:18. There must be prayers for ourselves in the first place; this is implied here. We must also pray *for all men*, for the world of mankind in general, for particular persons who need or desire our prayers. See how far the Christian religion was from being a sect, when it taught men this diffusive charity, to pray, not only for those of their own way, but for all men. Pray for kings (v. 2); though the kings at this time were heathens, enemies to Christianity, and persecutors of Christians, yet they must pray for them, because it is for the public good that there should

be civil government, and proper persons entrusted with the administration of it, for whom therefore we ought to pray, yea, though we ourselves suffer under them. *For kings, and all that are in authority*, that is, inferior magistrates: we must pray for them, and we must give thanks for them, pray for their welfare and for the welfare of their kingdoms, and therefore must not plot against them, that in the peace thereof we may have peace, and give thanks for them and for the benefit we have under their government, that *we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty*. Here see what we must desire for kings, that God will so turn their hearts, and direct them and make use of them, that we under them may lead a quiet and peaceable life. He does not say, “that we may get preferments under them, grow rich, and be in honour and power under them;” no, the summit of the ambition of a good Christian is to lead a quiet and peaceable life, to get through the world unmolested in a low private station. We should desire that we and others may lead a peaceable life *in all godliness and honesty*, implying that we cannot expect to be kept quiet and peaceable unless we keep in all godliness and honesty. Let us mind our duty, and then we may expect to be taken under the protection both of God and the government. *In all godliness and honesty*. Here we have our duty as Christians summed up in two words: godliness, that is, the right worshipping of God; and honesty, that is, a good conduct towards all men. These two must go together; we are not truly honest if we are not godly, and do not render to God his due; and we are not truly godly if we are not honest, for God hates robbery for burnt-offering. Here we may observe,

- 1.** Christians are to be men much given to prayer: they ought to abound herein, and should use themselves to prayers, supplications, etc.
- 2.** In our prayers we are to have a generous concern for others as well as for ourselves; we are to pray for all men, and to give thanks for all men; and must not confine our prayers nor thanksgiving to our own persons or families.
- 3.** Prayer consists of various parts, of supplications, intercessions, and thanksgivings; for we must pray for the mercies we want, as well as be thankful for mercies already received; and we are to deprecate the judgments which our own sins or the sins of others have deserved.

4. All men, yea, kings themselves, and those who are in authority, are to be prayed for. They want our prayers, for they have many difficulties to encounter, many snares to which their exalted stations expose them.

5. In praying for our governors, we take the most likely course to lead a peaceable and quiet life. The Jews at Babylon were commanded to seek the peace of the city whither the Lord had caused them to be carried captives, and to pray to the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof they should have peace, ^{<297>}Jeremiah 29:7.

6. If we would lead a peaceable and quiet life, we must live in all godliness and honesty; we must do our duty to God and man. *He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile; let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and pursue it, ^{<310>}1 Peter 3:10, 11. Now the reason he gives for this is *because this is good in the sight of God our Saviour;* that is, the gospel of Christ requires this. That which is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour we should do, and should abound in.*

II. As a reason why we should in our prayers concern ourselves for all men, he shows God's love to mankind in general, v. 4.

1. One reason why all men are to be prayed for is because there is one God, and that God bears a good will to all mankind. There is one God (v. 5), and one only, there is no other, there can be no other, for there can be but one infinite. This one God *will have all men to be saved;* he desires not the death and destruction of any (^{<311>}Ezekiel 33:11), but the welfare and salvation of all. Not that he has decreed the salvation of all, for then all men would be saved; but he has a good will to the salvation of all, and none perish but by their own fault, ^{<312>}Matthew 23:37. He will have all to be saved, *and to come to the knowledge of the truth,* to be saved in the way that he has appointed and not otherwise. It concerns us to get the knowledge of the truth, because that is the way to be saved; *Christ is the way and the truth, and so he is the life.*

2. There is one Mediator, and that mediator gave himself a ransom for all. As the mercy of God extends itself to all his works, so the mediation of Christ extends itself thus far to all the children of men that he paid a price sufficient for the salvation of all mankind; he brought mankind to stand upon new terms with God, so that they are not now under the law as a covenant of works, but as a rule of life. They are under grace; not under

the covenant of innocence, but under a new covenant: *He gave himself a ransom*. Observe, The death of Christ was a ransom, a counter-price. We deserved to have died. Christ died for us, to save us from death and hell; he gave himself a ransom voluntarily, a ransom for all; so that all mankind are put in a better condition than that of devils. He died to work out a common salvation: in order hereunto, he put himself into the office of Mediator between God and man. A mediator supposes a controversy. Sin had made a quarrel between us and God; Jesus Christ is a Mediator who undertakes to make peace, to bring God and man together, in the nature of an umpire or arbitrator, a days-man who lays his hand upon u both, ~~Job~~ Job 9:33. He is a ransom that *was to be testified in due time*; that is, in the Old-Testament times, his sufferings and the glory that should follow were spoken of as things to be revealed in the last times, ~~1 Peter~~ 1 Peter 1:10, 11. And they are accordingly revealed, Paul himself having been ordained a preacher and an apostle, to publish to the Gentiles the glad tidings of redemption and salvation by Jesus Christ. This doctrine of Christ's mediation Paul was entrusted to preach to every creature, ~~Mark~~ Mark 16:15. He was appointed to be a teacher of the Gentiles; besides his general call to the apostleship, he was commissioned particularly to preach to the Gentiles, *in faith and truth*, or faithfully and truly. Note,

- (1.) It is good and acceptable in the sight of God and our Saviour that we pray for kings and for all men, and also that we lead a peaceable and quiet life; and this is a very good reason why we should do the one as well as the other.
- (2.) God has a good will to the salvation of all; so that it is not so much the want of a will in God to save them as it is a want of will in themselves to be saved in God's way. Here our blessed Lord charges the fault: *You will not come unto me that you may have life*, ~~John~~ John 5:40. *I would have gathered you, and you would not*.
- (3.) Those who are saved must come to the knowledge of the truth, for this is God's appointed way to save sinners. Without knowledge the heart cannot be good; if we do not know the truth, we cannot be ruled by it.
- (4.) It is observable that the unity of God is asserted, and joined with the unity of the Mediator; and the church of Rome might as well maintain a plurality of gods as a plurality of mediators.

(5.) He that is a Mediator in the New-Testament sense, gave himself a ransom. Vain then is the pretence of the Romanists that there is but one Mediator of satisfaction, but many of intercession; for, according to Paul, Christ's giving himself a ransom was a necessary part of the Mediator's office; and indeed this lays the foundation for his intercession.

(6.) Paul was ordained a minister, to declare this to the Gentiles, that Christ is the one Mediator between God and men, who gave himself a ransom for all. This is the substance of which all ministers are to preach, to the end of the world; and Paul magnified his office, as he was the apostle of the Gentiles, ^{<4113>}Romans 11:13.

(7.) Ministers must preach the truth, what they apprehend to be so, and they must believe it themselves; they are, like our apostle, to preach in faith and verity, and they must also be faithful and trusty.

III. A direction how to pray, v. 8.

1. Now, under the gospel, prayer is not to be confined to any one particular house of prayer, but men must pray every where: no place is amiss for prayer, no place more acceptable to God than another, ^{<4001>}John 4:21. *Pray every where.* We must pray in our closets, pray in our families, pray at our meals, pray when we are on journeys, and pray in the solemn assemblies, whether more public or private.

2. It is the will of God that in prayer we should lift up holy hands: *Lifting up holy hands*, or pure hands, pure from the pollution of sin, washed in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. *I will wash my hands*, etc., ^{<4106>}Psalm 26:6.

3. We must pray in charity: *Without wrath*, or malice, or anger at any person.

4. We must pray in faith *without doubting* (^{<5016>}James 1:6), or, as some read it, *without disputing*, and then it falls under the head of charity.

¹ TIMOTHY 2:9-15

PAUL'S CHARGE TO FEMALES

I. Here is a charge, that women who profess the Christian religion should be modest, sober, silent, and submissive, as becomes their place.

1. They must be very modest in their apparel, not affecting gaudiness, gaiety, or costliness (you may read the vanity of a person's mind in the gaiety and gaudiness of his habit), because they have better ornaments with which they should *adorn themselves, with good works*. Note, Good works are the best ornament; these are, in the sight of God, of great price. Those that profess godliness should, in their dress, as well as other things, act as becomes their profession; instead of laying out their money on fine clothes, they must lay it out in works of piety and charity, which are properly called good works.

2. Women must learn the principles of their religion, learn Christ, learn the scriptures; they must not think that their sex excuses them from that learning which is necessary to salvation.

3. They must be silent, submissive, and subject, and not usurp authority. The reason given is because *Adam was first formed, then Eve* out of him, to denote her subordination to him and dependence upon him; and that she was made for him, to be a help-meet for him. And as she was last in the creation, which is one reason for her subjection, so she was first in the transgression, and that is another reason. *Adam was not deceived*, that is, not first; the serpent did not immediately set upon him, but the woman was first in the transgression (² Corinthians 11:3), and it was part of the sentence, *Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee*, ³ Genesis 3:16. But it is a word of comfort (v. 15) that those who continue in sobriety shall be *saved in child-bearing*, or *with child-bearing* — the Messiah, who was born of a woman, should break the serpent's head (¹⁵ Genesis 3:15); or the sentence which they are under for sin shall be no bar to their acceptance with Christ, *if they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness, with sobriety*.

II. Here observe,

1. The extensiveness of the rules of Christianity; they reach not only to men, but to women, not only to their persons, but also to their dress, which must be modest, like their sex; and to their outward deportment and behaviour, it must be in silence, with all subjection.

2. Women are to profess godliness as well as men; for they are baptized, and thereby stand engaged to exercise themselves to godliness; and, to their honour be it spoken, many of them were eminent professors of Christianity in the days of the apostles, as the book of Acts will inform us.

3. Women being more in danger of exceeding in their apparel, it was more necessary to caution them in this respect.

4. The best ornaments for professors of godliness are good works.

5. According to Paul, women must be learners, and are not allowed to be public teachers in the church; for teaching is an office of authority, and the woman must not usurp authority over the man, but is to be in silence. But, notwithstanding this prohibition, good women may and ought to teach their children at home the principles of religion. Timothy from a child had known the holy scriptures; and who should teach him but his mother and grandmother? ^{<B185>}2 Timothy 3:15. Aquila and his wife Priscilla expounded unto Apollos the way of God more perfectly; but then they did it privately, *for they took him unto them,* ^{<B186>}Acts 18:26.

6. Here are two very good reasons given for the man's authority over the woman, and her subjection to the man, v. 13, 14. Adam was first formed, then Eve; she was created for the man, and not the man for the woman (^{<B187>}1 Corinthians 11:9); then she was deceived, and brought the man into the transgression.

7. Though the difficulties and dangers of childbearing are many and great, as they are part of the punishment inflicted on the sex for Eve's transgression, yet here is much for her support and encouragement: *Notwithstanding she shall be saved,* etc. Though in sorrow, yet she shall bring forth, and be a living mother of living children; with this proviso, that they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness, with sobriety: and women, under the circumstance of child-bearing should by faith lay hold of this promise for their support in the needful time.