

What Effect Does the Gospel Have on You? – Part 4

Scripture Reading: Romans 1:11-17

We are having a special focus, this Sunday, because of the serious and timely need to consider and pray for our nation. We are continuing in the spirit of the notes, from this series, which emphasize the continual ministry of the gospel to the believer. The focus here will be on the following bullet point that shows gospel truth guiding us in **“Prayer and Social Concerns.”**

Gospel-Centered Preaching – All Scripture must be explained in the context of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the only way to truly interpret the Bible. *“The truth as it is in Jesus”* protects us from false teaching (Ephesians 4:21). This method of interpretation keeps us from the errors of legalism, lawlessness, formalism, ritualism, mysticism, and basically from all other “isms.”

Therefore, Paul preached the gospel to Christians – to people who already believed, who were justified and forgiven. The gospel message gives the believer understanding, discernment, and motivation. It empowers the believer, in this life, to continually trust the Lord, to spiritually grow, to become more like Christ, to faithfully follow and serve the Lord. Through the gospel, Christ ministers “grace and truth” (John 1:10-18; 6:63; 14:15-20 cp. Matthew 28:18-20).

Examples of how the gospel is relevant to all other Bible teaching:

- The Nature of God – Romans 2:4; 3:20-26; 11:1-36; 15:4-7
- Sanctification and Service – II Corinthians 5:14-21; Galatians 2:20; Titus 2:11-14.
- Evangelism and Missions – Luke 24:44-48; John 20:21.
- Love, Relationships, Stewardship – Ephesians 5:21-33; I John 3:16-18; II Corinthians 8:7-9.
- Personal Standards and Convictions – Romans 14:1-18 (whole chapter).
- Prayer and Social Concerns – I Timothy 2:1-8; Titus 3:1-8; Romans 8:28-39.
- Resurrection / Future Events – I Corinthians 15:1-28, I Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:9-11.

“Prayer and Social Concerns.”

I Timothy 2:1-8 – In the World, but Not of It!

I Timothy 2:1 – *“...First of all...”* implies a priority, that this should be a first and not last resort, a continual practice that is not neglected until there is a crisis. Previously, in chapter one, Paul was talking about his call to the ministry of the glorious gospel, about Christ’s mission to save sinners from this world, and about Timothy’s ministry to fight well in spiritual warfare (I Timothy 1:11-18, etc.). In view of those things, the number one priority is a call to prayer:

- Supplications – To ask for those who are in need (emphasis on salvation, discernment, guidance, strength, etc.)
- Prayers – Part of the act of worshipping God. Done with reverence. See Matthew 6:9-10.
- Intercessions – To ask God, with intimate and personal concern, as if you had interviewed or investigated that person and are now sharing that with God.
- Giving of Thanks – Another reverent approach to God. Mindful of God’s order and instruction, we come to God cheerfully or at least in faith and humility, being grateful to God and His providence. See Psalm 100:1-5; Ephesians 5:15-21; I Thessalonians 5:15-24; Philippians 4:6-7 cp. Romans 13:1-5; Titus 3:1-2; I Peter 2:13-17; II Peter 2:10; Jude 1:8.

The glorious gospel, the work of Christ, the call to spiritual warfare demands that we all rally around the throne of grace to *“obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”* (Hebrews 4:16 cp. Ephesians 6:10-20). That prayer is to *“be made for all men”* is to say that there is no discrimination. As all men should hear the gospel (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15), even so all men should be the subject of our prayers. *“All men”* also implies all kinds of men. In I Timothy 2:2, Paul specifically listed those in authority. These are people that were often making life hard for others (I Timothy 2:2). Yet without them, there would be chaos and confusion in the world. Those in authority need the help and grace of God to do their jobs (Romans 13:1-8; Proverbs 21:1; Daniel 4:35). Therefore, pray for them. Political and social involvement has its proper place, but seeking the God of heaven about the affairs of this life is the priority.

I Timothy 2:2-4 – Seek God, rather than men, to bless our lives (Psalm 118:8-9). Live to please God, rather than to be in service to men (I Corinthians 7:23; Galatians 1:10). Our sovereign God is not going to save all people (as Universalism teaches), but through the gospel God has shown good will towards men. He takes pleasure in saving people from sin. He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He calls all men everywhere to repent. See I Timothy 4:10; Luke 2:8-14 (KJV, NKJV); Ezekiel 18:30-32; 33:11; John 3:17; Acts 17:30; I Corinthians 1:21; Titus 2:11; Revelation 22:17.

I Timothy 2:5-7 – The gospel reveals only one Savior, one mediator between God and men; one redeemer who paid the price for sin, and one vital message for us to be declaring to all men. See I Corinthians 2:1-2; Luke 24:44-48; Romans 1:14-16; Isaiah 45:21-25 cp. Philippians 2:5-11,14-16.

I Timothy 2:8 – Prayer is the priority for how we shall be effective in reaching all men for Christ. Our *“hands”* are *“holy”* in that we have been set apart for the work of the gospel, to present salvation to all men (Romans 1:1-6; II Corinthians 5:14-21). *“Lifting up holy hands”* can also mean to intercede and support others who are involved with gospel ministry (Exodus 17:8-12 [Aaron and Hur with Moses]; II Thessalonians 3:1-2; Ephesians 6:18-20). *“Without wrath and doubting / quarreling”* – this kind of work cannot be done if we are angry, argumentative people, causing dissention (Titus 3:1-8; Romans 12:17-21; Philippians 2:1-16; 4:4-9 cp. Romans 8:26-39).