

WORSHIP SERVICE - 3.12.2023

THE GOSPEL IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH - PART 6 - ONE GOD, ONE MEDIATOR

I. INTRODUCTION

1 Timothy 2:1-7

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, **2** for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. **3** This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, **4** who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

5 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, **6** who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. **7** For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

II. THE BASIS OF OUR CALL TO PRAYER AND PROCLAMATION

- What is the basis that Paul lays out for this call to all kinds of prayer for all kinds of people?
- There are four primary things he mentions.
- The **first reason** is found in v2, that God's people may peaceably live out the faith and the implications of the gospel so that the gospel would be furthered and more people could hear the good news.
- The aim of our prayer is for peaceful conditions for the propagation of the gospel.

- The **second reason** is found in v3-4, This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, **4** who desires for people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.
- This verse lays bare God's benevolent disposition towards all mankind.
- This does not mean every will be saved.
- God did not decree for all men to be saved, but he did decree that he would sovereignly save the elect.
- What Paul expresses is not a contradiction but rather a complementary truth.
- God does not exclude certain kinds of people in his sovereign choosing in election unto salvation.
- John's heavenly vision in Rev. 7 reflects the expansive, inclusive, and indiscriminate nature of God's redemption. Multitudes will be saved from every nation, all tribes and peoples and languages.
- We are not to withhold the preaching of the gospel to anyone.
- God desires for all to come to repentance and faith in Christ. We should desire, pray, and work towards that end as well.

- The **third reason** that forms the basis for our call to make all kinds of prayers for all kinds of people is found in v5-6.
- God's Oneness and God's Sovereign Work in Christ

ONE GOD

- **5** For there is one God
- We know that for the Jews this wasn't a problem. That is a foundational theological affirmation made by every practicing Jew.
- Deut 6:6 "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.
- For God's people to recite the Shema, it was a pledge of allegiance and fidelity to the Lord God of Israel.

- The God of the Jews is not distinct or separate from the God of the Gentiles.
- Jesus is not a different God from Yahweh.
- 1Cor. 8:5-6 For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"— **6** yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we

exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

- There is not a pantheon of gods for which people can select to serve and worship.
- There are not many paths that lead to the true worship of God.
- There is only one God. And he is a jealous God.
- Isaiah 45:22 "Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.
- On the one hand our faith is inclusive, we pray and preach the gospel without exception.
- On the other hand our faith is exclusive. We are not offered a variety of options, there is only one God and one Mediator.
- We must unapologetically make the exclusive claim—there is one God.

ONE MEDIATOR

- Not only is there one God, there is only one Mediator.
- There is only one option for all men to obtain salvation—Christ Jesus.
- These are the exclusive claims of our faith.
- V5...and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,
- What is a mediator? A mediator is one who arbitrates. They are a go-between two parties who are in conflict; trying to broker a peaceful agreement or settlement.
- Why do we need a Mediator?
- Here is the truth that Scripture reveals to us, we are at war with God.
- Our sin and rebellion has created an insurmountable rift in the relationship between God and man.
- There is nothing we can do to bridge that gap.
- Colossians 1:21 And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds,
- Romans 8:7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.
- We don't have to struggle to wonder why God is the offended party. He is a holy God. We are sinful people.
- We need to be reconciled to God.
- We need a mediator who can broker an end to the hostility, who can broker a peace treaty between God and man.
- In the OT, the solution to this hostility was the sacrificial system whereby God could cover the sinful offenses.
- Those sacrifices reminded them that the punishment or payment for their transgression is death.
- The High Priest, by making atonement for the sins of the people, served as a type of mediator between God and man.
- But it was temporary. Sacrifices had to be offered continually. And the High Priest had to offer up sacrifices for his own sins (Heb. 5:3).
- We need someone who can mediate a permanent peace treaty, a true reconciliation between God and man, to put the war to an end.
- We need a once-for-all time mediator.
- Without a mediator we would be eternally lost.
- That one mediator, Paul says, is the "man Christ Jesus..."
- Why does he call him the "man?"
- The humanity of Christ, his incarnation, is an indispensable element of his capacity to function as our Mediator.
- Because man is the problem, and all mankind has this sin problem, Christ had to come as a man.
- A mediator must be able to represent both sides equally.
- Jesus is God. He can represent God as the divine Son.
- He became a man, added to his divine nature, a human nature, uniting both in the one person, so he can represent both God and man.
- **Hebrews 2:14-18** Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. 16 For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. 17 Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.
- He had to become like us in order to be able to rescue us and offer himself as a sacrifice to appease the righteous anger of God and so that God's wrath could be turned away from us.
- [1689 LBCF chapter 8 - Christ the Mediator.](#)
- Christ came, as a man, in order to perfectly obey the law of God, something we could not do.
- In order to do that he had to be born under the law, as a man, in order to perfectly fulfill it.
- God requires perfect obedience and perfect righteousness.

- Christ did for us what we could not do for ourselves.
- Galatians 4:4-5 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.
- As a man, Christ overcame every temptation that ensnared humanity.
- Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.
- Hebrews 5:7-9 In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. 8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. 9 And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him,
- This is why the “man Christ Jesus” is the one mediator between God and man.
- He is not only our mediator by virtue of his sinless life, but also by virtue of his sacrificial death.
- His sinless perfection allows him to offer the once-for-all sacrifice to make atonement for our sins and bring to an end the hostility between God and man.

RANSOM

- Paul writes, v6 who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.
- Christ Jesus gave himself, that means he willingly laid down his life.
- John 10:17-18 17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.
- By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us (1 John 3:16).
- What is a ransom?
- Ransom is a payment made in exchange for the release of someone who was taken captive.
- We were held captive by our sin, we are slaves to sin.
- We could not ransom ourselves!
- Psalm 49:7-9 Truly no man can ransom another, or give to God the price of his life, 8 for the ransom of their life is costly and can never suffice, 9 that he should live on forever and never see the pit.
- Christ's sacrifice is the ransom paid for our freedom.
- Christ's sacrifice satisfies the righteous requirements of God, a death is made in payment for sin.
- **Hebrews 9:11-15** But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of creation) 12 he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. 15 Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.
- Hebrews 10:14 For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.
- We are saved FROM God BY God FOR God!
- Heaven's praise consists of thanksgiving for Christ's ransoming of his people.
- Rev. 5:9 “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,
- This is Christ our Mediator. He makes peace with God by his blood and reconciles us to God.
- Because of his sacrifice, these are our grounds for making confident prayer.
- We have access to the throne room of grace to petition God because Christ gave himself as a ransom for us.

THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT

- Paul writes, “a ransom for all...”
- Does that mean Christ's atonement and sacrifice pays for every single person's sin?
- Is this an argument for universal or unlimited atonement?
- We have to define “all” in this passage.
- Paul is speaking about the missional call of the church; all kinds of prayers made for all kinds of people. The gospel is for all kinds of people, without exception.
- “All” does not mean every single person but rather all kinds of persons. That is what is meant in the passage by the use of “all.”

- If the ransom were made for every single person, all would be saved without exception.
- But Christ's ransom is not paid for every single person, but for all kinds of persons, all of the persons God has appointed to eternal life.
- 1 Timothy 4:10 For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.
- Ultimately the best way to answer the question is by examining what was the purpose, the intention, of God's plan for atonement through Christ?
 - Was it to make salvation possible for every single person, or was it to actually save his elect?
 - We can't make the word "all" mean every single person without exception when the passages of Scripture, even John 3:16, bases salvation upon those who believe.
 - If it were for every single person, then why isn't everyone saved?
- If Christ was punished for every person's sin, then why would God punish those sins again for those who reject Christ in unbelief. Hell would seem like double punishment of the same sins.
 - Scripture teaches that Christ's work is perfect and complete.
 - What the Father and Son purposed from all eternity, to purchase a people for His Son, to ransom and redeem them for his own glory, is exactly what Christ accomplished as our Mediator.
 - Jesus said, He came to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:34). Many, not all.
 - Jesus said, that his sheep hear his voice and they come to him. He said he was the door and anyone who enters by him will be saved (John 10).
 - Christ said, "*It is finished.*"
 - He didn't die just to make us savable, he saved us.
 - He didn't die just to make it possible to be saved, his blood actually and fully ransoms and reconciles us to God.
 - Titus 2:14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.
 - These are things Christ's death actually accomplishes. Christ's atonement is effectual, it accomplishes exactly what God decreed for it to accomplish—the salvation of all those he would draw to His Son.
 - This brings us comfort and assurance of salvation.

CONCLUSION

- Here is the main takeaway from this passage: we cannot limit the scope of the church's mission.
- Prayers must be made for all kinds of people.
- The gospel must be preached to all kinds of people.
- The offer of salvation must be extended to everyone without exception.
- We are forbidden from limiting the offer of the gospel.
- We cannot forget the mission of the church.
- Paul writes in v7, as the **final reason** for the basis of our call to offer all kinds of prayers for all kinds of people and to offer the gospel to everyone,
 - For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.
 - Paul says God appointed him as a preacher, apostle, and teacher to the Gentiles.
 - That means he was to go to the nations.
 - Apostle means sent one. Heralds are those who loudly announce a message. Teachers instruct.
 - We are a sent people, who are called to herald the good news, and instruct people in the teachings and commands of Christ, in faith and truth.
- It is because there is one God, and one Mediator, that all people must be included in the prayer and proclamation of the church.
 - We are to take this gospel message to all people as an urgent witness.
 - And we are to present all people before the throne of grace in fervent prayer.
 - May we see the correlation between the progress of the gospel in our community and world and the prayers of God's people in the church.
 - May God give us his desire to see all people saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.
 - May our proclamation of the gospel and prayers for the salvation of all kinds of people result in the increase of worship of the one true God.
 - May our mission prevail and may our Mediator be praised, and may the nations bow the knee in worship to the one true and living God and our great Redeemer.

APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?

