

## OUR OBLIGATION TO PRAY!

### 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-4

#### Introduction

The elections are over—Praise God! Now we can go back to being inundated with Lawyer and Pharmaceutical commercials instead of political bickering!

This was the most divisive presidential campaign that I personally remember! It will be a colossal task to bring the people of this country together and move forward!

We need to remember how God answered our prayers and was gracious to us in this election! Just as we saw in a message a few weeks ago in 2 Chronicles 20 how Jehoshaphat and Judah worshiped and praised the LORD for showing Himself mighty in answer to their prayers, we need to do the same!

Now is not the time to cease praying though! Now is not the time to go back to our old ways! Now is not the time to let up in our spirituality! We need to see that now, more than ever, God's people need to be people of prayer!

We need to stay in an attitude of 2 Chronicles 7:14 of humbling ourselves and praying and seeking the face of God, and turning from wickedness in our lives so that God can truly heal our nation again!

Yes, we are to pray for our needs and the Church's needs but our prayers are to extend far beyond the walls of our Church to others!

Let's look at our text this morning:

#### **I. WE ARE TO PRAY FOR ALL MEN!**

*"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men."*

Four Kinds of Prayers that we are called to offer on behalf of others:

1. **Supplications** – *"a specific petition."* Focusing upon specific special deep and intense needs of others and carrying that need to God with a sense of urgency.

When folks have needs, nothing shows that we care like prayer! I say that because it is something that we ALL can do!

2. **Prayers** – *"a general praying to God in worship."* Think of it

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as set times or seasons of prayer when we pray for others in general opening our heart up to God on their behalf!

3. **Intercessions** – *"to confer with God on behalf of others"*  
We could call it standing in the gap before God on behalf of others seeking God's mercy and grace for others.

*Ezekiel 22:30 "And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none."*

4. **Giving of Thanks or Thanksgiving** – *"gratitude; actually grateful language (to God, as an act of worship)"*  
Thanking God for hearing our prayers of faith in anticipation of what He is going to do in the life of others and/or gratitude for what He has done in the past.

5. **These are to be made for ALL MEN!**

D. Karl Barth said, *"To clasp hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world."* [Prayer. Christianity Today, Vol. 34, no. 4]

#### **II. WE ARE TO PRAY IN PARTICULAR FOR THOSE IN AUTHORITY!**

- A. Not only are we to pray for all men in general but as our text says we are to pray specifically *"for kings, and for all that are in authority"* (1 Timothy 2:2)

- B. What is amazing is that when Paul instructed Timothy to teach the Church to pray for kings and political leaders Nero was on the throne in Rome.

Nero having burned Rome in 64 A.D. blamed Christian activists for the fire and had then went on a campaign of brutal persecution against Christians!

The thought of praying for someone such as Nero and his administration had to be difficult if not repugnant to some!

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**C. So, this means we are to pray for them...:**

1. ...no matter how good or bad they are!
2. ...no matter what political party they belong to!  
(Democrat or Republican or other)
3. ...no matter whether they are conservative, or moderate or liberal!
4. ...no matter how moral or immoral they may be!
5. ...no matter how just or unjust they might be!

**D. We should pray for those in authority because they are there by the will of God and He will either raise up or remove leaders as He sees fit to accomplish His ultimate plan!**

*Daniel 2:21 "And he changes the times and the seasons: he removes kings, and sets up kings: he gives wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:"*

*Romans 13:1 "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."*

**E. We are to realize that the hearts of our leaders are in God's hands!**

*Proverbs 21:1 "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turns it whither so ever he will."*

*Ezra 6:21-22 "... The children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the LORD God of Israel, did eat, and kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy. For the LORD had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God,*

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*the God of Israel."*

George Washington (1732-1799) our first President said, *"It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible."*

*"I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom, and that of all about me, seemed insufficient for the day." - Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)*

Solomon's prayer in I Kings 3:7-9 *"And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?"*

**We must pray for our new President that God will give him wisdom and discernment in every decision he makes!**

**Pray that God will give the President all the appropriate knowledge needed to lead our nation by sound Biblical principles!**

**Pray for the President as he leads our nation through times of crisis!**

*Psalms 33:16 "There is NO king saved by the multitude of a host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength."*

**IV. WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR OUR NATION!**

**A. Think back to the days of Abraham Lincoln.**

Our nation was war-torn and weary in the midst of the Civil War, and victory in the long struggle was anything but certain when the President received a resolution asking him to declare

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a national day of prayer. Here is part of his response:

*"We have forgotten the gracious hand, which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us," he wrote, "And have vainly imagined that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us."*

With those words, President Abraham Lincoln called on all Americans to turn to God in prayer for a quick outcome to the Civil War! (copied from the Presidential Prayer Team)

**B. We Need To Live In An Attitude Of Revival!**

*2 Chronicles 7:14 "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."*

**C. We Need To Remember That Prayer Is A Vital Part Of Our Political Action!**

Prayer is our social energy!

Prayer is for our public good!

Prayer can shape more of our nation's life than is formed by ANY legislation!

That we have not collapsed into anarchy is due more to prayer than to the police!

**D. Prayer is a sustained act of patriotism in the largest sense of that word!**

It is far more precise, loving, and preserving than any patriotism served up in slogans!

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The fact that our society continues to be livable and that hope continues to be resurgent are attributable to prayer far more than to business prosperity or a flourishing of the arts!

The single most important action contributing to whatever health and strength there is in our land is prayer!

**E. Any revitalization of faith in this country will have to start with prayer, in which we gain a sense of the living presence of God!**

**Conclusion**

Note verse 3-6 in closing!