

**Bold Prayer**

*I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. 2 Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. 3 This is good and pleases God our Savior, 4 who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth. 5 For there is only one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus. 6 He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone. This is the message God gave to the world at just the right time. 7 And I have been chosen as a preacher and apostle to teach the Gentiles this message about faith and truth. I'm not exaggerating—just telling the truth. 8 In every place of worship, I want men to pray with holy hands lifted up to God, free from anger and controversy.*  
1 Timothy 2:1-8 (NLT)

**Observation** (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)

**Discussion/Topic Starters** (Ice Breakers)

O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

**v.1-8:**

O: For whom and what kinds of prayers does Paul tell Timothy to pray?

*Thought (from N.T.Wright) Paul prays for his friends and relatives, of course; we know that from things he says over and over elsewhere in the Bible. But in this passage he strongly urges that we should start at the other end.*

O: What kinds of groups of people should we be praying for (v.1-3)? Why should we be praying for a diversity of peoples?

Follow-up: For whom do you normally tend to pray? For whom would you find it especially difficult to pray? Why?

Follow-up: How can prayer change your attitude toward people who are different from you in some way?

Toward your enemies? Toward persecutors? Toward people who live far away from you?

To people who live in your neighborhood?

O: What reasons are given for praying for those in authority?

Follow-up: What does praying for those in government offices around the world have to do with people being saved and coming to know the truth?

Follow-up: Why would praying for political leaders give us peaceful, quiet lives (v.2)

*Thought (N.T.Wright) For many Christians, particularly those of us who've grown up in the Western world & have never known war or major civil disturbance in our own country, praying for our leaders often seems quite remote. We might grumble about our leaders or some of their policies, but what they do doesn't drive us to our knees to pray for them, to beseech God to guide them & lead them to create a better world for all of us to live in.*

I: Why does Paul put prayer as the #1 priority for Christians ("first of all" in v.1)

Follow-up: With regards to your pray life, what hinders you? Helps you?

I: What does God desire according to 2:4; and how can we "plug into" this desire according to v.2:1-2?

I: Identify all the times the Paul says "all" or "everyone" in v.1-6. What does this language tell us about God?

I: Review v.5-6 as fast or slow as needed. Some questions, depending on the groups familiarity with the Gospel, could be:

\*What three parties are mentioned in 2:5?

\*Why is a "mediator" needed?

\*How did Jesus "give Himself" as a ransom (2:6)? For whom was he given?

\*What are the theological motivations for prayer for all peoples?

\*\*What difference does this make to us today?

A: When has your prayer life been most vibrant? Why do you think this was?

**A: Make sure you take time to PRAY!**

Note: It might be helpful to break out into smaller, same-gender groups. Have this passage open when the group is praying, as a way of responding to the powerful content in this passage in prayer

**Recommended Follow-up:**

- Read: Next week's sermon (1/29/11) will focus on 1 Timothy 2:8-15. Take time prior to next Sunday to read & study the passage, pray through the passage, meditate on the passage, etc.

\*As discussed in Riverside's HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid "go through this guide word-for-word." There are intentionally too many questions for a single home group time.