

## I TIMOTHY 2:3-8

### INTRODUCTION

Last time we looked at the opening verses of this chapter and we discovered that God wants the church of Jesus Christ to have a global vision for the whole world. The gospel is not just for one particular group of people, but it is for people of all races, nations and languages. That is why we are to pray with all types of prayers for everyone (v 1). We are not just to pray for Britain or Europe but we are to have a big vision and pray for every part of the world, that God may save His people out of every tongue, tribe and nation.

We are to particularly pray for kings and those in authority, pray that those in authority may maintain or bring about peaceful conditions so that the church can live peaceful and quiet lives in godliness and holiness (v 2). Now we want to look at why we should pray with global vision. What is so wrong with being parochial in our praying? After all God has placed us in Britain, surely if everyone was concerned for their own area, then that would please God? But the text tells us that we should pray for everyone, and Paul is now going to give his reasons why this is right and should be so.

### WHY PRAY WITH A GLOBAL VISION?

**a) It is Good (v 3)** – Why should we pray for the lost of the world and the nations of this world? We should do so because it is good. The word refers to what is morally right. It is the right thing to do. It would be wrong and bad if we simply neglected the nations of the world, if we simply allowed them to go on their way to hell, without trying to do anything to stop them. What can we do? We may never be able to go as missionaries or as professional people and proclaim Christ in other countries but we can pray for those in authority, we can pray for favourable conditions for the proclamation of the gospel. We can pray for the church of Jesus Christ within the various nations of the world, that their witness will be effective and blessed of God. It is good and right to pray for the nations of this world.

**b) It Pleases God Our Saviour (v 2)** – Not only is it good and morally right to pray for the lost throughout the world, but it also pleases God our Saviour. This practice is acceptable to God. If you want to please God then this is the way to pray and this is the type of prayers to pray. In many ways it is a matter of obedience. If our praying is narrow and very localised, then it is the sort of praying that does not please God; He wants his people to have global hearts, a concern for His people in every people group within his world.

He is our Saviour, we know what it means to have Him as our Saviour and we know the joys and privilege of being one of his people, of having our sins forgiven and of being at peace with God. Therefore do we not want others throughout this world to experience the joys of salvation as well? Well if we do, then we ought to pray with a global vision, for it is right and it pleases God who is our Saviour.

**c) It Is Consistent With What God Wants (v 4)** - We should pray for all people of the world because it is consistent with what God desires. We saw last week and I do not want to cover the same ground again that this verse does not mean that every single person in the world is willed by God to be saved, but somehow God is unable to save them. I do not accept the argument that what God wants and what He wills are different things either. It is much easier to understand this verse as we have understood all the other verses that have a universal appeal.

God wants all men to be saved in the sense that he wants all types of people to be saved; people from different backgrounds, countries, and languages. This means people from Europe, Africa, North and South America and from every other country and continent. So you see praying for everyone (v 1), is not a fruitless exercise, God wants to save people from across the world and

you can be assured that because He wants too; He will. Therefore our prayers will be answered, as we set about praying for what God wants.

What sort of things should we be praying for as we lift the nations of the world up in prayer? Well we are told here that God wants people to come to the knowledge of the truth. This is really the interpretation on the word 'saved.' What does it mean to be saved? It means coming to knowledge of the truth. But coming to a knowledge of the truth is not an intellectual thing were someone comes to understand Christianity intellectually. They understand what it means and stands for. There are lots of people who have come to the knowledge of the truth in that sense.

But it is much more than that. It means to know the truth intellectually but it also means to know it experimentally. It is talking about heart knowledge and not just head knowledge. People are to come to the knowledge of the truth; so that your whole life is shaped by it and is given over to it. To have our hearts changed by the truth and to bring our desires, passions and hopes into line with His truth.

So as we pray for this world with all its needs, please pray that people will come to a knowledge of the truth and be saved. No one can be saved without coming to a heart knowledge of the truth. This knowledge brings you into a loving relationship with God. Before moving on let me ask if you have come to a knowledge of the truth. Are you saved, from sin and eternal death?

It is possible that you have an intellectual knowledge of Christianity and salvation. You know all about it, but as yet you have never repented of your sin and of going your own way, and have never experimentally trusted Christ as your Saviour.

You may have prayed a prayer some years ago and believed that you were saved at that time, but if it has not changed or shaped your life, then you have not yet come to a knowledge of the truth. It may have gotten into your head but not your heart. A good test for us is to ask what and who do we really love? An honest examination of that question might reveal that Christ is not our first love, if so in all likelihood you have not come to a knowledge of the truth or if you have; you have allowed your heart to be invaded by someone else or by something else, so that you have lost your first love.

**d) There is Only One God (v 5)** – Another reason why we should pray with a world vision is that there is only one God. This is important for if there is only one God then everyone stands accountable to this God and everyone stands condemned by Him. This is why everyone needs to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

This is why we ought to pray for people throughout the world to be saved. This teaching goes against the modern day trend and belief that believes that there is no one religious truth. We are told by our society that Christians, Jews, Moslems, Buddhists and Hindus are all equally valid faiths. If this idea is true then there would be many ways of salvation and hence there would be no need to pray or evangelise the world, everyone would find salvation in their own religious ideas.

But as there is only one God and that is the God of the Bible, the Christian God, then He is the one that all must turn to for salvation. "There is no other name under heaven by which sinners may be saved" (Acts 4:12). Do we really believe that? Well of course we do; I'm sure we are all saying that, but we must remember that the test of whether we believe that in practise is our prayer life. Are we global in prayer, praying that people of all nations and languages and cultures will be brought to knowledge of the truth.

Do we pray for Hindu's, Moslems, Jews and the millions who are caught in the trap of false religions throughout our world? We pray globally because there is only one God.

**e) There's Only One Mediator (v 5)** – Another reason why we ought to pray universally is that there is only one mediator between God and man. That mediator is Jesus Christ. The term mediator

refers to one who intervenes. The task of a mediator is to restore peace and to bring harmony when there is no peace and harmony. Christ came into the world to bring reconciliation between God and sinners. He did this by laying his life down as a ransom for all men (as we will see in our next point).

But the key is this; only those who come to Jesus Christ are saved. There is no other way to God; therefore we ought to pray that people will find Christ. The view of many in this world is that there may be one God but there are many ways to God. So the Hindu is finding God his way and the Moslem is finding God her way and the Jew is finding God their way, and the new age woman is finding God her way and so on. But such a view is wrong, there is one God and one way to God and that is through the man Christ Jesus. The stress is upon the man Christ Jesus because Paul is wanting us to understand that Christ became man in order to be our mediator. He could not have been our go between without identifying himself with us and becoming like us.

Just think of Jesus existence before he became man, yet he was willing to leave his Father in order that he may bring reconciliation between God and man. This ought to move us to pray, If Christ was that concerned for this world, that He became man, then should we not be concerned enough to pray that people from right across this world will be brought to a knowledge of the truth. This is why we should pray for our world.

**f) Jesus Christ Gave His Life For All Men (v 6).** - If we fail to pray in a universal way for people right throughout our world, then we are failing to recognise the universal nature of Christ death. Christ died for all men in the sense that He died for all types of people. He died for people from different nations, language and cultures. God is not a British God, Jesus Christ is not just the Saviour of Brits, and He did not just die for the English or Irish or Europeans. No Christ died for all people, Asians, Africans, Americans etc. He gave his life as a ransom for all men, He paid the price for the sin of Asians as well as Europeans, He took upon himself God's wrath; He acted as the substitute for all people.

Therefore people all over the world are saved the same way as we in Britain are saved. It's through faith in Jesus Christ who paid the ransom price by being our substitute, paying our debt of sin and taking upon himself the wrath of God. Our prayer should be that God by his Holy Spirit will work in the hearts of sinners' right across our world and apply Christ sacrifice for sinners to them.

We ought to pray for the salvation of Asians and Africans and Europeans and Americans on the basis that Christ has died for such people. We thank God that sinners are being saved in China today, In Iran, in Britain, in Australia and in hundreds of countries right throughout our world. They are being saved because Christ gave his life as a ransom for all men.

**g) God Appointed Paul A Herald To The Gentiles (v 7)** – It is because God wants all men to be saved; it is because there is only one God and one mediator between God and man. It is because Christ gave himself as a ransom for all men that God appointed Paul to go to the Gentiles and proclaim the gospel. God is so concerned that men and woman and boys and girls from across our world should hear the gospel and be saved that He sent Paul to the Gentiles. A Jew, who saw the Gentiles as dogs, was sent to preach these wonderful truths, that there is only one God, God of both Jews and Gentiles. This God sent His Son Jesus to be the mediator in order that God and man could be reconciled. He did this by giving his life as a ransom for all men. Why did Paul go to the Gentiles? Because He was convinced that God was not just the God of Jews but of Gentiles too.

This is why God is still sending people throughout our globe with this wonderful message of salvation. This is why people are prepared to leave the comforts of home to preach the gospel in some of the remote places of our world. This is what took David Livingstone to Africa, Hudson Taylor to China, William Carey to India, CT Studd to China, India and Africa and Mary Slessor to

West Africa; It was the God's great concern for sinners in all parts of the globe that has and will continue to take people to different parts of this planet earth to preach the gospel.

This is why we should pray as globally as well. If God is concerned for sinners in our world that He sends his servants throughout our world to preach the gospel, then surely we should have that same concern. If God does not call us to go and preach the gospel in a different country, then His certainty calls us all to pray globally for the proclamation of the gospel. Are we fulfilling our task, are we obeying God's command (v1)? We should have a global vision, which leads to global praying because:

- a) It is Good (v 3)
- b) It Pleases God Our Saviour (v 2)
- c) It Is Consistent With What God Wants (v 4)
- d) There is Only One God (v 5)
- e) There's Only One Mediator (v 5)
- f) Jesus Christ Gave His Life For All Men (v 6).
- g) God Appointed Paul A Herald To The Gentiles (v 7) – Thereby proving His love and concern for the whole world.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16)

Amen