

CHURCH AND STATE RELATIONS

I Timothy 2:1-4

Our Christian duty is to pray for our political leaders.

I. THE PRIORITY OF THIS PRAYER (1a)

A. AN URGENCY: First of all

1. The primacy of importance
2. More important than anything other thing
3. Before you do anything else Pray!

B. THE URGING

1. Not a command but an appeal to one's conscience ... this is the right thing to do
2. This is very important

II. THE NATURE OF OUR PRAYERS (1b)

A. THE CHARACTER OF THE PRAYERS

1. Entreaties
 - a. "Petitions for the fulfillment of certain definite needs which are keenly felt." [William Hendriksen, p. 91]
 - b. Addressing particular issues
 - c. Exp: The Philippians praying for Paul's release from jail in Phil. 1:19
2. Prayers
 - a. Recognizing the ongoing needs of others and reverently requesting God's assistance for them.
 - b. Asking God to give others wisdom, a spirit of justice, discernment, conviction or clear direction
 - c. Exps: Paul's prayer for Agrippa's salvation in Acts 26:28-29
3. Petitions
 - a. Being ready and able to intervene for another
 - Exp: Those praying for Peter's release from jail in Acts 12:12
 - b. A sense of urgency in appealing to God for another

B. THE CONDUCT OF THE PRAYING ONES

1. Giving thanks to God
 - An attitude of gratitude for God's benefits and blessings
2. Giving thanks for commoners and kings
 - Staying positive and giving thanks for the good things they do

III. THE FOCUS OF OUR PRAYERS (1c-2a)

A. REGULAR PEOPLE: All men (1c)

1. All kinds of men both saved and unsaved
2. We too often give in to the temptation to pray only for those who are close to us
3. Exp: Samuel's prayer for the people in I Sam. 12:23

B. ROYAL PEOPLE (2a)

1. Paul's appeal is for us to pray for those who govern
2. We often avoid this prompting because of ...
 - a. The ruler's ideology: We disagree with them
 - b. The leader's oppressiveness: We feel abused by them or see them abuse others
 - c. Our own apathy: We really don't care about them
 - d. Our own judgmentalism: Believing they deserve any bad thing that comes their way
3. Praying for those in authority is a matter of sympathy, submission and practicality
4. Whether perverted or not, we are to pray for them
 - Exp: Samuel cried all night to the Lord for Saul after his sin - I Sam. 15:10-11

IV. THE RESULTS OF OUR PRAYERS (2b-4)

A. SANCTIFIED BELIEVERS (2b)

1. Enjoying a calm life
 - a. Tranquil: Unhassled > Free from external distractions or difficulties
 - b. Quiet: Calm and at ease > Free from internal fears
2. Enjoying a consecrated life
 - a. In all godliness: One's character
 - b. With dignity: One's conduct

B. A SATISFIED SAVIOR (3-4)

1. He delights in the praying ones (3)
 - a. This is good > Such prayer is admirable and beautiful to Him
 - b. This is acceptable > Such prayer and praying people meet God's expectations and standards
2. He desires to save the lost ones (4)
 - a. His will is to save all men
 - b. His way is to bring all men to a knowledge of the truth

CONCLUSION:

If we wish to live a good and godly life, we must not neglect our responsibility of praying for our political leaders.