**Name of Assembly: United Apostolic Church**

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**Series: SCRIPTURAL PRIORITIES**

**Lesson 5: “FIRST- PRAYERS BE MADE FOR ALL MEN”**

**Scripture Text: 1 Timothy 2:1-4**

***“1 Moreover, I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. 3For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” – 1 Timothy 2:1-4.***

**INTRODUCTION**

Our text includes an admonition to offer supplications, intercessions, prayers, and giving of thanks for all people. This is an all-inclusive statement reaching the entire universe— “all men”! What a call, challenge, and responsibility for all Christians!

Again, we are confronted with the need to prioritize our conduct as Christians. In studying the context of our text, we find Paul admonishing Timothy to remember everyone in his prayers. Paul further encouraged him to give special attention to kings and everyone in authority. When we consider that the Roman empire ruled the world at this time with unrelenting rigor, it becomes obvious that most people would not ordinarily be inclined to pray for such rulers.

This is a tremendous lesson to saints everywhere. None of us choose the form of government under which we serve God. Agreed, it is easier to function in a democracy, where freedom abounds. We must remember, however, that people have lived for God under all types of governmental systems, which often presented circumstances beyond their control. Nevertheless, God calls upon us to pray for our rulers, even if they be tyrants of the basest sort.

A pattern emerges from this teaching relative to both prayer and submission. It is only when we pray for others that we can be submissive to them, and it is only when we are submissive to authority that we can truly be Christian.

**Word Study**

1. **Supplications**

“**Supplication**” comes from the Greek word deesis (deh’-ay-sis), meaning **a petition or request**. This is an entreaty and can even mean to beg. To supplicate, according to Webster, is to entreat for, seek by earnest prayer, petition earnestly. (See Daniel 9, a great chapter on supplication; Hebrews 5:7; Acts 1:14; Philippians 4:6; Ephesians 6:18.)

* Hebrews 5:7 – “***Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared***.”
* Philippians 4:6, “***Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God***.”
* Ephesians 6:18 – “***Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints***.”
1. **Prayers**

“**Prayer**” comes from the Greek word proseuche (pros-yoo-khay’), meaning to worship, to pray to God. Praying includes but is not limited to (1) seeking, (2) asking, (3) knocking, (4) requesting, (5) desiring, (6) entreating, (7) beseeching.

* Ephesians 6:18 – “***Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God***.”
* St. Matthew 7:7-8, “***Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened***.”
1. **Giving of Thanks**

“**Thanks**” comes from the Greek word eucharistia (yoo-khar-is-tee’), meaning gratitude, grateful language, giving of thanks as an act of worship.

* Colossians 4:2, “***Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving***.”
* Ephesians 5:20, “***Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ***.”

With the above-mentioned ways, we are to approach God for everyone. We are to offer prayers in this fashion for everyone, including those in authority.

God’s Word sets forth many things for believers to perform and engage themselves in. We have covered several of these in this series on “Scriptural Priorities.” Let it be stated for the record—all of these should be preceded by prayer. Prayer furnishes the impetus and power to perform all other Christian duties. Sinners can find their way to the God, from whom they have been alienated, when they pray. How much more will God’s redeemed gain His attention in prayer!

Before we engage ourselves in any activity involving the work of God, let us take time to go to God in prayer. It is before His throne of grace that we obtain mercy and find grace to help in the time of need. “***Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need***” - Hebrews 4:16.

Let us note the reasons that Paul set forth as to why we are to pray with such diligence.

1. **THAT WE MAY LEAD A QUIET AND PEACEABLE LIFE**

Paul knew that in response to prayer God could provide a peaceful environment for His church to function in. Christians who live in a political storm caused by ruling tyrants, undergo undue hardships; their work and witnessing are hindered, and unneeded turmoil overwhelms their lives.

Those who live in a peaceful nation should thank God, while remaining faithful in prayer for their leaders. They should also remember brethren in other lands who face turmoil and persecution, realizing that none of us are safe from war and upheaval. Paul declared that living a quiet, peaceable life in godliness and honesty is good and acceptable in the sight of God.

We should further note that God wants us to be submissive in whatever political setting or whatever form of government we find ourselves under, so long as it does not conflict with God’s Word. We are to be responsible, law-abiding citizens, seeking to exemplify Christ every way we can. “***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. 2Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. 3For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 4For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. 5Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. 6For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. 7Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour***” - Romans 13:1-7.

If man’s law should conflict with God’s law, we are under obligation to obey God’s law regardless of the cost. Let’s consider the following two examples:

1. **The three Hebrews in** **Daniel 3:1-25**, “Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. **2**Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. **3**Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. **4**Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, **5**That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: **6**And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. **7**Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. **8**Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews. **9**They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever. **10**Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image: **11**And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, that he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. **12**There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

**13**Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king. **14**Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? **15**Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands? **16**Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. **17**If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. **18**But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. **19**Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated. **20**And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. **21**Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. **22**Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flames of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. **23**And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. **24**Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. **25**He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.”

1. **The apostles in Acts 5:24-42 “*24Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow. 25Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people. 26Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. 27And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, 28Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. 29Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. 30The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. 31Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. 32And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. 33When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them. 34Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space; 35And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men. 36For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought. 37After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. 38And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: 39But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. 40And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. 42And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ***.”
2. **THAT MEN MIGHT BE SAVED**

 God’s highest and ultimate purpose is to save the lost. Calvary’s design was for the lost of all time. What a price He paid for humanity! He who was rich became poor that through His poverty we might become rich. “***For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich***” - 2 Corinthians 8:9. “***For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost***” - Luke 19:10. This truth is further exemplified in St. Luke 15 where we read of the **Lost Sheep,** the **Lost Coin** and the **Lost Son.**

In I Timothy 2:1-4 Paul instructed us regarding prayer to the end that we may live in a peaceful environment. He then expressed God’s will that everyone be saved. On casual notice no correlation exists; however, through examination it becomes obvious that political turmoil or governmental oppression often hinders the spread of the gospel. This in turn can cause people to be lost, since they do not have access to truth. Here again, the power and purpose of prayer comes to the forefront. Prayer for kings and those in authority can ultimately effect the salvation of the lost from sin.

**CONCLUSION**

Quite a chain reaction can occur when we pray. First, God can put up or put down whom He wills in order to create a climate of peace for His people to dwell in. “***Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: 21And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: 22He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him***” – Daniel 2:20-22.

No power presents such formidable strength that God cannot break through it when we pray. The Book of Judges is an excellent example of God’s deliverance when His people cry to Him. We also need to learn this lesson, “***6The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. 7The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. 8He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them. 9He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail***” - 1Samuel 2:6-9. No foe can stop the forward movement of God’s church. It has survived the Dark Ages, wars, revolutions, extreme persecutions; it has penetrated every curtain including the Iron and Bamboo.

It is obvious that prayer can help create a peaceful political setting and produce fertile ground for the gospel seed. Truth spreads faster when people can move freely, teach openly, and print Bibles and literature. For such a climate we pray! For our nation we give thanks. For our leaders we offer supplication, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks. For freedom we rejoice! God has answered prayer! Now let us pray unrelentingly until our world knows Jesus Christ through the experience of Acts 2:1-4, 38.

**Personal Notes**

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