

KNOWING THAT YOU ARE PRAYING ACCORDING TO GOD'S WILL –
PRAYING FOR OUR GOVERNMENT:

Many times, when we pray, we may wonder are we praying according to the will of God. Does my petitions and request align with what God has ordained? How can we know whether our request is in accordance with what God wants to see happen? These are questions that can trouble a Believer when it comes to prayer. Thankfully, there is one sure way we can know and that it lines up with His Word. Sad to say, many Believers today do not know what the Word of God says about issues that they are asking Him to intervene in.

Paul tells us in **2 Timothy 2:15 (KJVer)** that we are to *Study to show yourself approved to God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

So, what Paul is saying here in 2 Timothy is that we are to, be diligent to substantiate ourselves, properly, acceptable to God, a teacher, not irreprehensible to expound the divine message, the word of truth. The Word of God is for our guidance and instruction. If we do not want to be deceived in this age, we must know the truth, which is the Word of God -- for the truth will set us free. John 8:31-32 (KJVer) says, *Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If you continue in My word,*

then are you My disciples indeed; And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Recently while doing research for a series of teachings on spiritual warfare I had been reading a book by Derek Prince, titled 'Experiencing God's Power'. I was amazed at one of the truths that Derek brought with regards to praying for our government, hence this teaching today was birthed. I trust that you will be encouraged and empowered by this teaching to have a new confidence with regards to your prayer life.

Derek stated, "Christ is *"Lord of lords, and King of kings"* (Rev. 17:14 KJVer). He is the Ruler of earth's rulers and the Governor over earth's governments. His authority over all earthly governments is made available in His name to the church—the assembly of His believing people. As Moses stretched forth his rod on God's behalf over Egypt, so the church by its prayers stretches forth Christ's authority over the nations and their rulers."

Wow, do you see that truth??? Just like Moses had the authority from God to do His bidding over Egypt, so does 'the Church' have Christ authority over all the nations and rulers of this world. If this is true, why does the church seem ineffective in dealing with them? I would say that it is because we lack the knowledge that we need to defeat the forces that control them.

Hosea 4:6 tells us that, *My (God's) people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because you have rejected knowledge, (because of lack of knowledge), I will also reject you* Our ignorance is willful, "My people," implies; we ought to have known, having the opportunity, as God's children to study His Word.

Let us move forward in the knowledge of His Word as we breakdown these truths. Turn to 1 Tim, 2 and we will read the first 4 verses.

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

I now want to break down these four verses, so we have a better understanding that we are praying according to and with God's will.

In v. 1, Paul instructs us to, ***first of all***, to pray for all men in general, and particularly for all in authority. Timothy must take care that this is done, as we also, as part of the Church today must do. Paul does not give us a prescribed form of prayer; but, in general, that we should make *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks*. **Supplications** for the averting of evil, **prayers** for the obtaining of good, **intercessions** for others, and

thanksgivings for mercies already received. Paul thought it enough to give them general headings of prayer; where we have the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit to direct us in our prayers. Observe, the design of Christianity is to promote prayer; and as disciples of Christ, we must be praying people. Pray *always with all prayer* (Eph 6:18). The primary duty of Christians meeting in fellowship should be prayer.

There must be prayers for ourselves in the first place; this is implied here. We must also pray *for all men*, for the world of mankind in general, and for particular persons who need or desire our prayers. This is quite different from other religions, for here we are instructed to pray for all men, whether of faith or not. This goes along with the prophecy of Isaiah 56:7, where God says, *Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people*. By God being concerned with all people, likewise this should be a concern of ours as well. Is this what our prayers look and sound like in the Throne room of Heaven, or is it more like 'bless me, we, and us, amen'? I trust not.

After being told to pray for all men, in 1Ti 2:2 we are next told to pray for ***kings and all that are in authority***. Though the *kings* and those *in authority* at this time were heathens, enemies of Christianity, and the persecutors of Christians, yet we are instructed to pray for them, though we ourselves may suffer under them. Well, you might say, I do not live under a monarchy, however whether we live under one or not, the phrase ***all that are***

in authority would indicate all those who are responsible for governing our nation. This is what is known as government.

Let me ask you a question. We just saw the first specific topic given is prayer for ***kings, and... all that are in authority***, so what would you say is the first topic of prayer that God wants His Church to pray for? Is it the sick and shut-ins? Maybe the ministers, missionaries, evangelist, and the Church? How about the lost and dying world that does not know Jesus and His love for them? The list can go on, however, what I see here is that our first specific topic of prayer ordained by God for His people meeting in fellowship is the government. When was the last time we heard our government mentioned in our prayer time, let alone first? We might remember to mention them at some point but is it at the top of our list as it is indicated here in Scripture?

For kings, and all that are in authority, that is, governments; as inferior, imperfect, sinful, governmental leaders are: we must still pray for them. Why, to make petition, ***that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty***. Here see what we must desire, that God will so turn their hearts, direct them, make use of them, that we under them, ***may lead a quiet and peaceable life***. He does not say, "that we may get promotions under them, grow rich, and be in honor and power under them;" no, the goal and ambition of a good Christian is to lead a ***quiet and peaceable life***. We should desire that we and others may lead a ***peaceable life in all godliness and honesty***,

implying that we cannot expect to be kept quiet and peaceable unless we keep ***in all godliness and honesty***.

Let us heed our duty, and then we may expect to be taken under the protection both of God and the government. ***In all godliness and honesty***. Here we have our duty as Christians summed up in two words: godliness, that is, the right worshipping of God; and honesty, that is, a good conduct towards all men. These two must go together; we are not truly honest if we are not godly, and do not render to God His due; and we are not truly godly if we are not honest, for God hates robbery for burnt-offering.

As Christians and Americans, we should pray for our government. In doing so we can affect the way we live under that government. The framers of our American Constitution had a desire for us to live lives that were free to pursue our own legitimate interest, without the interference from others or our government; while seeing that it was the responsibility of government to protect its citizens. Looking at the words that they used, it is obvious that they believed that this was only possible under the sovereign protection and favor of Almighty God. We must ever be thankful as Christians, that the basic charter of this nation agrees so exactly with the purposes and principles ordained by holy Scripture.

In v. 3 Paul tells us, ***for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior***. What is ***this*** referring to? If we look back to the previous verse, we will have to summarize it as "good

government". I like how Derek paraphrased it, "Good government is good and acceptable in the sight of God" or simply still, "Good government is the will of God."

My friend, do we believe this statement? Do we really believe that we can have a good government? I would say by our words we can be judged. I must admit that I have been critical of our government. I have not always spoke words that could be counted as good and righteous in the sight of God. It is all too easy to stand on the sidelines and cast accusations at those on the field. God forgive us all who find ourselves casting stones instead of prayers and petitions. By studying Scripture, I believe we will see that it is God's will that we have good government.

Now why do I think it is God's desire for good government? That can be found in the next verse. Paul states, ***all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*** We do know that it is God's will for all men to be saved, because before He formed the foundations of the world, He had a plan of redemption already worked out. His Son, His only Son, would come to this earth, as a servant; live, suffer, die, be buried, and three days later rise from the dead, so that '***all men might be saved***'. Through the atoning death of Christ, by faith, salvation is made available to ***all men.*** How is this done? By them first ***come unto the knowledge of the truth*** concerning Jesus' atonement. And this is only possible if the good news of the Gospel is preached to them.

In Romans 10:13-14, Paul presented this issue very plainly.

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? All this comes about by the preaching of the Word of God unto salvation. Salvation purchased through Christ's atonement on the cross of Calvary.

So, it is God's desire that all men be saved. So, for this to happen they must **come unto the knowledge of the truth**. For them to **come unto the knowledge of the truth**, there must be the preaching of the Gospel. So, it is God's desire that the Gospel be preached to **all men**.

Now let us wrap this part up. What we see Paul telling us here in 1 Timothy 2, is there is a direct connection between good government and the preaching of the Gospel. When we have a good government, the preaching of the Gospel can go forth without hinderance. We have freedom to speak the Word without fear of reprimand. We can gather because of freedom of assembly and law and order is maintained. In short, good government, without becoming involved in religious controversy, provides a climate in which the Gospel can be preached effectively.

When we look at what bad government allows, we see a breakdown of law and order, unsafe travel, poor communications, and imposing unjust and arbitrary restrictions, thus hindering the

effective preaching of the truth. We can see today what bad governments have done to their people. They oppress them in order to make them obey what the government feels is right and punish them if they do not abide. They tell them how, who, and where they can worship. There is no freedom to believe in God or express their faith. This is seen in countries under socialism, communist and radical religious rule today.

Therefore, it is through good government that we see the facilitating of the preaching of the Gospel, while bad government hinders it. For this reason, good government is the will of God.

So let us look at six logical steps in which Derek summarizes Paul's teaching of I Timothy 2:1-4.

1. The first is ministry and outreach of believers as we meet together in regular fellowship is prayer.
2. The first specific topic for prayer is the government.
3. We are to pray for good government.
4. God desires all men to have the truth of the Gospel preached to them.
5. Good government facilitates the preaching of the Gospel, while bad government hinders it.
6. Therefore, good government is the will of God.

Now to bring this all home, we can have the knowledge of God's will when we pray. In all effective praying, the decisive issue is the

knowledge of God's will. If we know what we are praying for is in accordance with God's will, then we have the faith to believe and claim it. However, if we are not sure of God's will, our prayers can be wavering and ineffective. James warned us of this in chapter 1:6-7 saying, *But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavers is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.*

But I am glad for the confidence that John speaks about when we know the will of the Father: *And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He hears us: And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.* 1 John 5:14-15 (KJVer)

We see here in this Scripture, that we know if we are praying according to God's will, that we *have* whatsoever we prayed for. We must look at the Greek to fully understand the present tense of we **have** in order to properly interpret this passage. It does not necessarily indicate an immediate manifestation of the thing we are praying for, but it does indicate an immediate assurance the thing is already granted to us by God. So, the actual time for it to manifests cannot affect the initial assurance of it being in God's will.

In Mark 11:24 (KJVer) Jesus is saying, *Therefore I say to you, What things soever you desire, when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them.* We are to believe that we already received what we have prayed for that very moment. After that, the actual manifestation of our prayer will follow at the appropriate time. Paul makes this clear in **Romans 4:17 (KJVer)** speaking of Abraham, (As it is written, I have made you a father of many nations,) before Him whom he believed, *even God, who makes alive the dead, and **calls those things which be not*** [literally, “the nonexistent things”] ***as though they were*** [literally, “as existing”]. God spoke of Abraham’s future, even though it seemed impossible, as if it had already happened. This is how we are to trust in the Lord to bring about what He has already declared in His Word.

Now let us apply the same basic logical analysis to 1 John as we did to 1 Timothy.

1. If we know that we are praying for anything according to God’s will, we know that He hears us.
2. If we know that God hears us, we know that we have the things that we prayed for. [This does not necessarily indicate immediate fulfillment.]

Now we must combine the teaching of John with that of Paul to fully understand what can be accomplished by praying for our government.

1. If we pray for anything knowing that it is according to God's will, we have the assurance that the thing is granted to us.
2. Good government is according to God's will.
3. If we know this and pray for good government, we have the assurance that good government is granted to us.

Do we as Christians have a full assurance that it is God's will that we have good governments? If not, it could be that we do not pray for a good government or that we pray but do not have a knowledge that it is God's will. I fear that the vast majority of Christians do not pray according to God's known will because they fail to study and know what the scriptures say. As we have seen from Paul's teaching, God wants good government, and this can be accomplished through our prayers. If we fail to exercise this God-given authority, we are gravely delinquent—both toward God and toward our countries.

As Christians we must watch our words as we speak. For they can bring a blessing or a curse. *There is death and life in the power of the tongue (our words), and they that love it shall eat the fruit*

thereof (Prov. 18:21). We are all to free to criticize our leader and those in authority over us and not hold them up in our prayers. As citizens of America, it is a double-edged sword, for we have the freedom to let our voices be heard on election day as well as support those who champion causes of righteousness. By the power of prayer, we can see good government, which enhances the ability to have the Gospel proclaimed freely, so man may come to know and accept Christ as their Lord and Savior.

We as Christians are not told to criticize our government, but we are held responsible to pray for them. If we fail to pray, then we have no right to criticize and if we prayed, we would find less to criticize. Many leaders are far better at carrying out the duties of their office, than we as Believers are at carrying out ours.

Yes, we can know in most cases the will of God. I see the root problem is that most Christians do not lack the will but lack the knowledge. If we search His Word and are led by the Holy Spirit, we can be confident in our prayers and, as we have seen from this teaching, act and believe accordingly. Prayer changes things that we as man can never change. God has given us example after example in His Word of His faithfulness. So, why is it that we doubt? Have faith in God and what He has proclaimed in His Word and see what He will do in answering your prayers.