



## “A CALL TO PRAYER”

1 Timothy 2:8

(Part 3)

**Theme:** Spiritually qualified men are to prioritize praying when the church assembles.

**Introduction:** I am that *“Prayer tunes the heart of the believer to God’s passion for the souls of last sinners.”*

- I. The Emphasis on Prayer
- II. The Emphasis on Purity
- III. The Emphasis on Patience



### I. THE EMPHASIS ON PRAYER

#### A. The Leaders in Prayer - *“Therefore, I want the men ... to pray”*

1. Given the instructions regarding prayer that God’s Spirit led Paul to write in the previous section, he summarizes the central role prayer has in the life of the church gathered.
2. It is necessary to recognize the context of what we are reading is how the church ought to conduct itself - to set things in order.
3. Given the comments here and the following section, it is apparent that among the false teaching that was taking hold in the church was the erosion of the definitive distinctions between men and women in worship.
4. Here Paul places emphasis on the leadership that *“men”* were to provide - [ἄνδρός] - an adult male or husband as opposed to the other word for man [ἄνθρωπος] which can mean “mankind” or “human being.”
5. This is an emphasis on the fact that in the assembly of the church, it is the male leadership that is to be leading in prayer - cp. v. 2:
  - a) *Pleading with God - “entreaties”*
  - b) *Prayers to God - “prayers”*
  - c) *Petitions of God - “petitions”*
  - d) *Praises to God - “thanksgivings”*
6. This does not mean that women cannot pray when they are gathered with other women - but when men are present and the church is

assembled, God's expectation and purpose is that the *"men ... pray"* [] -

## B. The Location of Prayer - *"... in every place to pray ..."*

1. The phrase *"in every place"* refers to wherever the church assembles - cp. *1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 2:14; 1 Thessalonians 1:8.*
2. There is a clear instruction that the assemblies of God's people were to be places where God's presence is deliberately acknowledged by means of talking to Him as a way by which He is honored.
3. This was true also within Judaism when Jesus refers to the place of meeting with God as a "house of prayer" - cp. *Isaiah 56:7; Mark 11:17.*
4. In many of our Slavic brothers' traditions, this is what the church building is called.
5. This indicates two likelihoods:
  - a) *The Church at Ephesus existed in multiple assemblies under a general bishop with individual elders overseeing each assembly; and,*
  - b) *The expectation is that more assemblies would be established as the Word grew and spread - until the whole world is reached with the Gospel - cp. Malachi 1:11.*
6. Additionally, this phrase implies that there is no exception to the primacy of prayer and the principle<sup>1</sup> of men leading - cp. *1 Corinthians 11:2, 16.*

## II. THE EMPHASIS ON PURITY

### A. The Posture in Prayer - *"... lifting up holy hands ..."*

1. The statement *"lifting up holy hands"* is not a directive on the posture one adopts in prayer, although it is one of many postures that are appropriate for prayer.
2. The idea is that the *"lifting up"* [ἐπαίρω] - is to offer oneself to the Lord as an expression of devotion, reverence, and openness of heart as one approaches the Lord.
3. There are several ways that believers are described as approaching the Lord - none of them are to be viewed as "THE" acceptable position in which one should pray but reveals a heart that extends itself toward the Lord.
  - a) *Standing - indicates reverence - Mark 11:25*
  - b) *Lifting the hands - indicates dependence - Isaiah 1:15*
  - c) *Bowing the head - indicates submission - Psalms 5:7*

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<sup>1</sup> The mention of "tradition" in 1 Corinthians 11 does not mean a malleable cultural pattern, but a settled statement of belief authoritatively handed down from one generation to the next.

- d) *Lifting the eyes* - indicates looking to God alone - [John 17:1](#)
- e) *Kneeling* - indicates humility or adoration - [Luke 22:41](#)
- f) *Prostrating* - indicates awe or contrition - [Matthew 26:39](#)
- g) *Closing of the eyes* - this is not something biblical but is a practical effort to eliminate distractions and perceive that no one is in focus but God alone.

## B. The Purity in Prayer - "... holy hands ..."

1. The reference to "*holy hands*" [ὅσιος] - emphasizes the freedom from corruption or contamination.
2. "*hands*" represent the conduct or actions of a person, the sum of a person's behavior - indicating that a person who will pray must have dealt with any actions that would separate between them and God - cp. [Isaiah 1:15; 59:2](#).
3. It would be appropriate to translate this as "purified hands" referring to a life that has dealt with sin by repentance and confession - [Psalms 24:3-4](#).
4. In a ceremonial sense, one would wash their hands as a demonstration of their desire for a clean life after they had repented and confessed their sin.
5. Paul instruction to Timothy essentially emphasizes that the men who lead in prayer must be prepared spiritually by dealing with their sin and therefore are able to present themselves to the Lord in a worthiness gained through their reliance on Christ Jesus for cleansing.

## III. THE EMPHASIS ON PATIENCE

### A. The Absence of Dissatisfaction - "... without wrath ..."

1. Paul then places clarification on the mindset of those men who are leading in prayer - they cannot have "*wrath*" [ὀργή] - a reference to a state of strong displeasure or dissatisfaction.
2. It often refers to the indignation directed at a perceived wrongdoing with a desire to have retribution or vengeance.
3. It seems to focus on the specific context of praying "*... on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority ...*" - cp. vv. 1-2.
4. Of course, it would also apply to those who are dissatisfied with others within the Body of Christ.
5. The essential problem is one cannot approach the Lord on behalf of people who, in your estimation, God has failed to effectively transform or change to your satisfaction.
6. Anger or "*wrath*" toward your brother is actually dissatisfaction with God and His management of their lives - cp. [1 John 4:20](#).

## B. The Absence of Doubt - "... without *dissension*."

1. This word "*dissension*" [διαλογισμός] - conveys the process of reasoning or tossing something back and forth with uncertainty or doubt.
2. The ESV translates this as quarreling - but it is more fitting to see it not as something that is happening with others but is within the heart of the one who is to pray - cp. [\*Luke 5:22; 24:38\*](#).
3. It is casting doubt upon the very thing you are bringing before the Lord - cp. [\*James 1:6\*](#) [a different word, but similar concept].
4. When we pray, we cannot pray impatient with God who has failed to work in the one for whom we are praying or with doubt that God will ultimately or eventually do so.
5. We must come to the Lord in faith, patiently enduring even hardship with the hope that the Lord will work.

### So What?

1. Prayer must be one of the primary activities of the assembly of believers.
2. God expects men to exercise leadership in leading the church in prayer.
3. Prayer must be an expression of the heart of a man who knows compatibility with God because of Christ.
4. To be effective in praying one must be willing to submit to God in both what He does and when He does it.

**Spiritually qualified men are to prioritize praying when the church assembles.**