

Small Group Discussion + Leader Guide

Sunday - August 23, 2026

Preached By: Matt Alexander

“A Church That Prays”

Message #3

“Set In Order: God’s Design for His Church” 1 Timothy Series

1 Timothy 2:1-8

Homiletical Bridge:

CIT: Paul desired for the church to be a people of prayer. Thesis: We should desire for our church to be a people of prayer. Proposition: I want Fusion Church to desire to be a people of prayer.

Probing Question: Why did Paul desire for the church to be a people of prayer?

Thesis: We should desire for our church to be a people of prayer.

Proposition: I want Fusion Church to desire to be a people of prayer.

- 1. The Priority of Prayer — vv. 1–2a**
- 2. The Pursuit of Peace — v. 2b**
- 3. The Pleasure of God — vv. 3–4**
- 4. The Provision of the Mediator — vv. 5–6**
- 5. The Proclamation of the Gospel — vv. 7–8**

Before You Begin

Open your time together in prayer. Ask God to make your group a people who depend on Him, who pray for the lost, and who walk through the doors He opens.

Key Takeaways

1. Prayer is not a last resort — it is a first response. Paul places prayer before every other instruction in the life of the church. A rightly ordered church is a praying church.
2. Prayer for all people reflects the heart of God. God desires all kinds of people to be saved. Our prayers should reach beyond those we like, agree with, or find easy to love.
3. Peace is not the goal — it is the opportunity. God grants peaceful conditions so that believers can live faithfully and the gospel can advance.
4. There is one Mediator. Jesus Christ alone reconciles sinners to God. He gave Himself as a ransom. No religion, morality, or self-effort can bridge the gap between a holy God and sinful humanity.
5. Prayer and proclamation belong together. We cannot faithfully pray for someone to be saved while refusing to tell them how they can be saved.

Discussion Questions

Opening Question

Go around the group and answer honestly: When trouble comes, what is usually your first response? What does your first response reveal about what you trust most?

Section 1 — The Priority of Prayer (vv. 1–2a)

1. Paul uses four words for prayer in verse 1: supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings. What do you think the variety of these words tells us about the fullness of what prayer is meant to be?
2. Pastor Matt said: "Prayerlessness often reveals more than a scheduling problem. It can reveal a dependence problem." Do you agree? What are some honest reasons why we neglect prayer?
3. Paul instructs the church to pray for kings and those in authority. How does this challenge you personally, especially when it comes to leaders you strongly disagree with?

Section 2 — The Pursuit of Peace (v. 2b)

4. Pastor Matt described peace as a clear highway — not the destination, but what allows you to reach it. What is the destination that peace is meant to serve? How does this reframe the way you think about praying for stability in your community or nation?
5. If God gives us peaceful days, what does faithfulness look like in how we use them? Is your church and your personal life taking advantage of peaceful seasons for gospel ministry?

Section 3 — The Pleasure of God (vv. 3–4)

6. Paul says it pleases God when we pray for all people because God desires all people to be saved. How does understanding that God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked shape the way you feel about praying for difficult or even hostile people?
7. Pastor Matt placed an empty chair on the platform and asked people to picture someone who needs Jesus. Who came to your mind? Have you been praying for that person consistently? Have you grown weary of praying for them?

8. Paul himself was once the enemy of the church. He described himself as the foremost of sinners, and yet he received mercy. How does Paul's story challenge the temptation to decide that someone is beyond the reach of Christ?

Section 4 — The Provision of the Mediator (vv. 5–6)

9. Verse 5 says there is one God and one Mediator. In a culture that increasingly says all paths lead to God, why is it important that the church holds firmly to the exclusivity of Christ without apology?
10. Pastor Matt described the great chasm between a holy God and sinful humanity and said: "What we could never bridge from our side, God provided in Jesus Christ." How does the truth of Christ as Mediator give you confidence when you pray for lost people? How does it give you confidence when you share the gospel?
11. Have you ever been tempted to assume someone does not need Jesus or that someone is beyond the reach of Jesus? How does this passage correct both of those errors?

Section 5 — The Proclamation of the Gospel (vv. 7–8)

12. Pastor Matt said: "We cannot faithfully say, 'I am praying for them to be saved,' while refusing ever to tell them how they can be saved." How does this challenge the way your group thinks about the relationship between prayer and evangelism?
13. Colossians 4:3 shows Paul asking believers to pray for an open door for the word, and then Paul walked through that door. What would it look like for your group to pray for open doors and then actively walk through them together?
14. Verse 8 tells men to pray with holy hands, without anger or quarreling. What is the connection between the character of our lives and the integrity of our prayers? What does this passage call men in your group to address personally?

Practical Applications

This Week — Put a Name in the Chair Write down the name of one person in your life who does not know Christ. Commit to praying for that person every day this week using the following pattern:

- "God, open their eyes to their need for You."
- "Convict them of sin and show them Christ."
- "Grant them repentance and faith."
- "Give me an opportunity to speak the gospel to them."
- "Give me the courage to walk through the door You open."

As a Group — Pray Together with Intention Before your group closes, take time to pray out loud together. Pray for:

- Those in authority over your city, state, and nation
- Peaceful conditions for gospel ministry to flourish
- Lost people by name
- One another's faithfulness in prayer and proclamation

Ongoing — Examine Your Prayer Life Ask yourself honestly this week: *Does my prayer life reflect dependence on God or does it reflect a belief that I can manage life on my own? Identify one specific change you will make to move prayer from a last resort to a first response.*

For the Men — Lead in Prayer If you are a husband or father, commit to praying with your family at least once this week. If you lead in any capacity in the church, examine whether your leadership is rooted in godly dependence or self-sufficiency.

Closing Thought

Pastor Matt closed the sermon with this challenge: **"Prayerlessness says, 'We've got this.' Prayer says, 'God, without You, we can do nothing.'"**

Jesus said the same thing in John 15:5 — ***that apart from Him, we can do nothing.***

A church known for sound doctrine, faithfulness to Scripture, love, and gospel proclamation must above all be a church that prays. May that be true of your group, your families, and Fusion Church.

Close your time together in prayer, lifting up the names your group members placed in the empty chair.