

Date: February 1, 2026 Text: 1 Timothy 2:1–6

## INTRODUCTION: PRAYER—LEARNED EARLY, LOST EASILY

Prayer is often one of the first spiritual habits we learn as children. Many of us were taught to pray before meals or before bed. Years ago, the Lord’s Prayer was commonly taught and prayed in schools. Prayer was woven into daily life. Yet for many believers, prayer slowly fades from being central to being occasional.

A recent survey of **7,454 Christians over two years** revealed several sobering trends:

- Most Christians pray **less than one minute at a time**
- Many want to pray more but feel **too busy**
- Others say they are **not sure what to say**

**The conclusion is clear: prayer is familiar but not prioritized.**

**Do you agree or disagree with this statement - *What we put first reveals what we trust most.***

Paul writes to Timothy at a moment when the church is active, influential, and under pressure. Yet Paul does not begin with strategy or structure. He begins with prayer—because prayer is foundational to being the church.

## 1: PRAYER MUST BE THE CHURCH’S HIGHEST PRIORITY

**Read: 1 Timothy 2:1 - “I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people.”**

Paul’s phrase “*first of all*” does not refer to order of service but to **importance**. Prayer is not an accessory to ministry; it is the foundation of it. Paul urges Timothy because prayer does not always come naturally—even to faithful people. It must be intentionally chosen.

Paul lists four expressions of prayer to show that prayer is not one-dimensional:

- **Petitions / Supplications:** Specific requests that express dependence on God
- **Prayers:** General communication with God, including worship and confession
- **Intercessions:** Standing in the gap for others (see Romans 8:34)
- **Thanksgiving:** Gratitude that guards the heart against entitlement

*“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.”* (Colossians 4:2)

## Discussion Questions

1. What does it reveal about a church—or a believer—when prayer is treated as secondary?

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2. Which of the four expressions of prayer do you practice most naturally? Which do you tend to neglect?

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3. How might your spiritual life change if prayer became your “steering wheel” rather than your backup plan?

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## 2: PRAYER FOR THOSE IN AUTHORITY REVEALS OUR TRUST IN GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY

**Read: 1 Timothy 2:2** - “For kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.”

Paul now gives a **specific example** that shapes all our prayers: praying for those in authority. This letter was likely written around **65 AD**, during the reign of **Emperor Nero**, one of Rome’s most cruel and unstable rulers. Despite this, Paul does not tell Timothy to encourage prayers for Nero’s downfall. He simply says: **Pray.** Jesus said, “*Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.*” (Matthew 5:44)

Praying for leaders does not mean approving their actions. It is a declaration that **God remains sovereign**, regardless of who holds power. Paul understands that peace and stability—even imperfect peace—create space for the gospel to advance.

### Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think praying for leaders is often difficult for Christians?

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2. How does praying for those in authority reshape our hearts toward bitterness, anger, or fear?

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3. In what ways can peace and stability create opportunities for gospel witness?

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## 3: PRAYER ALIGNS US WITH GOD’S ETERNAL PURPOSE

**1 Timothy 2:3–4**, “**This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.**” Paul now reveals the **why** behind prayer. God’s ultimate concern is not comfort or convenience—it is **eternity**.

**1 Timothy 2:5–6**, “For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people.” Prayer always leads us back to Christ. Jesus did not merely offer help—He offered Himself. He stood in our place, bore our sin, and paid our debt. This is the foundation of all prayer and ministry. “*Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.*” (Ps 127:1)

### Discussion Questions

1. How does remembering eternity reshape what you pray for today?

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2. What does it mean to trust God’s will when prayers are unanswered or delayed?

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3. Why is Jesus’ role as Mediator essential to our confidence in prayer?

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### RESPONSES & APPLICATION

#### 1: Reorder Your Prayer Life Around God’s Will

##### Application:

This week, pause before making requests and intentionally pray, “*Lord, Your will be done.*” Reflect on whether your prayers are shaped more by personal comfort or by God’s eternal purposes.

#### 2: Pray Faithfully for Those in Authority—Without Reservation

##### Application:

Choose one leader—local, provincial, or national—and pray for them daily this week. Ask God for wisdom, restraint, and peace. Let prayer replace frustration, criticism, or disengagement.

#### 3: Align Your Prayers With God’s Redemptive Mission

##### Application:

Identify one person or group who does not know Christ. Commit to praying consistently for their salvation and for opportunities to reflect Christ’s love and truth.