

“THE MAN CHRIST JESUS”

1 Timothy 2:1-8

Intro: For the last three Sundays I have spoken on texts in the Bible that have to do with the incarnation of the Son of God. By incarnation I mean when the Son of God came to earth as a Man. This is supposedly what we are to be remembering at the Christmas season. Obviously the idea of Christmas has moved far from that to the extent that in many of our public schools and other public facilities students and people in general have been forbidden to mention Christ, or to set up manger scenes. It has even gotten to the point when some have ruled out the Christmas carols which speak of the coming of the Son of God into the world. *Fortunately we are seeing a strong reaction against this.* Fox news has been putting on verses of Scripture, like John 3:16, and playing portions of Christmas carols. Too long have we let the ACLU and people who claim that they are atheists, as well as some who say we need to give equal emphasis to all religions, call the shots for us. When the early Christians were told that they were not even to talk about Jesus Christ, they got together and prayed for boldness to be faithful to the Gospel. God’s answer was that He filled them with the Holy Spirit, and the result was that in a very short time the Gospel was preached throughout the whole Roman Empire. To be they were persecuted, and many laid down their lives for the Gospel, but Christians were not afraid to stand up against those who wanted to silence them. We need more of that attitude in the church today. That is why we all should be constantly reading the Bible to have our faith strengthened that we, too, may be bold to speak to people constantly about our Savior. Most people today are completely ignorant of the Bible. The Lord declared that as He was dying on the Cross when He prayed, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” What the enemies of the Gospel are saying about giving equal time to all religions, sounds reasonable if you don’t know the truth of God’s Word. But if you know anything about the Bible and the Gospel that it reveals to us, then you know that it is insane to talk about getting rid of God and listening to anybody who comes along with anything that they want to say and want us to believe. Although it has been popular to believe that truth is relative, and that there is no such thing as absolute truth, that is a lie! The Bible tells us the truth about God, and it tells us the truth about ourselves. It tells us what our greatest need is. And woe to anyone who ignores its message.

This little epistle of 1 Timothy is a letter which the Apostle Paul wrote to

his younger brother in the Lord about the work that the Lord has given us to do. People were teaching strange doctrines in those days too. Paul called them fables, or myths. Read chapter 1 and you will see that those who were teaching doctrines contrary to what we find in the Bible did not know what they were talking about. Paul wrote to Timothy to tell him to wage a good warfare, to hold to the faith which basically was that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” That was the message that the Jews in our Lord’s day sought to silence. Even the Apostle Paul when he was Saul of Tarsus hated Christ and the Gospel. But when the Lord miraculously intervened in his life, forgave him of his sins, and made him a new creature, then he started preaching the very truths that once he had tried to destroy.

Only a person who is totally unrealistic could look at our generation and say that we don’t have problems that are threatening to destroy us. The Bible tells us that people and nations in the past who were living like people in the USA are living today, paid a terrible price for their sins. Crime has gotten so enormous that we have had to release people from our prisons because we just don’t have room for them. You all know the details as well as I do, or better. With our homes being attacked and destroyed by many different sins, we ought to be alarmed. More judgment is ahead if we continue on our present course. People need to know today that those who are trying to get God out of our nation are not our friends; they are our enemies. The Bible says, “The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.” The Hebrew of that verse which appears twice in the Psalms, is: “The fool hath said in his heart, NO GOD! That is, *there may be a God, but I don’t want to have anything to do with Him! No God for me!* So whether you deny the existence of God, or simply say that others can pay attention to Him if they want to, but it’s not for me, it is all the language of fools. Actually professed atheists are seeking to deceive themselves, because down in their hearts they know there has to be a God. The Bible tells Who He is. He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Third Member of the Godhead moved upon the hearts of certain people of God over a period of some 1600 years to give us the Bible which is just as true today as it was when it was first written.

Paul was telling Timothy that people don’t like what we preach, and they don’t want to hear about it, but our commission from God is to proclaim it anyway. It is the power of God unto salvation. Whether we want to believe it or not, our problem is sin. It is slowly but surely destroying our society and our nation. God sent His Son to save us from our sins! That

is the Gospel. That is the message we need to hear and to believe as we remember the birth of Jesus Christ.

Now all of this that I have been saying is a background for the message of the first eight verses of chapter 2. In fact, it is the message of the whole epistle and the whole Bible.

But in the light of the conditions which Paul and Timothy faced in their generation, and which is very much the same that we face today, what is our first responsibility?

I. OUR FIRST RESPONSIBILITY(1 Tim. 2:1-3).

Timothy's first responsibility as a servant of the Lord, which also had been the main emphasis in Paul's life, and it must be in our lives too, *was prayer!*

Notice the word, "first of all." This means that prayer was to be Timothy's first priority. The job is too big for us. Even with all of us who know the Lord working together, it is still too big for us. We are opposed by a real Devil, and we are sent into a world with a message, as I have been saying, that people don't want to hear. But our orders do not depend upon what people want to hear. We are not sent to entertain them or give them what they want. We are sent to proclaim to them what they need to hear!

Our first need is prayer is for ourselves. We can't pray effectively for others if our hearts and lives are not right before God. We need the Lord. We need Him every day in every way. We need to keep learning. We need to have our faith strengthened. We need to know that the Lord is with us. We need to fear him, not people. We need to be cleansed daily of our sin so that we might walk in fellowship with God.

All of this is preparation for what God has called us to do: to pray for all kinds of people, including even kings and presidents – all who have any kind of authority over us. But then we need to remember everybody down the social scale. Paul was saying that we must pray for the people who come within the range of our acquaintance. We may not be personally acquainted with our President, but we need to pray for him. The Gospel is for everyone. There is not one Gospel for the President, and another Gospel for a person on welfare. There is not one Gospel for a

black man, and another Gospel for a white man. There is not one Gospel for America, and another Gospel for Iraq. And Paul said that if we want to live a quiet and peaceable life, and we all do, but that is not the kind of a society we have today, then we need to seek God for His blessing.

But then look at verse 3. “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior.” It means that this is what pleases God. I hope all of us realize that this is something that we hardly hear mentioned today. The Republicans have their agenda. The Democrats have their agenda. Most people are concerned about their rights and what is going to make them happy. But the big mistake that most of us are making, is that we are not trying to find out what is pleasing to God. And, after all, that is the thing that matters most. If we are not pleasing God, we are not going to have the blessing of God. But, someone asks, how can we know what pleases God? It is all here in this book, God’s book. The Bible even says that “when a man’s ways please the Lord, He [that is, the Lord] maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.”

God’s Word never changes. If something is wrong before God, it is always wrong, and it is wrong everywhere in the world! We are a nation desperately in need of the blessing of God. If we are going to have it, it has to be on His terms, not ours. And the first step toward pleasing God is to trust in His Son for salvation. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5 that it was the goal of his life every day to please God, not displease Him.

So prayer is the starting place, and the place where not only the Lord’s servants must live, but where all of His people should live.

But let us move on. What was the message that Timothy was to preach?

II. THE MESSAGE WE ARE TO PREACH (1 Tim. 2:4-7).

It is salvation. It is that people everywhere come to the knowledge of the truth, the absolute truth, the truth of God. This is why we read the Bible day after day. This is why we teach the Bible. Years ago it used to be that a man was not considered educated unless he was well acquainted with God’s truth in the Bible. It is through the truth of God’s Word that we learn about God.

What does the Bible teach us? It teaches us many things, but basically it teaches that there is but “one God.” Different people who are religious

worship many different gods, or what they call gods. But the Bible teaches that there is one God, just one. There are Three Persons in the Godhead, and yet the Three are One. And God is not what you think He is, but He is as He has revealed Himself not only in the Bible, but also in Christ, His Son. And you can't know God any way you want to know Him. You must know Him the way that He has chosen to make Himself known. That, again, is why we have the Bible.

But in verse 4 Paul mentioned being saved. What did He mean, "saved"? Back in verse 15 of chapter 1 we read that "Christ Jesus came into the world [by the virgin birth] to save sinners," to save us from the penalty of our sins, to save us from eternal death, to save us from the judgment of God.

But Paul went on to say that there is but "one mediator between God and man." You have a holy God, on the one hand, and sinful people on the other hand. But what is a mediator? A mediator is a reconciler. He is a peacemaker. He is an intercessor. Now who is this mediator? Paul tells us so that we won't be in doubt or mistaken in any way about who the "one mediator" is. He is "the Man Christ Jesus." The words, "the Man Christ Jesus" tell us that "Christ," the One Whom God anointed for this work, the Son of God, became a "Man" without ceasing to be the Son of God, and His Name given to Him on earth was, as we all know, "Jesus." So putting all of this together we are told that God's Son, became a Man, without ceasing to be Deity. It is very important to understand this because if Jesus Christ, the Man, ceased to be God by becoming a Man, then He needed a Savior and could not be our Savior. If Joseph was the father of Jesus, Jesus may have become a man who did a lot of good, but He would still have been just like we are, under God's judgment, but not our Savior. But the truth is, the teaching of Scripture is, He remained absolutely God when He became a Man, but He became a Man so that He could die for human sinners.

How did He do it? Look at verse 6. He "gave Himself a ransom for all." What is a ransom? It is the price that is paid for the redemption, for the freedom, of one who is held captive. What was the ransom? Our text says that the Lord "gave Himself." This was His death on the Cross. This is why our Lord died. It was not because He deserved to die, but He died to secure our redemption from the judgment of God. He died to secure the salvation of all who had ever, or would ever, trust in Him. And so to whom was the ransom paid? It was paid to God. Jesus Christ put

away our sins by the sacrifice of Himself. He reconciled us to God. He secured our eternal acceptance with God. And so we are eternally secure in our salvation.

But remember there is just “one Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus.” Jesus Christ is “the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” And the Apostle Peter declared before the rulers of the Jews, their elders and scribes that “neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

Therefore, all who are trusting in Christ for salvation, can say what Paul said as he wrote to the believers in Rome, “Therefore, being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Nothing could be clearer than this, could it? And yet people do not understand this truth unless the Lord opens their hearts to this truth.

The word “all” in verses 4 and 6 does not mean that it was the Lord’s purpose to save everyone. We know that that is not happening. But it means that He died to save all kinds of men, as I have emphasized before. There are not many different ways for people to be saved from the penalty and power of their sins. There is just one way, through faith in the death of Christ. And that is why we are to preach the Gospel to every creature. Those who are truly God’s people, may speak hundreds or even thousands of different languages, and the color of their skin may indicate that they come from many nations, but there is just one God, and one Savior, and one way of salvation, by faith that Christ crucified and risen again, paid our debt in full for the free forgiveness of our sins.

In verse 7 Paul, a saved Jew, said that he had been ordained by God to carry this message to the Gentile world in his day. He had no right to change the message at all. Neither did Timothy. And neither do we!

Now Paul’s last point brings us back to his first point, and anticipates what was to follow:

III. AN EXHORTATION FOR MEN TO PRAY (1 Tim. 2:8).

We know that in this passage when Paul said “men” he meant *men!* I say that because he went on to speak to women. Paul never minimized the way in which God has used women. There were women who had a

special part in the ministry of our Lord when He was here on earth. We are all to be witness of Christ and the Gospel. But somehow we men need a special word like Paul gave to Timothy to pass on to men the need to pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands (personal holiness), and in fellowship with each other. These last two words, “without wrath and doubting,” can suggest with wrath toward people, believers or unbelievers would be included, doubting would have reference to God – the object of faith.

Concl: So we can easily see from this passage how extremely important it is to believe that Jesus Christ was God in human flesh, truly God and truly man. He, and He alone, is our Savior. And it is our Lord Who also gives us daily access to God in prayer. No person can come to the Father for salvation except through Christ, and no believer can come to God in prayer except through Christ. But our hands (and all of us) must be holy, and we must be in a right relationship with other people as firmly trusting in God. Remember Hebrews 11:6, “ But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God . . .”

If you are one who does not know the Savior, don't let people turn you away. What I have been telling you is the truth of God because, as you can readily see, it comes directly from the Word of God, the Bible.

For those of us who do know the Lord, let us be faithful in approaching our God throughout each day, always remembering that our access to the God of heaven and earth, our heavenly Father, continues to be through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.