

LESSON 3

THE CENTRALITY OF PRAYER

1 TIMOTHY 2:1–15



1 Think through your last worship service at church. List the times of prayer you can remember.

2 Why do some prayers seem too long or make your mind wander?



Read 1 Timothy 2:1–15 and the following notes:

☐ 2:1–4 ☐ 2:2 ☐ 2:8

3 Why does Paul use the phrase “plead for God’s mercy upon them” (2:1)? How do you plead for mercy before God?

4 What does Paul say is good and pleasing to God?

Prayer should be central to our life and our public worship. In this chapter Paul says he wants everyone to pray (2:8), and he urges that prayer be made for everyone (2:1). This means that we should not exempt any believer from praying nor exclude anyone from prayer. Sometimes we let our mind wander while praying in church or regard public prayer as only a ceremony. After all, we may not know the people mentioned in the prayers. If asked what we enjoy in church, many would mention the opportunity to sing, listen to the sermon, and fellowship with other believers. Few would say they look forward to the long prayers. Yet prayer is a vital part of our worship. Those who live in religiously restricted countries certainly value prayer more highly than we do. Let prayer become your focus of attention over the next few weeks so that you can bring your attitudes more in line with Paul's advice to Timothy.



5 Why is personal prayer alone insufficient? Why should believers be involved in corporate prayer as well?

6 Why is it difficult to explain to young people the importance of prayer during worship services?

7 What dangerous consequences might there be for a church that spends little or no time in corporate prayer?

8 How might your attitude toward prayer in worship change if corporate prayer was restricted by law to Sunday mornings?



9 What should be the purpose of prayer in our worship? What should be our attitude as we pray?

10 Paul says that we should pray for everyone. How can we expand the scope of our prayers?

11 What does it mean to pray without “anger or controversy” (2:8)? How do we violate this guideline?

12 How can we unintentionally degrade or demean our corporate prayer? How do we lift up unholy hands in prayer today?

13 What are some of the reasons why it is difficult to pray for the government and those in authority over us? For whom do you often neglect to pray?

14 For which world leaders might it be difficult for you to pray? For whom or what do you avoid praying?

15 What do you usually think about when your mind wanders during prayer in church? How can you focus your attention and join in the prayer completely?

16 What practical steps can you take to participate more wholeheartedly in times of corporate prayer? How can you make prayer a more meaningful aspect of your weekly worship?



A What does it mean that God “wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth” (2:4)? What implications does this have on our evangelism efforts?

B Why is having only one Mediator important (2:5)? Why was this significant at the time this letter was written?

C What does it mean to be modest in appearance in a time of changing tastes, fashions, and sensibilities? Why is dressing modestly so important?

D How do we make ourself attractive by the good things we do? How does this apply to men as well?

E What does it mean for us to learn quietly and submissively?

F Why were women not permitted to teach? What does this mean for us today?

G What does it mean that “women will be saved through childbearing” (2:15)? How should we understand this verse?

H How does a person continue in “faith, love, holiness, and modesty” (2:15)?

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