



KING'S HARBOR CHURCH

Love God. Love People. Make Disciples.

Responding To Gospel Grace (1 Timothy 2:1-7)

I. INTRO

A. On a dangerous seacoast where shipwrecks often occurred there stood a lifesaving station. The building was just a hut with one rickety boat...

The few devoted members kept a constant watch over the sea, and with no care for themselves, went out day and night tirelessly searching for the lost.

This wonderful little station saved so many lives, that it became famous.

Some of those who were saved, and others in the surrounding area, wanted to become associated with the station and give of their time, energy, and resources to support the work.

New boats were bought and new crews were trained. The little lifesaving station grew.

Over time some of the members of the lifesaving station became unhappy because the building was so crude and so poorly equipped. They felt that a more comfortable, suitable place should be provided for those rescued from the sea.

So they replaced the emergency cots with beds, and they put in better furniture and enlarged the building, so that now the lifesaving station actually became a popular gathering place for its members.

They took great care in decorating it beautifully and furnishing it exquisitely. But fewer members were now interested in going to sea on lifesaving missions, and so they hired lifesaving crews to do this work on their behalf.

The lifesaving motif still prevailed in the club's decoration and symbols — where the club initiations were held — so, it did not necessarily mean that the original purposes were totally lost.

About this time a large ship was wrecked off the coast, and the hired crews brought in boatloads of cold and half-drowned people. They were sick from ingesting salt water and they were obviously from distant shores -- a different class of people from those who manned the station.

The beautiful new club, as you might imagine, was thrown into chaos, so that the property committee immediately had out-buildings constructed to process the people so future shipwrecks could be processed with less disruption.

At the very next meeting, there was a split in the club membership. Most of the members wanted to stop the club's lifesaving activities because they were so unpleasant and a hindrance to the normal social life of the club.

Some members insisted upon lifesaving as the primary purpose of the station. They were ignored however and were told that if they wanted to save the lives of all the various kinds of people who were shipwrecked in those waters, they could begin their own lifesaving station down the coast. And so, they did just that.

Now as the years passed, the new station down the coast came to experience the very same changes that had occurred in the older, initial station. It evolved into a club, and yet another lifesaving station had to be founded to restore the original purpose.

Well, history continued to repeat itself, so that if you visit that seacoast today, you will find a great number of exclusive clubs along that shore. Shipwrecks are still frequent in those treacherous waters, and sadly, most of the people are lost!"

- B. This "lifesaving station" parable¹ with historical roots, goes all the way back to the coast of the port city of Ephesus in what is today Turkey.
1. Paul's great fear in his first letter to Timothy is that the vibrant, lifesaving passion of the Church in Ephesus would be snuffed out.
 2. The church in Ephesus was growing more and more inward in its focus. We read in 1 Timothy 1:3b-4 that some of the leaders in the church were teaching "...*strange doctrines, and paying attention to myths and endless genealogies, which gave rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith.*" --1 Timothy 1:3b-4
- C. What we see as we launch into chapter 2 is that Paul continues to expound upon the dominant theme of chap 1 – which is the good news of a salvation by grace through faith: *"It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full*

¹ Adapted from an article by an Episcopal priest named Theodore Wedel, which was cited in *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit*, by R. Kent Hughes & Bryan Chapell. Crossway 2000. © 2017 Gregg Caruso, King's Harbor Church. All rights reserved. We encourage you to use and share this material freely—but please don't charge money for it, change the wording, or remove the copyright information.

acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.” --1 Timothy 1:15 [listen to Jason’s sermon]

D. With that being said, I would like to read 1 Timothy 2:1-7 plus v. 8. And, as I read, I would like for you to notice three things:

1. The number of times the word “all” is used.
2. I have also substituted the word “people” where the male pronoun “men” or “man” is used. The Greek word is *anthrōpos* – and means “people.” It’s the same word we get the “anthropology” from.
3. I will also read v. 8 yet I think v. 8 ought to be grouped with the verses in the next section – which are very controversial verses – that we will consider next weekend.

E. So, I will read the text, pray, and we will see what Paul is up to in chapter 2: *“First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all [people], ² for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. ³ This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires all [people] to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and [people], the [person] Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave [of] Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time. ⁷ For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying) as a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth”* --1 Timothy 2:1-7 (emphasis added)

F. *“Therefore I want the [males] in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension.”* --1 Timothy 2:8 (emphasis added)

II. BODY

A. Here’s the main point of our text today: The primary emphasis of these seven verses is the universal offer of salvation to all people -- in opposition to the legalism and exclusivism that was being taught and practiced. **Paul is saying, “Go back to becoming a lifesaving station – and begin with prayer.”**

B. Three points:

1. **The PRIORITY of Prayer (vs. 1-2)**
2. **The PURPOSE of Prayer (vs. 3-4)**
3. **The PASSION of Prayer (vs. 5-7)**

C. Let's look at them one at a time:

1. **The PRIORITY of Prayer** (vs. 1-2) *"First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all [people], ²for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.*
 - a. These verses contain a clarion call to world mission, evangelism, and discipleship. Notice that we have three of the four "all's" in these two verses.
 - b. Paul's opponents are teaching an exclusive gospel that offers salvation only to a select few. Paul is emphatically saying just the opposite.
 - c. V. 1 emphasizes that prayers should be made for all people, Paul adds four types of prayers one after another. Paul is making use, here, of a Hebrew literary device that groups synonyms together in order to add emphasis to the basic concept.
 - 1) So, *entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings* are overlapping synonyms. The main point of v. 1 is that prayers of ALL types should be prayed for ALL people.
 - 2) Some commentators believe that, based on the construction of the sentence, that a better rendition might be: *entreaties, prayers, and petitions WITH thanksgivings.*
 - 3) What Paul is saying here is that the gospel is for EVERYONE.
 - 4) There is a beautiful account of an encounter that F.B. Meyer, an English pastor and well-known Bible teacher had with A.B. Simpson who founded the Christian and Missionary Alliance denomination. They were at a gathering and F.B. Meyer woke up before dawn to meet with some people to pray. He was astounded when he walked into the room and found A.B. Simpson kneeling on the floor with a globe cradled in his arms -- weeping and praying for the world.
 - d. V. 2 is making two important points: *for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.*
 - 1) We are to pray for our secular authorities.

- a) I don't have to tell you that tensions are building around the world – and there is a lot of strife and division in the U.S. as well. Paul is seeking to refocus the Ephesian church to pray for the good news of the gospel to spread to make its way into the hearts of those in authority over us.
 - b) Let's not forget that Nero was the Emperor of Rome when Paul was writing this to Timothy. And, as most of you know, Nero's rule was associated with extreme tyranny and extravagance. He had his own mother executed, was suspected of poisoning his stepbrother, and he had Christians dipped in oil and set on fire in his garden at night as a source of light.
 - c) Paul was keenly aware of these things as he wrote this letter to Timothy and the church at Ephesus.
- 2) Paul's desire to "lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity" was **not** a prayer for a quiet middle-class life that is free from stress.
- a) Here is how Paul says basically the same thing to the Church in Thessalonica: "...so that you may win the respect of outsiders..." --1 Thessalonians 4:12 (GWT)
 - b) In both 1 Timothy and 1 Thessalonians Paul has the same consideration in mind: Pursue a good reputation outside the church so that the church does not suffer unnecessary reproach, which will lead to the furtherance of the gospel.

2. **The PURPOSE of prayer (vs. 3-4)** *This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires all [people] to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

- a. There are two theological debates related to v. 4. One is centered around the idea of universalism – that all people will eventually be saved. And another debate is centered around divine sovereignty (the doctrine of election) and human responsibility, or, what role the human will plays in conversion – do we choose God or does God choose us?

- b. But what these verses are actually speaking of is God's merciful inclination toward all people.
 - c. What these verses are teaching is that the church should **pray for everyone**, including secular rulers since Christ died for them.
 - d. The church in Ephesus had turned inward and fallen into elitism, which is a natural and sinful desire of the human flesh.
 - 1) Other words that would fit here are classism, racism, tribalism, and nationalism – all of these "isms" come naturally to our sinful human souls.
 - 2) This is what we will settle into APART from being called out into the gospel.
 - 3) To want to be at ease in a club-like atmosphere is a natural tendency of us all.
 - e. To be a part of the Church is to have been called into the life-saving business.
 - f. I heard a pastor say once that the hands of Jesus were nailed wide – welcoming all who would come.
3. **The PASSION of prayer (vs. 5-7)** *For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and [people], the [person] Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave [of] Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time. ⁷ For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying) as a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth"*
- a. With these verses Paul is returning to the indicative. (An indicative is what is true and real. An imperative is what we are to do in light of what is real and true.)
 - b. We encounter the passion of Jesus in vs. 5-6:
 - 1) Paul is saying that Jesus is God and that Jesus became the mediator between God and people. A mediator is one who brings together parties who are not communicating, who are alienated, estranged, or at war with each other.
 - 2) Paul goes on to provide another word picture of the gospel – Jesus gave of Himself as a ransom for **all**. God is offering salvation to all people.

- 3) We could say that we have been kidnapped by our own sinful human condition and that Jesus became both the negotiator AND the ransom for our sin – and we have been brought home to the family of God.
- c. And then finally, we see Paul's passion (v.7): *For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying) as a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth"*
- 1) Evidently Paul has been regularly accused of lying.
 - a) We see this here in v. 7 and Paul also says it Romans 9:1, 2 Corinthians 11:31, and Galatians 1:20.
 - b) This becomes part of Paul's passion – he was willing to put up with SO much in order to become a preacher, and apostle, and a teacher of the gospel of God's grace.
 - c) From 2 Cor 11: He was beaten several times, often in danger of death, received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes five times, beaten with rods three times, was stoned (at least) once, shipwrecked three times, spent a night and a day in the ocean, frequent journeys, dangers from rivers, robbers, his own countrymen, from Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren, in labor and hardship, many sleepless nights, often without food, in cold and exposure.
 - d) And then he sums it up by saying in 2 Cor 11:28: *"Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches."*
 - 2) This man Paul, who was appointed by God to be a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. Paul was in the lifesaving business.

III. CONCLUSION

- A. KHC, my time is short here – and there are some things I'd like to say to you on my way out:
1. You have not been called to be comfortable. You have been called to get back into the lifesaving business.

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2. I expect the permanent pastor will be a dynamic preacher, teacher, and leader – but you cannot depend on a dynamic preacher going forward.
3. What Paul is declaring to the church at Ephesus – and what I believe he is saying to us at KHC is that we are all to respond to the call to world evangelization and discipleship.

B. Prayer Circles

C. Communion

P.A.S.S. Questions For KHC Community Group Leaders

Sermon Dates: Feb 4-5, 2017

Sermon Title: Responding To the Gospel Grace

Sermon Passage: 1 Timothy 2:1-7

P - Participation (get everyone involved in the dialog)

1. Why do you think it is difficult for a church to be intentional about mixing multiple age groupings, social classes, and ethnicities?

A - Application (makes it personal)

2. What conditions would need to be present for a church to be well represented in age groupings, social classes, and ethnicities?
3. If you're praying for someone's salvation, but you don't see results, is it ever right to stop praying? Why or why not?
4. How can a person who lacks a burden for lost and broken people gain and deepen such a burden?

S - Scripture (thinking biblically is a learned behavior! :-)

5. If God is going to save the elect, why do we need to pray?

S – Sharing (aim for a time of honest reflection, authenticity, and transparency in a safe atmosphere modeled by you). [Choose one of the following as a final dialogue question.]

6. What are some things you could do to serve or appreciate those in your sphere of relationships who are not active in their faith as a Christian?