

April 8

Scriptures: Read 1 Timothy 2

Key Verse: “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.”
(1 Timothy 2:1, 2)

Overview

In the world of Paul’s day, the common thing was to pray to emperors. Many Caesars of that time erected statues of themselves and required, by law, worship from their people. To pray for an emperor, therefore, was a radical and dangerous notion.

There were two critical implications in praying for “kings and all who are in authority”: 1) it implied that kings were not deities, but human, and 2) there was some higher Deity to whom even this world’s leaders were subject and accountable. What’s more, in terms of verse four, these men were just as much in need of salvation as anyone else.

Paul had a high view of prayer. He saw it as a central aspect, both in the life of the church and in the life of nations. He linked it with decisions made “at the top” which would produce “a quiet and peaceable life” in everyday experience. Whether the nation’s leaders were believers themselves apparently was not the issue. The issue was that a nation’s welfare was inextricably tied to the prayerfulness or unprayerfulness of the church. There’s a subtlety in praying for leaders. We don’t always like them or agree with their policies, but we’re to pray for the leader, not for his politics. We’re to pray, “Thy will be done on earth...” In other words, we pray that God’s agenda will be fulfilled — not our agenda, not the leader’s agenda, but God’s. We’re to pray for justice and righteousness. And if we live justly and righteously, we will discover eventually that “righteousness exalts a nation”.

Prayer

Father, in accordance with Your Word, we pray for the leaders of our country and all who are in positions of authority, that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and reverence. We pray both for their salvation and that You would direct them in leadership. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.