

“What it Means to be Reformed”; Session # 71, Solus Christus - “Prayer Made for All Men”, Prepared by Pastor Paul Rendall for the Adult Sunday School Class on March 20th, 2016.

It is very important in terms of our preaching the gospel and sharing it with others, that we understand and communicate the truth to them that Christ is the one and only Mediator between God and man. It is very important that we and others see that no one can bring us to God except Jesus Christ; through no one else can we offer up our prayers to God, and that by no one else has the ransom been paid for believers, except by our Savior. It is very important then that we communicate to them that Christ’s death on the cross was and is sufficient to save all men, but only those who by a lively faith depend upon him, and obey him, are actual partakers of salvation:

Christ is the only Mediator between God and Man:

1st Timothy 2: 1-5 – “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires (who will have) all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, 7 for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.”

Mr. Benjamin Andrews Atkinson who wrote the commentary for Matthew Henry on 1st Timothy, after Henry had died and could not write it, says this:

Here is:

I. A charge given to Christians to pray for all men in general, and particularly for all in authority.

“Here we may observe,

1. Christians are to be men much given to prayer: they ought to abound herein, and should use themselves to prayers, supplications, etc.
2. In our prayers we are to have a generous concern for others as well as for ourselves; we are to pray for all men, and to give thanks for all men; and must not confine our prayers nor thanksgiving to our own persons or families.
3. Prayer consists of various parts, of supplications, intercessions, and thanksgivings; for we must pray for the mercies we want, as well as be thankful for mercies already received; and we are to deprecate the judgments which our own sins or the sins of others have deserved.
4. All men, yea, kings themselves, and those who are in authority, are to be prayed for. They want our prayers, for they have many difficulties to encounter, many snares to which their exalted stations expose them.
5. In praying for our governors, we take the most likely course to lead a peaceable and quiet life. The Jews at Babylon were commanded to seek the peace of the city whither the Lord had caused them to be carried captives, and to pray to the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof they should have peace, Jer_29:7. 6. If we would lead a peaceable and quiet life, we must live in all godliness and honesty; we must do our duty to God and man. He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile; let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and pursue it, 1Pe_3:10, 1Pe_3:11. Now the reason he gives for this

is because this is good in the sight of God our Saviour; that is, the gospel of Christ requires this. That which is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour we should do, and should abound in.

II. “As a reason why we should in our prayers concern ourselves for all men, he shows God’s love to mankind in general, 1st Timothy 2: 4.

1. One reason why all men are to be prayed for is because there is one God, and that God bears a good will to all mankind.

There is one God (1st Timothy 2: 5), and one only, there is no other, there can be no other, for there can be but one infinite. This one God will have all men to be saved; he desires not the death and destruction of any but the welfare and salvation of all. (Ezekiel 33: 11 – “As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.” “Turn, turn from your evil ways!” “For why should you die, O house of Israel?”) Not that He has decreed the salvation of all, for then all men would be saved; but He has a good will to the salvation of all, and none perish but by their own fault, Matthew 23: 37 – “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her!” “How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!” He will have all to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, to be saved in the way that He has appointed and not otherwise. It concerns us to get the knowledge of the truth, because that is the way to be saved; Christ is the way and the truth, and so he is the life.”

2. There is one Mediator, and that mediator gave himself a ransom for all. As the mercy of God extends itself to all his works, so the mediation of Christ extends itself thus far to all the children of men that he paid a price sufficient for the salvation of all mankind; he brought mankind to stand upon new terms with God, so that they are not now under the law as a covenant of works, but as a rule of life. They are under grace; not under the covenant of innocence, but under a new covenant: He gave himself a ransom. Observe, The death of Christ was a ransom, a counter-price. We deserved to have died. Christ died for us, to save us from death and hell; He gave himself a ransom voluntarily, a ransom for all; so that all mankind are put in a better condition than that of devils. He died to work out a common salvation: in order hereunto, he put himself into the office of Mediator between God and man. A mediator supposes a controversy. Sin had made a quarrel between us and God; Jesus Christ is a Mediator who undertakes to make peace, to bring God and man together, in the nature of an umpire or arbitrator, a days - man who lays his hand upon u both, Job 9: 33. He is a ransom that was to be testified in due time; that is, in the Old Testament times, his sufferings and the glory that should follow were spoken of as things to be revealed in the last times, 1st Peter 1: 10, 11. And they are accordingly revealed, Paul himself having been ordained a preacher and an apostle, to publish to the Gentiles the glad tidings of redemption and salvation by Jesus Christ. This doctrine of Christ's mediation Paul was entrusted to preach to every creature, Mark 16:15. He was appointed to be a teacher of the Gentiles; besides his general call to the apostleship, he was commissioned particularly to preach to the Gentiles, in faith and truth, or faithfully and truly.

Note, (1.) It is good and acceptable in the sight of God and our Savior that we pray for kings and for all men, and also that we lead a peaceable and quiet life; and this is a very good reason why we should do the one as well as the other.

(2.) God has a good will to the salvation of all; so that it is not so much the want of a will in God to save them as it is a want of will in themselves to be saved in God's way. Here our blessed Lord

charges the fault: You will not come unto me that you may have life, John 5: 40. I would have gathered you, and you would not.

(3.) Those who are saved must come to the knowledge of the truth, for this is God's appointed way to save sinners. Without knowledge the heart cannot be good; if we do not know the truth, we cannot be ruled by it.

(4.) It is observable that the unity of God is asserted, and joined with the unity of the Mediator; and the church of Rome might as well maintain a plurality of gods as a plurality of mediators.

(5.) He that is a Mediator in the New Testament sense, gave himself a ransom. Vain then is the pretense of the Romanists that there is but one Mediator of satisfaction, but many of intercession; for, according to Paul, Christ's giving Himself a ransom was a necessary part of the Mediator's office; and indeed this lays the foundation for His intercession.

(6.) Paul was ordained a minister, to declare this to the Gentiles, that Christ is the one Mediator between God and men, who gave himself a ransom for all. This is the substance of which all ministers are to preach, to the end of the world; and Paul magnified his office, as he was the apostle of the Gentiles, Romans 11:13.

(7.) Ministers must preach the truth, what they apprehend to be so, and they must believe it themselves; they are, like our apostle, to preach in faith and verity, and they must also be faithful and trusty.”