

# Why Pray For All Men, part 2

I have been reading a book titled, *The Almost Christian Discovers*, written by Matthew Mead in 1661. The book addresses a problem that existed in his day, and the same problem exists today in our churches. The author refers to King Agrippa who was listening to Paul preach the gospel about Christ. Paul was appealing to the king to believe in Christ. Then Acts 26:28 records King Agrippa's response. The King James Version Bible says,

*Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. Acts 26:28 (KJV)*

The author of the book then summarized King Agrippa's response as "Almost a Christian." Then Mr. Mead asks the reader, "Are you almost a Christian?" He asks, "How far [can] a man . . . go in the way to heaven and yet be but almost a Christian?" Next, he answers the question himself. He says:

- A man may have much [biblical] knowledge and yet be but almost a Christian.
- A man may go far in opposing sin and yet be almost a Christian.
- A man may be much in prayer and yet be but almost a Christian.
- A man may suffer for Christ and yet be but almost a Christian.
- A man may have faith and yet be but almost a Christian.

All of his statements are true. His second question is, "Why [is it] . . . that many go far and yet no further? That is a great question. Why is it that some people are almost a Christian? Why it is that some people look so good, but they are going to hell? Mr. Mead asked great questions because he was concerned that some people have a shallow view of what it means to be a believer in Christ.

**EVALUATE YOURSELF.** So, Mr. Mead repeatedly asked, "Are you almost a Christian?" Some individuals think they are a Christian, but what they believe may not be true. A man may enjoy attending church. He may know the teachings of the Bible. He may be a faithful in his ministry. He may have adopted



the Christian culture because it seems ethical. He may enjoy the church music. He may want to please God, if doing so gives him favor with God. Some may read the Bible in the hopes of finding encouragement. Some may read the Bible so they

can become scholars of the Bible, and yet, be almost a Christian. Do you have faith in God, and yet, are almost a Christian? Now that may surprise you. How can a man have faith in God and be almost a Christian? Why not be a Christian! You may think that it is impossible to believe in God and not be a believer. But, remember that James 2:19 says the demons believe in God.

The message is that many individuals have a watered-down view of what it means to be a believer. They think that all that God requires is that they believe in Christ. May I add, the

demons do that! That is why Matthew 7:21-23 prophesies that someday Jesus will tell many people you were almost Christian. Here is what Jesus will say.

**I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS. Matthew 7:21 (NASB)**

So, may I ask, “Are you almost a Christian?” I hope you are thinking about your own salvation right now. I hope you are evaluating why you think you are a Christian. I hope you are evaluating your “Christian behavior” in recent years. So, are you almost a Christian or are you actually a Christian?

**HOW CAN WE HELP SAVE UNBELIEVERS.** Maybe you have wondered if someone else is almost a Christian. You hear their words, watch their actions, and wonder. Are you concerned about them? Do you pray for their salvation?

In Matthew 9:37-38, we are told that Jesus said this to His disciples,

**The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Matthew 9:37-38 (ESV)**

This is an amazing verse. Here Jesus tells us to pray that God sends believers to share the gospel. Yet, we were told in our last study in 1 Timothy 2 that God wants all men to be saved. So, why must we ask God the Father to do something that He already wants to happen? I do not understand how this works, but I have a thought. If we pray it reveals that we actually want all men to be saved too! It reveals our hearts! The only other thought that I have is found in Proverbs 25:2. It explains that God chooses not to explain everything to us. The verse says,

**It is the glory of God to conceal a matter. Proverbs 25:2 (NASB)**

You may remember on one occasion Jesus declared that unbelievers are more shrewd in using their money to make friends than believers. His message was that believers need to be more shrewd in using their money to spread the gospel. The result would be that each individual believer would make friends. These new friends would welcome us in heaven someday.

In 2 Thessalonians 3:1 the apostle Paul did not ask the believers in Thessalonica to pray that the gospel would spread, and that people would become believers. He asked them to pray that the gospel would spread rapidly.

**REVIEW OF THE LAST STUDY.** In the last study, Paul also told all believers to offer four requests to God. The requests are that God would heal, comfort, and meet the needs of all men, kings, and those who are in authority. Second, that we would talk to God about Himself and thank Him for Himself and for what He has done!

What was the purpose for offering entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings for all men, kings, and all in authority? The benefit was so that believers can have physical and emotional peace.

Then Paul gave us five reasons why we should pray this way. His first reason was that making these requests to God was morally correct and it greatly pleases Him.

The second reason we should pray this way is that 1 Timothy 2:4 tells us God desires all men to be saved, including kings and those in authority.

The third reason is that God wants all men to know the truth, especially the gospel. So, “Are you almost a Christian?” Do you want what God the Father and Christ want too? It is a sign you love God.

**REASONS FOR PRAYER (v. 3-7).** With that review of our last study, we can now dig into our study which is from 1 Timothy 2:5-7. This study is about the last two reasons, reasons four and five, why we should offer entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings for all men, kings, and all in authority.

4) *Christ Our Mediator and Ransom (v. 5-6).* The fourth reason for praying this way this is given in 1 Timothy 2:5. It says,

**For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus . . . 1 Timothy 2:5 (NASB)**

The word “for” connects us back to the preceding verses all the way to verse 3. In 1 Timothy 1:1 and in 1 Timothy 2:3 we were told that God the Father is our Savior. Now we are reminded that He is one God. That is a fundamental and important biblical truth. The Old Testament declares that God is one in

multiple places. The most familiar verse is the Shema in Deuteronomy 6:4. Another less familiar verse is Isaiah 44:6. So, I will read it. It says,

**Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:**

**“I am the first and I am the last,  
And there is no God besides Me.” Isaiah 44:6 (NASB)**

The same truth is repeated in the New Testament. It is repeated here in verse 5, and also in 1 Corinthians 8:4, 6. So, the “for” connects to God the Father who desires all men to be saved.

— *Christ Our Mediator* (v. 5-6). Now we are told that there is only way to Him. It is through Jesus Christ.

In recent times, the concept of pluralism has become popular in some Christian circles. It claims there are different gods and goddesses and a person can be saved through them. To them, Jesus is not the only way. But the message here in verse 5 is that there is no other God than the one described in this passage, and there is no other mediator between God and men but the man Jesus Christ.

This reminds me of the time some Jehovah’s Witnesses came to the door of our house. They attempted to make me believe that John 1:1 taught that the Word was a god, and not Yahweh. I tried to explain that the Greek text did not agree with their claim. At which point they began rebuking me by claiming that I was displaying pride when I referred to the Greek. Then they quoted this verse which said, “The man Jesus Christ,” and added it says Jesus was a man.

Well, they were correct. Jesus was and is both man and God. He was and is the only God-man that has ever existed. Now notice that this verse reveals an important truth. So, let me ask you a question. When Paul wrote this, where was Jesus? The answer is that this epistle was written about A.D. 62-64. Nero was reigning and Rome burned in July A.D. 64. This means Jesus Christ had already returned to heaven. Jesus was in heaven! So, why did Paul refer to him as a man? The answer is that Christ was in heaven and was still the God-man. He is the immortal God-man. Now watch, He is also the only mediator between God and men. This means there is no other way to God. No other man, whether priest, bishop, pope, cardinal,

or a man with another title can mediate between the one and only God and men. Jesus Christ is the only way to God the Father, who desires all men to be saved! This is why God the Father wants us to offer entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings for all men, kings, and all in authority. This can only happen through Christ.

In Matthew 7:13-14 Jesus said,

**Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it. Matthew 7:13-14 (NASB)**

Christ’s point is the way to eternal life is very narrow, and a person can only go to heaven through Him. Acts 4:12 says,

**And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved. Acts 4:12 (NASB)**

Only Jesus can forgive sins. Only Jesus can intercede for us to God the Father. Only the eternal God-man Jesus can mediate for us against false accusations that we deserve hell. His imperfect and human mother, Mary, cannot be a mediator between God and men. It is false doctrine to call her a mediatrix, which means a female mediator. There is one mediator and that person is Jesus Christ.

— *Christ Our Ransom* (v.6). Verse 6 now reminds us that Christ was a ransom for all when it says,

**... who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time. 1 Timothy 2:6 (NASB)**

The Greek word for ransom is a very unusual word. Apparently, the apostle Paul created this word. The normal Greek word for ransom is *lutron*. It occurs in Matthew 20:28 and Mark 10:45. In both passages Jesus said,

**Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. Matthew 20:28 (NASB)**

So, what is a ransom? One example of a ransom is money that is given so that someone who was kidnapped will be released. A ransom is a price paid to free captives. When *avti* is added to the word, as it is here, the meaning adds the concept of a substitute. That is, Jesus was the “substitute-ransom.” He became the price to free us from the grip of sin and He also took our place. You see, Christ bought us from the grip of sin! Titus 2:14 says,

**Who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed.  
Titus 2:14 (NASB)**

Here is 1 Corinthians 6:20,

**For you have been bought with a price. 1 Corinthians 6:20  
(NASB)**

This means that Christ was the price for rescuing us from our lawless deeds. His death was the price for freeing us!! That is the ransom. I love Galatians 1:3-4. It is a great summary.

**... the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins so that  
He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the  
will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forevermore.  
Amen. Galatians 1:3-4 (NASB)**

Not only has Jesus rescued believers from this evil age, He has also rescued us from sin. For 1 Peter 2:24 reveals that when He swapped places with us, He bore our sins in His body so that we would die to sin. Notice the little word “in.”

**He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we  
might die to sin and live to righteousness . . . 1 Peter 2:24 (NASB)**

The point of 1 Timothy 2:5-6 is that there is only one mediator between God and men, who is the eternal God-man, and who willingly gave Himself as a ransom for all men. He is Jesus Christ.

The last part of verse 6 says He did this at the right time in human history. If He had died and was resurrected at another point in time in human history, He would have died and been

resurrected at the wrong time (Romans 5:6; Galatians 4:4). In summary, there is only one mediator and substitute-ransom in human history. No one else can save. That is why God the Father wants us to pray like this. Can I ask, do you want God to have His desires fulfilled? We pray for our spouse. We pray for children and friends. Do you pray that the Father has His desires fulfilled too?

4) *Paul Was Called To Save Men (v. 7)*. This brings us to the fifth reason why we should offer entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings for all men, kings, and all in authority so that we can have external and internal peace. It is given to us in verse 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 2:7 (NASB)**

Paul’s says that God called him to preach the gospel. The Greek word for “preach” is *keryx*. It means “to herald.” Paul was called to herald, to be an apostle, and to teach the gospel and the truth to the Gentiles. Why? Because there is only one way to God. There is only one eternal God-man who became a substitute-ransom, and who is the only mediator between God and men. Salvation is only through Christ. No one else can save men! That is why it is important to be confident that you are a Christian.

Now I would like to read part of a sermon that was given by the preacher Charles Spurgeon. He spoke these words to his congregation. He said,

Tell me what it is, my brother, that keeps you from Christ. I hear one say, “Oh, sir, it is because I feel myself too guilty.” That cannot be, my friend, that cannot be. “But, sir, I am the chief of sinners.” Friend, you are not. The chief of sinners died and went to heaven many years ago; his name was Saul of Tarsus, afterwards called Paul the apostle. He was the chief of sinners, I know he spoke the truth. “No,” but you say still, “I am too vile.” You cannot be viler than the chief of sinners. You must, at least, be second worst. Even supposing you are the worst now alive, you are second worst, for he was chief. But suppose you are the worst, is not that the very reason why you should come to Christ. The

worse a man is, the more reason he should go to the hospital or physician. The more poor you are, the more reason you should accept the charity of another. Now, Christ does not want any merits of yours. He gives freely. The worse you are, the more welcome you are.<sup>1</sup>

The message is wonderful. Christ, the only mediator, the only substitute-ransom, the only eternal God-man, is on the narrow road that leads to salvation. He is not on the wide road. Biblical knowledge does not save, but it can lead us to Christ. Trying to be a moral person is great, but you cannot save yourself. Praying doesn't mean you are a Christian, because even the unbeliever prays in a crisis. He knows there is something beyond him. Faith in Christ must be more than the faith that the demons have in Christ. You see, someone can be almost a Christian, but not be a Christian. So we need to pray for non-Christians and those who think they are Christians. They may be almost a Christian. We need to pray that all be saved.

**CONCLUSION.** So, how does someone know if they are saved? How does someone know they are a true believer? First, you need to believe that God was born into this world as a man and died so that our sins can be forgiven, and was then resurrected. (That much the demons also believe). Do you also grieve your sins and want them to be forgiven? Demons will never do that. In addition, are you willing to let God control your life? Finally, are you desirous to please God and to increasingly please Him more and more? Are you becoming His slave or are you the master of your life? If you still have doubts or questions, visit [Are You A Christian? — Looking For Evidence](#).

Verse 8 is the concluding verse. It is a call for serious believers to offer entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings for all men, kings, and all in authority so that men can be saved. The verse says,

**Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension. 1 Timothy 2:8 (NASB).**

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1. Spurgeon. The New Park Street Pulpit. Vol. V, 20.