

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

Romans 12:14

Store In My Heart

1Timothy 2:1-2

First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.

There is no greater service that we could do for our country than to pray. We need to pray for our leaders. We need to pray for wisdom and honor and that they would use God's teaching to guide their decisions. We need to pray that they will focus on what is best for all of the nation, not just what is best for themselves or their friends and supporters.

If we want to lead "a tranquil and quiet life" we need to pray that our leaders and all men learn the way of the Lord and submit to His will in all areas of life. We also need to pray that we continue to be an example in submission to Him.



Attitudes Toward Unbelievers

Shawn Smith

Christians need to know what their attitude should be toward those of the world. If we want to convert people, this is especially important. Paul instructed Titus regarding this subject in **Titus 3:1-3**. The way of Christ should manifest itself in every relationship of life, including that of civil authority. So, Paul declares, "*be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey,*" (**Titus 3:1**). Even though Nero was the emperor and a persecutor of Christians when Paul wrote these things, they were nevertheless to be subordinate to him and all such authorities. Civil disobedience is never justified, except when those in authority demand that Christians disobey God's stated will. Then, Christians must obey God rather than men (**Acts 4:18-20; 5:29**). "*To be ready for every good work*" (**Titus 3:1c**) suggests the limits wherein Christians are to be ready to obey civil authorities. Christians must respect their position, honor, pray for, and obey them, so long as God's will is not violated (see **1Timothy 2:1-4**).

In dealing with others, Christians must, "*speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men*" (**Titus 3:2**). That is, they must refrain from speaking reproachfully, railing at, or reviling anyone, especially rulers and authorities. A Christian must not be contentious, quarrelsome, and ready to attack others, but rather manifest gentleness and meekness in dealing with all men. These

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We want opportunities to speak with others about the Lord's Kingdom.

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For Our Information

John Ragsdale's eye is doing better.

Betty Ragsdale fell last week and injured her arms.

Amy Simpson has bulging discs causing major back pain. An epidural steroid shot is scheduled with hope for some relief.

Theresa and John LaValla are both quarantined with Covid.

Tonight we start with 1Kings 9.

Wednesday we are in 1Timothy 3:14.

Pray for safety, courage & healing.

instructions seem especially appropriate as we've seen all manner of ugly rhetoric and behavior from folks during this election cycle. As a Christian, have you contributed to this behavior? I pray not! If you have, who do you think is influencing who? The world or you?

(As I read this article I not only think how timely it is for us, but I also recognize that these passages were written 2000 years ago to a people to whom it was just as needed. First century Christians were surrounded by those who sought to harm or destroy them for their belief in Jesus. The Jews wanted them stopped so they would be unable to turn people from the law of Moses and the uniqueness of their nation. The Romans wanted to stop Christians because their teachings spoke against the debauchery and wickedness that was their way of life. In the midst of all of this Paul tells his readers that they need to be careful of their attitude about those who wanted to stop them. Many Christians would lose their life in that struggle, yet Paul taught they were to pray for them and continue to conduct themselves honorably and according to the principles laid down in the teachings of Christ and His messengers.

I am also reminded of Paul's instruction found in the 12th chapter of the book of Romans. He first tells them to be transformed by the Word, not overtaken by the world around them. Then as he continues they are instructed to do good to the very ones who are trying to harm them. In verse 18 he tells his readers to do all they can to live a peace with everyone. **Romans 12:18** And in the next verses he says, *"Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.""* **Romans 12:19-20** The final verse of the chapter encourages them to use good to overcome evil rather than letting evil get the best of them.

We need this instruction in our lives today as much as they needed it in the day of Paul. Though we are not yet under persecution for our beliefs, in this country, we do recognize a significant effort to silence the teaching of God's Word in many public areas. We need to be careful how we respond to such things as our attitude toward others is always regulated by God's Word, not the actions of those around us. Do Good, Not Evil. DLH)



We seek only to serve God according to His Will!