

## I Timothy Sermon #12

I Timothy 2 – church polity, church life, conduct of the church

Public worship

#1 – prayer – vs. 1 through vs. 8

#2 – position of women in the church beginning in verses 9-15

Leadership of the church in Chapter 3

Let us stand to our feet

I Timothy 2:8 – memorize it

Vs. 8

The first thing I want you to see in this verse deals with the word “men.”

There are two words generally translated in the New Testament for men.

One of them occurs around 200 times

The other one is used over 500 times

The one used around 200 times is the Greek word “*aner*” (anair) – for male gender –  
which is found here in vs. 8

The other word used over 500 times is the Greek word “*anthropos*” – vs. 1

Now, the word we are dealing with in vs. 8 is “anair”

Forty of the times, this word is translated “husband”

3:2 – the anair of one wife

3:12 – the anair of one wife

20 percent of the time anair is translated “husband”

*Anthropos* is never translated “husband”

Always translated “men” or “man”

2:1

2:4

2:5

“*anthropos*” but in verse 8

He switches to *anair*.

Why does he do that?

This word is typically used in contrast to the woman.

In this passage, you will notice in vs. 9 – he begins a discussion about women

But it is men in vs. 8

Men are leaders when the church meets for corporate worship.

When prayer is offered for the lost during those times, the men are to do it.

In the synagogues, only men were permitted to pray, and that was carried over into the church.

It is fitting, therefore, he uses *anair* in vs. 8

In other words, he is saying in public worship – public praying – the men in distinction from the women are to lead in this.

That is our first point.

Public prayer is to be led by the men

The men are to take the leadership in those kinds of services.

Men, this is our responsibility before the Lord.

We are the ones that take the initiative

Paul stated definitely that “men” should pray in the local assembly.

The men of the congregation are to lead in prayer.

If the men do not pray, the local church will not have the example God intended.

Will you notice that these men are to pray everywhere (vs. 8) – which means that in every place that God’s people assemble themselves – the men are to do this

The phrase **in every place** appears four times in Paul’s writing (cf. I Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 2:14; I Thess. 1:8).

All four times it refers to the official assembly of the church.

“Everywhere” refers to services in all churches.

Notice the second thing about public prayers.

When they are done, they are to be done with holy hands

Vs. 8 – “lifting up holy hands”

Now, what does that mean?

It was customary for Jewish men to pray with their arms extended and their hands open to heaven.

Our traditional posture of bowing the head and closing the eyes is nowhere commanded in Scripture.

Then why do we pray this way? Tradition

Real reason bowing – humble – eye closing – to focus one’s mind

When we pray, why don’t we pray like this in vs. 8

Is the emphasis on the posture? No!

To answer this, all we would need to do is to look at the various postures people prayed in – in the Bible.

Let me give some of them to you.

Here are seven – people stand to pray – I Samuel 1:26 – Hannah prayed for a child – she said, I stood here praying

Sometimes people stood with hands uplifted

I Kings 8:22 – Solomon lifted up his hands to God in the presence of all – to dedicate the Temple and he prayed, Lord God of Israel, there is no god like Thee

Sometimes people knelt – Daniel 6:10 – this was habit – he kneeled upon his knees

Sometimes they put their face down – Elijah on Mt. Carmel – I Kings 18:42 – when he asked God to send rain on the land

Elijah bowed and put his face between his knees and prayed

Sometimes people just bowed their heads – Genesis 24:48 – the servant of Abraham – asking God for help in finding that bride for Isaac

Sometimes people didn't bow – they would lift up their eyes – the Lord Jesus did this in John 11:41, *“Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me.”*

Lazarus, come forth!

Sometimes people lay on the ground face down – flat out – Matthew 26:39 – the Lord Jesus did this in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Not as I will, but as Thou wilt

Actually, there are many prayer postures found in the Bible: standing (Luke 18:11, “Be merciful unto me a sinner”); sitting (2 Sam. 7:18 – David sat); bowing the head (Gen. 24:26); lifting the eyes (John 17:1); falling on the ground (Gen. 17:3 – Abram fell on his face).

**The important thing is not the posture of the body but the posture of the heart.**

Now there are those who lift up their hands in services today, and they are sometimes criticized for it.

There is nothing wrong with lifting up your hands if it is something you feel you want to do.

**Clearly there are a number of postures of prayer that are appropriate.**

**What is the appropriate posture for public prayer?**

The emphasis in verse 8 is not on the posture, but on the holiness of the individual.

Notice that Paul says, “**holy** hands.”

Paul stated three essentials for effective prayer, and the first was “holy hands.”

Obviously this means a holy life.

“Clean hands” was symbolic of a blameless life . . .

If we have sin in our lives, we cannot pray and expect God to answer (Psalm 66:18, *"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."*)

That is a prerequisite for effective prayer

No matter what posture, the person must be holy.

**Holiness has everything to do with the acceptability of our prayers.**

The word used here for "holy" is not the typical word in the New Testament.

This word occurs only eleven times in the New Testament

However, there is one passage that tells us specifically what it means to be this.

One passage – you are to be holy and that means this

I want us to look at this because this is the acid test of whether we can pray to God in public tonight – in a holy fashion.

Ephesians 4:24

Five categories of practical holiness mentioned

Verse 24 – same word – what is it, to have true holiness?

Vs. 25 – truthful person

Vs. 26-27 – absence of anger

Vs. 28 – holiness is to work hard for your own living and not to steal

Vs. 29-32 – speech

All these things have to do with our relationship with one another. Isn't that interesting?

Do we realize that we can paralyze our access to God by disruption in our relationships with others?

I cannot come to God in prayer when there is a matter between me and \_\_\_\_\_ when it is unsettled—lied, stolen, cursed

I cannot come to God in prayer when there is anger toward another believer – critical spirit within me, gossip

Any of these things means that we cannot lift up holy hands to our Lord.

And we want to know why God does not answer the prayers of today's churches.

When we come to God in prayer, God is very concerned about our life.

It is true we have wonderful access into the presence of God – Hebrews 10

It also says that when we come boldly, we are to come with our conscience sprinkled  
from an evil conscience

I Peter 3:7 – even in the marital relationship – so that your prayers may not be hindered.

This is what it means to pray with holy hands

The **hands** symbolize the activities of life, thus **holy hands** represent a holy life.

I Timothy 2:8

“Without wrath” is the second essential, and requires that we be on good terms with one  
another. . . .

We cannot come in prayer with anger in our heart, or a bitter spirit, but with all our sins  
confessed.

A person who is constantly having trouble with other believers, who is a troublemaker  
than a peacemaker, cannot pray and get answers from God.

We are not to harbor wrath

Ephesians 4: 26 – same word – let not the sun go down upon your wrath.

It could mean our wrath toward the government, civil authorities – needs to be nothing  
between so that when we pray for these people – I Timothy 2:2

Our hearts cannot be filled with personal malice toward anyone

Vs. 8

“Without . . . doubting” is the third essential for effective praying

In Hebrews 11:6 we read: *“But without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that  
cometh to God must believe that He is, and the He is a rewarder of them that  
diligently seek Him.”*

“Doubting” suggests that we must pray *in faith*.

Our mental doubt about God wanting to save such a person or our mental doubt if God could save a person

In this passage of I Timothy 2, the emphasis of the passage is what ?

For people to be saved

We are to pray for that

And if we can't pray, then that hinders people being what? Saved

That's the sobering thing about this passage.

It's not just that I cannot access God, but it is that I hinder someone else from coming to God

Do we realize that when we come and pray on Wednesday night that we are engaged in the greatest business on earth?

God's heart is involved in the salvation of the lost and when we come and yoke ourselves to God's purpose with the mighty arm of prayer,

God's heart is in that!

He could not be any more pleased with us than when we gather to pray

God hears us and lost people are saved

And our responsibility is that we pray with holiness – absence of anger and doubting

So that our prayers are acceptable to God.

Conditions of praying:

#1 – Holy hands – no known sin

#2 – Without wrath – no quarrel – Matthew 5:24, *“Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.”*

(The same should be done with prayer.)

#3 – Without doubting – no question – James 1:6-7, *“But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.”*

Effective praying, then, demands that I be in a right relationship with God (“holy hands”) and with my fellow believers (“without murmurings and disputings”).

Jesus taught the same truth (Mark 11:24-26, *“Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.”*).

**If we spent more time *preparing* to pray and getting our hearts right before God, our prayers would be more effective.**

Prayer should be made in our public services by those who have their sins confessed, who come without bitterness in their hearts, and who come in faith, believing that God will hear and answer.

Let us stand for closing invitation

Evangelism begins with evangelistic prayer.

1. Holy life
2. Angry spirit
3. Doubting heart