

1 Timothy 2:1-8

Instructions to Timothy

Fight, Keep Fighting, Finish!

What God Wants!



*the Olympics – These elite athletes went through a years-long process of growth, learning their sport, focusing upon it, being dedicated to mastering it, and then the grinding, hard, hard work to continually improve their capabilities!



The Christian life is also a process of growth, of “*running the race*” that requires **dedication to learning**, a heartfelt **desire for godliness**, **focus**, **hard work**, **repetition**, **self-discipline**, and **self-control**! It cannot happen without a starting vision of greatness, a dream of winning the prize, and a consuming desire to walk the hard path that it takes to get there! Do not think that God’s amazing grace will just slide us into heaven! The bulk of the word grace is “race”. We have first to be in the race to receive grace!

[1 Cor. 9: 24-27; Heb. 12:1; Gal. 5:7; 2 Tim. 4:7]

In casting a vision of Olympic proportions for average Christ-followers, Paul starts out with the need for prayer - *for the government*. They had government in Paul's day that was much worse than what we are experiencing today!! Yet they were told to pray for their officials! That's because the more that government opposes Christianity, the more it needs prayer! We should pray to be left alone by them, so that our mission is not interfered with. Our purpose in life is to win our part of the world, our community(s), to a return to its Creator-God! The peace of the church is something that "***pleases God***"! It does not please God to see His people suffer the terrifying hardships and stresses of persecution, so we need to pray for His help in combating that!



God does not want the efforts of the church impeded in any way, because He wants people saved without delay! If you remember, the apostle Peter said that God “*is not willing that ANY should perish*”. God really wants “*everyone*”, and He is clear in this! His heaven is open to “*whoever will*” (Rev. 22:17; Mark 8:34)! He has given us the privilege of free will, an attribute that originates in Himself. To all who will use their free will to choose **HIS** will, the Holy Spirit then prompts and motivates, and speaks, and instructs! This is the normal Christian life! It is not reserved for great Christians, but for average ones! The key ingredient to following Christ is subduing our own will that we might be lead by God’s greater will! We are in His employment and under His *deployment*! His deployment sharing the truth of Christ in peace or in persecution – but preferably in peace!



And what does God wants *everyone* to know? That there is one God and one mediator/go-between between a holy, pure, and perfect God and a sinful humanity – and that is Jesus! Peter is emphasizing that Jesus is all there is! The Gospel the only cure that works! Jesus alone has taken care of the key issue of sin by bearing the wrath of God against sin, quenching it and shutting it down while He was upon the cross! This word “*ransom*”, is a good word that captures another facet of the cross of Christ. *Criminals abduct a targeted victim and then demand a **ransom** be paid or they will kill their victim! Likewise sin will kill us by keeping us from the Creator/God unless the right price is paid, for “*the wages of sin*”, says **Rom. 6:23**, “*is death*”. Jesus has paid the right price, and sin has had to release us into the welcoming arms of God!



Paul concludes this section by stating that he was chosen by God to be a “**herald**”. A herald is someone who announces the arrival of someone important! Paul was a herald/ evangelist/ gospelor who announced the arrival of Jesus to people everywhere! Jesus may never have been in their conscious thoughts before, but when Paul got through with them, many of them could not forget Him! And Paul taught people how to do the same! In this way the churches grew and grew in city after city, and Christianity became a major force in Eurasia even within the lifetime of Paul! Paul HAD run the race, and had done very well! He had successfully kept the gospel rapidly moving forward, despite all the obstacles from without and from within!

