

GOD'S WAY TO LEAD THE WAY
18TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

1 TIM 2:1-15
SEPT 18, '16

¹ First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, ² for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. ³ This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. ⁷ For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

⁸ I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; ⁹ likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, ¹⁰ but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. ¹¹ Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. ¹² I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. ¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve; ¹⁴ and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. ¹⁵ Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.

Text's reference to kings and authorities is timely

as we are in season of debates about upcoming election.

A few debate if Christians should be involved in politics.

As Lutherans, we believe it is a godly thing to do,
since, as Paul writes to Romans, such authorities
are established by God as his representatives.

Here, too, Paul notes God's purpose that by what they do
we can have quiet & peaceful lives.

Still, some debate whether to vote for anyone at all this year.

They question what difference their vote will make.

Text addresses question of how Christians

can make a difference in the world,

and answer it gives may be both surprising & controversial.

In chapter before, heard in last Sunday's reading,

Paul talks about ministry to which he was called by God,
which is living as example of grace to unworthy sinners.

Then he says he entrusts this same charge to Timothy,
a young pastor,

encouraging him in what he calls the "good warfare"

So, what is the “warfare” in which Christian leaders engage?

The surprise is that what he talks about here is worship.

This chapter gives two instructions about worship,
one that would be controversial and one that would not.

At that time, praying for pagan rulers could be controversial
while women being quiet and submissive would not.

In our day it would be other way around.

Paul anticipates the controversy, affirming in v. 7
that God appointed him as an apostle & he is telling truth,
not lying or just giving own personal opinion.

What he says about making a difference, through our worship,
in the spiritual warfare that we are involved in, is...

START WITH THE POWER OF PEACEFUL PRAYER
SHOW GODLINESS WITH QUIET GOOD WORKS
SHARE THE TRUTH OF SALVATION THROUGH JESUS

START WITH THE POWER OF PEACEFUL PRAYER

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hands without anger or quarreling;

When people want to make a difference & be an influence,
what is the first thing they do? They start talking.

And what is this talking like? Paul has obviously seen it
and refers to it in v. 8: anger and quarreling.

Isn't that true in both public square and in church?
The natural way to try to get things to happen
is to argue about it.

Paul would not say that Christians should not be involved
in discussion of politics or anything else.

Paul himself was always ready to debate.

But let's leave out the anger or quarreling.

But first, before talking to others, talk to God in prayer.

We have a lot to talk to God about,
both supplications, requesting things for ourselves,
and intercessions, asking things for others, for all people.

We pray for all because, as v. 6 says, Christ died for all.

Our leaders especially need our prayers.

The O.T. is full of examples of how the “prayer force”
was the first line of defense against powerful enemies
that could be defeated in no other way.

Our prayers can include specific requests,
asking boldly for what God has promised,
including wisdom, strength, and forgiveness,
and asking humbly for anything else we need,
if it is God’s will.

Then our prayers always include thanksgiving,
with confidence that God is already answering our prayer
even before we are done praying
and that his answer to our prayers is always best.

This puts everything in this chapter in the right focus,
not on what we have right to do
but on relying on what God does.

A key word in both parts of this chapter is “godly”
this word means having respect for God,
living with awareness that he is watching.

Godliness is part of another emphasis in both parts of chapter,
on peace, quietness, dignity and orderliness.

When Paul writes to the Corinthians about worship
he says God is not a God of disorder but peace.

I think that orderliness and humble relying on God,
is a key connection between the two parts of this chapter
which can seem very different,
along with intercession, that is,
being one through whom God works.

To make a difference, first pray, then...

SHOW GODLINESS WITH QUIET GOOD WORKS

⁹ likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable
apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold
or pearls or costly attire, ¹⁰ but with what is proper for women who
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authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. ¹³ For Adam was
formed first, then Eve; ¹⁴ and Adam was not deceived, but the woman
was deceived and became a transgressor. ¹⁵ Yet she will be saved
through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness,
with self-control.

Paul saw men trying to make impression with loud arguments.

In his day he also saw women trying to make an impression
with their bold appearance.

He says that is not the way to do it either.

The proper way to make a statement with what can be seen,
is with good works. This is what professes godliness.

Anyone who knows Paul knows it is not good works
that make us godly or holy

but they are the way the holiness God gives us shows.

As prayer for kings shows respect for God's order in society,
whether those kings themselves are good or not,

women also are to respect God and the order he created,
in which role & position does not determine value.

Later, Paul has plenty to say to Timothy about teaching
but here he says men are first to pray

and teaching is not the role of women in worship either.

Let's take a minute to try to understand these verses.

The context is instructions about worship in church
where, as Paul explains in similar verses elsewhere,
for sake of godly order the church has a spokesman
who speaks for God and the group.

What is clear is that women are not to be that spokesman,
not that they can't sing or pray out loud.

Paul gives a reason from scripture: the way God first created
husband & wife in paradise, with husband given
responsibility for spiritual leadership when he
explained trees in garden to Adam before Eve created.

He gives example of what happens when men
do not exercise their role as spiritual leaders -
even though Adam was not deceived, he knew better,
Eve became a transgressor, stepping over the boundary.

We too get in trouble if we ignore boundaries
set in God's word because we think we know better.

So in both family and church God expects men
to exercise spiritual leadership with the support of women
Women's role doesn't involve teaching & authority over men
but does include teaching and authority over children.

Which brings us to v. 15

Back in the 70s, I saw a Tshirt that said:

"A woman's place is in the house...and in the Senate"

That has nothing to do with these verses,
since they are about the church, not the congress,

except that that it reminds of another slogan I have seen:
“Well behaved women seldom make history.”

They may not become famous or infamous
but Paul says well behaved women are exactly who
shapes course of history, especially church history.

I believe preaching & being pastor is 2nd most important job.
Most important job of all in all of society is being parent,
especially being a mother.

v. 15 says Women will be saved through childbearing.
While this can be being kept physically safe through labor,
it certainly does not mean that having children
is what causes their salvation
except that original Greek says through the childbearing.
Which specific childbearing is this?

Throughout Bible, God had essential role for women
in the plan of salvation.

As important as anything Abraham, Isaac & Jacob did
in preserving the teaching of the true faith
was what Sarah, Rachel, Rebecca & Mary did
in bringing God’s savior into the world.

v. 1 says we are to live quiet lives as intercessors. This means
those through whom God’s blessings come to others.
What women quietly do, including all their good works,
Paul says, have a key role as those through whom
God’s blessings come.

Which is ultimately the one mediator for all of us.

SHARE THE TRUTH OF SALVATION THROUGH JESUS

³ This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who
desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the
truth. ⁵ For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God
and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all,
which is the testimony given at the proper time.

Why is it that we pray and intercede for others, including rulers?

Why is it that we hope to live peaceful, godly, holy lives?

it is because Jesus himself is our go-between with God.

v. 5 is one of the most clear in all the Bible
that there is one God but this God is triune,
and so Jesus himself is true God
but through the virgin Mary and the mothers before her
he became a true man.

His being both is the only way for us to be saved.

Only as man could he take our place in keeping God's law
and fulfilling the order all of us have broken,
and only as God could he do it perfectly.

Only as man could he suffer and die on the cross
to pay the penalty we deserve for our sins
and only the death of God could be precious enough
to ransom and redeem us all at the same time.

v. 6 says this is the will and testament, the covenant,
the inheritance that God has given us in his good time.

But also that now it is time for us to share this testimony,
this good news with all those he has saved.

This is done through preaching and teaching in the church
and announcing forgiveness & administering sacraments
in an orderly way through men chosen as pastors.

It is also done in homes and businesses and job sites
and classrooms and shops and street corners
and state houses

by Christian men and women who do not keep quiet
about what God himself constantly does for us
so that we are able to live peaceful lives.

This makes a difference in the world,
not because of anything we ourselves do
but because of what God the Holy Spirit is doing
through us as his mediators.

But first we worship, pray and do good works.

In O.T. reading, people are eager for quiet time of worship
to be over so they can get back to ungodly lives.

Paul reminds us of importance of quiet time, quiet prayer
and quietly doing good works.

START WITH THE POWER OF PEACEFUL PRAYER

not arguing with others but interceding for others
because we focus not on our rights but relying on God

SHOW GODLINESS WITH QUIET GOOD WORKS

Women too, submitting to God's orderliness,
don't lead the church with words but do with their works

In this way all of us make a difference in the world as we

SHARE THE TRUTH OF SALVATION THROUGH JESUS

who is our one mediator who brings peace to our lives here
and brings us to the peace of eternal life with God.