

Intro:

In a way, this message is a 'do over'. I had planned to divide up 1 Tim 2.5 into two messages, but when I worked on the first part of the verse last week, I wasn't very happy with the result.

The things I said were true, but there seemed to be little point or force in what I was saying.

This week, I hope we can really get hold of something that will be helpful for our lives.

We have said that this first section of 1 Tim 2 is a call to prayer, and specifically a call to evangelistic prayer.

The first reason for evangelistic prayer:

- God desires all men to be saved (3-4)

We are now looking at the second reason for evangelistic prayer:

- God is able to save all men (5-6)

What I want to deal with in this message is how it is that the truths taught in 1 Tim 2.5-6 mean that God is able to save all men and then I want to show you what that means for your praying and your living.

The kind of praying and living I want you to think about is the kind of praying and living William Carey did.

Carey is called the father of modern missions. He was a poor English cobbler – a shoemaker. He was converted to Christ in a group of English Baptist Calvinists – many of them would actually be called 'Hyper-Calvinists.'

Hyper-Calvinists: believe that we should do nothing to evangelize the lost because God will do the calling of the lost himself, no human intervention necessary.

No doubt many of them thought Carey's conversion was just on this same score.

Carey became a lay preacher ... he was burdened for the salvation of the lost in foreign lands ... wrote a book about it ... challenged his fellows to be concerned about it.

Preached what has become a well-known sermon: "Attempt great things for God, Expect great things from God"

One year later (1793), sailed for India with his family. After many trials he translated the Bible into 3 languages and founded a Christian college that has endured into modern times.

Carey was confident in God's ability to save men and staked his entire life on it. That ability to save is what our text is about.

Read 1 Tim 2.1-6, text 5-6

Proposition: We believe the life-changing fact that God is able to save sinners because there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

I. The unique *nature* of the Saviour

A. A 'preview' phrase (3)

1. Lit., 'the saviour our God'
2. "Since Jesus is our Saviour, it stands to reason that He is also divine. Any who deny His deity have no proper interpretation of this phrase."¹

B. The 'echo' (5a – 'one God')

1. Emphasis is on the unity of God
2. If we stop at this point, we have a mystery
 - a. One Great God – over all, beyond all, demanding all from all
 - b. God our Saviour (3) – an unexplained mystery
 - 1) The One God is holy and just
 - 2) The One God cannot simply forgive sin – justice demands satisfaction

In our passage, the satisfaction is described as a ransom. It is also spoken of in terms of a vicarious, or substitutionary, atonement.

C. The unfolding mystery

1. The One mediator between God and men
 - a. The One who stands in the middle
 - b. The One who bridges the gap
 - c. The One who satisfies the holiness and justice of God
 - d. The One who provides "salvation manward and [facilitates] prayer Godward"²

¹ Charles Ray, *The books of First and Second Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, p. 225, footnote 33 from p. 45.

² Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible*, 1 Ti 2:5 (Galaxie Software,

2. The One who is the man, Christ Jesus

- a. The mediator is effective because he is a man
- b. He is God, but as the person of God who became also a man, he is able to mediate between the demands of God and the sin of men
- c. He is God, but it is as a man that he functions as a mediator
 - 1) He dies a human death as a substitute for men
 - 2) He suffers a human death under the wrath of God
 - 3) He satisfies the demands of justice for the sins of men

We could belabor this... maybe we already have... but these facts are essential to salvation – without them there would be no salvation at all.

He is able to save us because of *who He is* – the God-man, the mediator.

II. The universal *value* of His Sacrifice

A. His sacrifice is a ransom

1. Matthew and Mark use the root term

^{NAU} **Mt 20.28** just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

^{NAU} **Mk 10.45** For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

“the price of release, the ransom”

2. Our passage adds the preposition ‘anti-’ emphasizing the substitutionary aspect of the ransom

B. His sacrifice pays for all

1. The plain statement of our text, ‘a ransom for all’

- a. Some object – ‘Not all are saved!’
- b. True, not all are saved, but the ransom is for all

- 1) υπερ – ‘on behalf of’
 - 2) The one great price that was necessary
 - 3) Not the individual price that is applied to everyone, but the price that is paid for all
2. Note that he is the mediator between God and *men* (5)

One has to ask this question:

- Given the incredible infinite nature of the Mediator
- Given the incredible infinite value of His Life

What more could He pay if he were to ransom more than merely the souls of the elect?

He is able to save us because of *what He did* – He gave Himself as the ransom price on behalf of all men.

III. The unparalleled *witness* of God’s so-great Salvation

A. A complicated phrase

1. Lit. ‘the testimony in its own times’
2. ^{NAU} **1 Ti 2.6** who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony *given* at the proper time.
 - a. The phrase renames the ransom
 - b. A ransom, which is the testimony at the proper time

B. An unparalleled witness

1. The Old Covenant witness was obscure
 - a. Blood of bulls and goats somehow connected with atonement – but how?
 - b. Asaph had a sense of it (Ps 50.12-15)
 - c. David had a sense of it (Ps 51.16-17)
2. The New Covenant witness is clear
 - a. It is the point of the Old Testament witness
 - b. It was God’s plan from eternity past
 - c. It appeared at its own time, to bring light and life to all who will receive it

- 1) Publicly
- 2) Dramatically
- 3) Conclusively

2 Tim 1.9-10; Tit 2.11-14; Tit 3.4-7

C. A great salvation – able to save all men, even kings and those in authority

1. Will you not pray for the salvation of men?
2. Will you not work for the salvation of men?

Conclusion:

This last week in the FBF conference, the theme was evangelism: ‘Counting the cost, seeking the lost.’

I was reminded of the imperative need of men for salvation from sin.

I was challenged to be aware of my responsibility to be the voice of the testimony given at the proper time.

The speaker at the conference spoke of the concept of ‘Divine Appointments’

You know you are in a Divine Appointment when

1. you enter a situation and it is obvious that God has been at work before you got there
 2. the person to whom you are talking tells you that someone else has been talking to them about the Lord
 3. you see obvious interest and/or conviction
 4. the Lord leads you to say something you normally don’t say
 5. when a lost person approaches a Christian out of the blue
 6. when the timing of events is obviously from God
 7. the person to whom you are talking is dealing with a traumatic event that has pointed him to his inner needs
 8. when a visitor comes to your church without human intervention
 9. when someone brings up the Bible, religion, God, or spiritual things in a normal conversation
- You should pray for divine appointments

We need to become more aware of these appointments. I met a fellow this week who mentioned some things to me that I should have responded to... but I blew it.

- In shock? Too timid? Over-thinking what to say?

Here is an opening question our speaker gave us:

“How would you describe your relationship with God?”

Even if they answer, “I don’t believe in God” or “I have no interest in God”, from this question you can gain an opportunity to give a brief testimony about your own relationship with God and lead the conversation from the testimony to the gospel.

There is more, but what gives us the desire to approach strangers with the good news?

We believe the life-changing fact that God is able to save sinners because there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.