

Daily Prayer

MONDAY, JULY 13

Today's prayer is based on I Timothy 2.8, ESV.

I desire then that in every place the men should pray,

Lord, it could not be clearer - you want me to pray,
you want men in every place to pray.

Guide my thinking in assessing this instruction from your Word.

Help me to see application of this encouragement to pray
as a matter of the heart.

So, regardless of the tremendous cultural shift from Paul's day in the Holy Land,
to America today, help me see what your heart wants for your people.

You want men to pray. Why aren't the women mentioned here as well?

Lord, here I am venturing into speculation about things that cannot be known -
but could it be that the women in Timothy's community were known
for their spirituality - and the men were not?

That would not be the first time I've heard of a church where
the women do the heavy spiritual lifting
and the men get distracted from the weightier issues
by all their projects.

Lord, I do not want to lose the notion that you want your people
to commune with you in prayer just because we now live in a time
where our culture not only cannot understand that different roles for sexes
does not imply anything at all about worth or personal value -
our present culture cannot even define how many sexes there are.

Lord, will I miss the point much if I conclude that your overwhelming concern is
that people who do not find themselves praying readily *need* to get praying?

That you want to be actively engaged in the lives of your people
and one of the means you have ordained for that involvement is *prayer*?

lifting holy hands

Lord, in our day we make much of the inward, unobservable nature of spirituality -
we do not often think of things like posture or gesture in expressing ourselves.

I do not see many of your people lifting their hands as they pray.

(I am well aware some churches do this all the time!)

Experimenting now with lifting my hands I realize that just doing that simple motion
highlights for me that I am praying to a God who is there.

It reminds me that you *are* there.

If you are not, it is just a silly, empty gesture.

But what if you are so close,

so near to my reach,

that lifting my hands opens me up to receive from you -
even though you remain invisible.

Thank you for this encouragement.

without anger or quarreling...

And right here you immediately remind me to beware of the merely external -
that anyone can make an observable gesture -

but your concern remains *what is going on in my heart?*

Your Word instructs me in many places that my anger
does not accomplish your purposes,

that I am to *be angry and sin not.*

Help me win the battle of my heart against my temper.

Your Word also tells me that *out of the fullness of my heart, my mouth speaks.*

Help me benefit from this insight in dealing with my heart -

deliver me from carrying anger in such a way that it spills into my speech.

Repair any damage I have already done to so many

with my unguarded and unrestrained venting of my anger and quarrelling.

Change me internally so that I am filled with blessing and encouragement -
not venom,

for Jesus and His kingdom's sake. Amen.

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You have made us for yourself and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.

Augustine

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