

Salvation to godliness and holiness

Back in 1830 George Wilson was convicted of robbing the U.S. Mail and was sentenced to be hanged. President Andrew Jackson issued a pardon for Wilson, but he refused to accept it. The matter went to Chief Justice Marshall, who concluded that Wilson would have to be executed. "A pardon is a slip of paper," wrote Marshall, "the value of which is determined by the acceptance of the person to be pardoned. If it is refused, it is no pardon. George Wilson must be hanged. "For some, the pardon comes too late. For others, the pardon is not accepted.

1 Timothy 2:1-7 I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—² for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.³ This is good, and pleases God our Savior,⁴ who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.⁵ For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus,⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.⁷ And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a true and faithful teacher of the Gentiles.

1) Saved people intercede for others

- 1 Timothy 2:1-2 I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— for kings and all those in authority.
- We aren't saved just for our own eternal wellbeing. If that were the case Jesus would just take us to be with him where we'll live in eternal bliss, having no concern about anything or anyone in this world.
- Intercession means to stand in the gap for someone in the sense of being a mediator.
 - Ezekiel 22:30-31 I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one.³¹ So I will pour out my wrath on them and consume them with my fiery anger, bringing down on their own heads all they have done, declares the Sovereign LORD.
- In the same way Abraham stood in the gap between God and Sodom, until he couldn't find any legitimate reason for God not to judge Sodom
 - Genesis 18:22-23 The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the LORD. Then Abraham approached him and said: "Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked?"
- Jesus is our prime example of an intercessor as being the only mediator between God and man
 - Romans 8:34 Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.
 - Hebrews 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.
- Intercession is standing in the gap before God pleading with him on behalf of all people.
 - It starts with prayer for people – all people including those in authority
 - True intercession moves from prayer to action
 - Jesus was the only mediator between man and God because sinful man was separated from a holy God
 - However, we have been made holy through the blood of Jesus shed for us and can enter into the Holy of holies by that blood to offer intercession for others.

2) Saved people's lives are reflected by godliness and holiness

- 1 Timothy 2:2 ...that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.
- Praying for those in authority may result in living peaceful and quiet lives as they then govern well. However, holiness and godliness come from the Lord.
- We are often accused of being able to continue in sin as Christians because God will just keep forgiving us.
 - That isn't true at all
 - Romans 6:1-4 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.
 - We aren't just saved to go to heaven. We are saved to reflect the character of God in this world and so bring glory to His name.
 - Holiness means being separate from the world and being set apart for God.
 - Godliness means being like God in character.

3) God wants all people to be saved

- Being like God in character means that we will also want all people to be saved in the same way that He wants all people to be saved.
 - 1 Timothy 2:3-6 This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.
- It's the will and desire of God that all people be saved and that none should perish
 - 2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.
- Jesus is the only way of salvation – there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people.
 - His work on the cross is the only means of salvation, where he gave himself as a ransom for our sins.
 - John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
- Coming to the knowledge of the truth is the knowledge that salvation is only through Jesus and His work on the cross

4) Saved people are used by God to save others

- In the same way that Paul was appointed as a herald and apostle, and a true and faithful teacher of the Gospel, so we are saved to reach out and save others.
- God immediately gives us the responsibility to be a light and witness to the truth in this world of darkness.
- We aren't all Paul, and we aren't all gifted evangelists, but we are all witnesses to the truth of who Jesus is and what he's done in each of our lives.