

THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH

God desires all people to be saved and “to come to the knowledge of the truth.” Therefore, we are exhorted to pray accordingly (1 Tim. 2:1-4). In order to be saved, people must come in contact with THE TRUTH (1 Tim. 2:4). They must know about God’s truth in order to respond to it. In 1 Timothy 2:5-6, Paul shares this essential gospel truth.

1 Timothy 2:5–6 (NKJV)

5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,

6 who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,

Verses 5-6 underscore the crux of what the knowledge of the truth involves.

There is one God and only one (cf. 1 Cor. 8:5-6). This is the core creed of Judaism and is considered the heart of the Jewish faith. The key verse is Deut. 6:4, which is called “**The Shema**” and is quoted twice daily – in the morning and in the evening.

This confession of faith actually makes way for the doctrine of the Trinity because God (Elohim) is plural and the word “one” (ehad) signifies a compound unity. There is only one God. He is a Triune God consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That is why, according to Christ’s command, we baptize in the “name” (singular) of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Mt. 28:19).

There is only ONE God, and there is only ONE Mediator between God and men. A mediator is a “go-between”. A mediator must be able to properly represent both sides and bring them together.

In the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the OT), the Greek word for mediator is found only once, and that is in Job 9:33. Job was frustrated that he could not negotiate with God.

Job 9:33 (NKJV)

33 Nor is there any mediator between us, Who may lay his hand on us both.

The answer to Job’s ancient cry for a mediator is found in Jesus Christ. A mediator intervenes between the two, bringing about reconciliation.

“To be of any use, a bridge across a chasm or river must be anchored on both sides. Christ has closed the gap between deity and humanity. He has crossed the Grand Canyon, so deep and wide, between heaven and earth. He has bridged the chasm that separated man from God.” - **Expositors**

We call Jesus the BRIDGE TO LIFE. He is the perfect Mediator. Being God, He perfectly represents God. Being man, He perfectly represents man. And as the God-Man, He was the perfect sacrifice that brings God and mankind together in a restored relationship.

It has already been well established in the book of 1 Timothy that Jesus is Lord/God, so the emphasis here is that Jesus as Man is the one Mediator. He is the great representative of mankind. He is our Mediator. To be our Mediator, Christ had to take on humanity (cf. Heb. 2:14, 16). When it says here in verse 5, “**the Man Christ Jesus**” the word “**Man**” is not *aner* meaning “a male individual”, but rather the generic term *anthropos* which identifies Him with the whole of mankind in general. In Him all humanity is represented so that He is the representative of not merely males or of this or that man, but rather of the whole of mankind, involving every human being.

Note most carefully that there is only ONE Mediator between God and men, and that is Jesus Christ. The church is not THE Mediator. Angels are not THE Mediator. Saints are not THE Mediator. Mary is not THE Mediator. The Pope or priests are not THE Mediator. The ONLY Mediator by which we can have access to God is Jesus! Any other gospel is a FALSE gospel. Any other knowledge is not knowledge of the TRUTH.

This Scripture is clear that there is no co-mediator or any other mediator other than Jesus. The truth is there is only ONE Mediator and He is Jesus! He alone is the ONLY way we can come to God (cf. Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Jn. 5:12).

Hebrews 8:6 calls Jesus the “Mediator of a better covenant”. Hebrews 9:15 and 12:24 say Jesus is “the Mediator of the new covenant”. All people who truly come to God come through Jesus. We are reminded of this every time we pray in Jesus’ Name. We only have access to God through Jesus (cf. Jn. 14:6). We can only get to God through Him. He and He alone is THE MEDIATOR!

And the basis of Christ’s mediating work is seen in verse 6 where it says He “gave Himself a ransom for all”. The Roman world was a world of slaves. Perhaps as many as half the people in the empire were slaves. To

set a slave free, a ransom price was paid. The money was paid, and the slave was freed.

As sinners, we were in slavery to sin (cf. Jn. 8:34). Christ Himself became the ransom price to set us free. The price of sin is DEATH. Christ paid our death payment to set us free (cf. 1 Cor. 6:20; 2 Pet. 2:1; Rev. 5:9).

“He paid the debt “for all.” This is proof that He desires all to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4).” – **Thomas Constable**

This exact word for ransom (Gk. *antilytron*) appears only here in the NT. It refers to “what is given in exchange for another as the price of his redemption” (Thayer). The price is specifically stated in 1 Pet. 1:18-19 as being the “precious blood of Christ”.

In the first century, the simple word “*lytron*” was used to refer to the ransom price paid to free a slave. But added to this word is the preposition “anti,” indicating substitution. “Anti” literally means “instead of”. For example, Antichrist means “instead of Christ”.

“**Ransom** is a rich theological term, describing Christ’s substitutionary death for us. It is not the simple word for ransom, *lutron*, but *antilytron*, the added preposition intensifying the meaning. Christ did not merely pay a ransom to free us; He became the victim in our place. He died our death, and bore our sin. He **gave Himself**.” – **John MacArthur**

Thus, *antilytron* means the payment of Christ given as a substitute for us. Simply put, Christ Himself was our substitutionary payment for sin. He is our ransom payment so we could go free.

Add to this the preposition translated as “**for**” is the Greek word “*huper*” meaning, “*for the sake of*”, “*in behalf of*”, or “*instead of*” (cf. Ti. 2:14; Gal. 3:13). The STRONG emphasis here is that Christ became our SUBSTITUTE payment for sin! As our Mediator, as our perfect representative, He Himself became a ransom payment for all.

Note the emphasis on “all” throughout this whole section (cf. 1 Jn. 2:2).

vv. 1-3 Pray for **all**.

v. 4 God desires **all** to be saved.

v. 6 Christ gave Himself a ransom for **all**.

We are to pray for all because God desires all to be saved. God, in Christ, has made provision for all in the substitutionary death of Jesus.

To summarize this passage, we might say the first priority of the church is to pray for all people, because God desires all to be saved. Proof of this is seen in that God has made provision for all in the ransom death of Christ Jesus. It was because of this universal “all” reality that Paul was made a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

1 Timothy 2:7 (NKJV)

7 for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.