

The One Mediator

TEXT: "For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all; the testimony to be borne in its own times" (1 Timothy 2:5, 6).

INTRODUCTION

Notice the "all-ness" of 1 Timothy 2:1-6: Pray for all (v. 1); God desires all to be saved (v. 4); Christ gave Himself a ransom for all (v. 6). Three implications rise from these three "alls." The gospel includes the high and the low, the emperor and the slave. No class distinctives are found within the gospel. We face a strange danger in the church in our day, the danger of becoming too exclusive. We have no room for the sinner! C. T. Studd said,

Some want to live within the sound
of church or the chapel bell.
I want to run a rescue shop
within a yard of hell.

The gospel embraces both Christian and non-Christian. Pray for all, even the most ungodly. Paul included Emperor Nero in his statement. God wants all to be saved.

It is at the heart of this powerful teaching that there is one of the shortest, most meaningful statements of the Bible.

I. "THERE IS ONE GOD" (2:5)

To a heathen world who believed in all sorts of gods, who were fearful of pleasing one god only to anger another, and who saw their gods as warring against one another, no better news was ever offered than the oneness of God. This must not be taken to teach that there is only one person who possesses deity or Godhood (Ephesians 4:4-6). Three personalities possess divine nature: the Father (Matthew 6:9), the Son (John 20:28), and the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-5). (Cf. Matthew 28:19 and 2 Corinthians 13:14.) But these three are one (John 17:20, 21). They are agreed in plan, pur-

pose, love for man, and commitment to save man. Our mission, then, is to know and serve that one God. To know Him is eternal life. To lead others to know Him is to render the highest service.

II. THERE IS "ONE MEDIATOR ALSO BETWEEN GOD AND MEN" (2:5)

A mediator is one who stands between two parties and acts as a go-between. His effort is to reconcile parties who are at odds with one another. We have seen a mediator working in a strike proceeding between the union and management. We have seen one assisting in family disputes.

To serve as an effective mediator one must have an impartiality or fairness. He also must have a means of identifying with both parties.

Christ was uniquely qualified to serve as mediator between God and man. Sin made the separation (Isaiah 59:1, 2). Man was far away from God (Ephesians 2:12). Christ's effort was to bring us near to God (Ephesians 2:13-16). Reconciliation required both God and man (Philippians 2:5-10; John 1:1-14). Only One could identify with both. No person can take His place, not Mohammed, Sun Myung Moon, or Joseph Smith.

III. THERE IS ONE "WHO GAVE HIMSELF A RANSOM FOR ALL" (2:6)

Here is the cost of being a mediator. "Gave" speaks of a voluntary act of self-giving. He did not just give His life, He gave "himself." He gave His whole being, including His humiliation, suffering, and death.

He was a "ransom" for all. The word for "ransom," *antilutron*, appears only here in the New Testament. It is a compound word. *Anti* means "instead of" and *lutron* means "a ransom price." Thus, Christ became the ransom price for sin in our stead.

This is “for” all men (cf. Hebrews 2:9). There is a way, therefore, opened wide for “all” to be reconciled to God. God freely offers the forgiveness. Christ paid the price. The ball is now in your court; it is up to you. What will you do about it?

CONCLUSION

No one needs to stand between you and God except Jesus. He stands as the Mediator opening the way.

—Leon Barnes

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