

Complicated

Scripture Reading — 1 Timothy 2:1-7

I urge ... that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone ...
1 Timothy 2:1

It's complicated to develop a community that practices stewardship, isn't it? You begin using more efficient light bulbs to save electricity while your neighbor doubles his display of Christmas lights. You buy a smaller, fuel-efficient car, but your neighbor drives a huge vehicle that guzzles in a day the gas you save in a week. Higher production in one country may mean wealth and an increase in food exports, but those same exports may become an obstacle to a Third World nation's efforts to become self-sufficient in food production.

So how can one person make a difference? How can a person know what is the best thing to do?

Well, what could a few Christians in the mighty Roman Empire do? Paul, in writing to Timothy, a pastor in Ephesus, urges him to "fight the good fight" (1 Timothy 1:18) and then adds, "I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority ..."

The sovereign God whom we serve is able to use our small beginnings to produce real change. He is also able to bend the hearts of people in authority so that significant structural changes can be made in society. Keep on fighting and praying, "because prayer is the most important part of the thankfulness God requires of us" (Heidelberg Catechism, Q&A 116).

Prayer

Lord, sometimes it seems that our efforts barely make a dent in the world around us. Slavery, hunger, injustice-what can we do? Teach us to pray, Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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