

Rev George Macaskill - 1 Timothy 2:5

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Preacher: Guest Preacher

[0 : 00] Let's turn in our Bibles to the chapter of God's Word which we read, 1 Timothy chapter 2, and as God would help me, I would like to concentrate on verse 5.

1 Timothy chapter 2 verse 5, for there is one God and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

Note the apostle does not say, I believe there is one God and one mediator.

He does not say it's my opinion that there's one God and one Savior. He doesn't even say the Bible says there is one God and one mediator.

He comes straight out with it, there is one God and there is one mediator.

[1 : 33] He wrote to this, he put this in writing in an age, if you can imagine it, that was more multi-faith and more pluralistic than our own age.

Every age is proud and even when it comes to negative things. We tend to say, oh but there never was an age like our age.

Wrong, there is nothing new under the sun. It has been well said, if you cannot be certain about God, you cannot be certain about anything.

And our Bible itself of course tells you, the foundation of God stands sure. And if the foundations be destroyed, well you've got real problems then.

So let's start with the foundation, let's start with the revelation from God. How does he open his revelation? In the beginning, God.

[3 : 08] So let's look at what this revelation is saying to us this morning in 1 Timothy 2.5. There is one God and there is one mediator. One God. God. Something divine. Something other worldly.

Something sacred and spiritual or maybe even religious if you like.

Something different. There is one God. Different. Or as I like best of all, superior. Vastly superior. Different and vastly superior from all else.

One God. One God who is the first cause of everything there is.

One God who is truly self-existent. You know, some people speak a lot today about independence. Only God is truly independent.

[4 : 58] God is dependent upon nothing. Truly independent of everything.

And everything there is is dependent upon God. There is one God. And he is an absolute being. He is an absolute being. There are absolute whatever this present culture might think.

There are absolutes. This absolute God is our Creator. Not only is he our Creator, he is our law giver.

He has given us rules through which we are to live. Given us boundaries within which to work.

He is our Creator. He is our law giver. He is our judge. In the last analysis, in the last analysis, he decides everything. He is the final judge of everything.

[6 : 35] But you know, some of us in here, maybe, I don't know you, maybe all of us in here can say truthfully.

Not only is he our Creator, our law giver, our judge, but he is our saviour. Can you see that? This one God saves. Can you see he is your saviour?

Whether you can say it or not, he is your God. So he is your Creator. He is your law giver. He is your judge. Can you see truthfully he is your saviour?

When we say one divine being, one divine, when we say one God, we are saying actually one authority.

What is authority? In the last analysis, there is only one authority. God. What is authority?

[7 : 53] Here is my definition. Having the right to give commands. Some people give commands and have no authority to do it. God has the right to give commands.

You see, God is the sole proprietor of everything. He is sole proprietor of everything. He has made everything. He has a right. He has a right to authority over everything. He has made it. One God, one authority.

Ultimate permission for everything resides in God. God has delegated authorities. God has instituted the state.

Rulers, kings, they have authority. God has given them authority but is delegated from God. They are to rule according to the instructions which God has given. Rulers.

[9 : 14] Last analysis though, permission. Authority is another word you could use as permission. He is the ultimate permission. God. All authority. All permission in the last analysis resides in God.

The sole proprietor of everything. One authority. One law. One set of rules.

I don't know if you ever thought. If you have two sets of rules, you have two gods.

That is one God. The last analysis is one set of rules. God's law.

That one God is a person. God is not an it or a force like electricity. He is a person.

[10 : 36] He is the ultimate person. He is the supreme person. The ultimate supreme being.

You and I are human beings. God is the supreme being. Incidentally, the history of the human race is that they are much more guilty of polytheism rather than atheism.

Atheism is actually quite a new development relatively. The sin of mankind working over history is many gods. Worshiping many gods. A plurality of gods rather than the small god.

It's relatively a new philosophy. Atheism. That one person. That one God is infinite. Eternal, unchangeable, think of that. Infinite.

Without limit. Without boundary. You cannot say he's this great or else you're limiting him to that greatness. It might be massive but you're limiting him to that greatness.

[12 : 12] If you say he's so great as, God is infinite. You cannot put a boundary. You cannot say he's this great. You need to be greater than that you might say but you still limited him to that greatness. He's without limit. Without boundary.

You cannot increase or decrease. Infinite. Eternal. All how important time is. Not to God. God is beyond time, before time, above time. Time doesn't refer to God.

One day is as a thousand years to God and conversely a thousand years are as one day to God.

In the Garden of Eden God promised to send a savior. How long did it take? Four thousand years.

Can you imagine the Jews getting a bit impatient? You can understand, can't you? But wait a minute. A thousand years are as one day to God. 96 hours.

[13 : 49] Before he sent his son, which he promised, to a timeless being beyond and above time. Infinite.

You see, you and I age. Just look at some of us. Just remember some of us. We age. God doesn't age.

Infinite. Eternal. Unchangeable. Nothing within him can change. Nothing outside of him can influence him. Unchangeable.

You see, I can't get my head round that. That's fine. You're finite. You're not expected to get your head round it. The finite cannot grasp the infinite.

But we are required to believe it. You must believe God, even though you cannot understand.

[15 : 20] Now this one God. There can only be one God. Think of it. If all of God's presence is everywhere, all of the time, and it is, all of God's presence is everywhere, all of the time.

Now just think of it. Logically and geographically, there's no room for two gods. There can only be one.

There is one God. And it is the fool who says in his heart, there is no God.

It's a fool that says that. But thankfully as well, hearing all that, does it make you just a wee bit uneasy, unsettled, insecure, hearing about the one God that there is?

Well, here's the second part of our text. For there is one God and there is one mediator between God and men.

[16 : 49] What on earth's a mediator? I suppose the simple word we'd use today is a go-between. A go-between.

Here's a better definition, the best I've read. A mediator is a person who intervenes between two contesting parties for the purpose of making peace.

I think it's an excellent definition of a mediator, I'll repeat it. A person who intervenes between two contesting parties for the purpose of making peace.

The implication of course is there's a controversy. Isn't that sad? Isn't that amazing? That we would have the temerity to oppose such a God? But that's the case. In fact, it is not just controversy. It's actually war.

[18:07] Is it not? Do we not want to keep God out of our lives completely? Isn't that our natural instinct?

I am in charge of my own life, am I not? Is that not what we see? About ourselves? To ourselves? No wonder it's written, God is angry with the wicked every day and rightly so. And rightly so. Do you remember the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ?

The parable about the rich man in hell? Do you remember the conversation that was going on between heaven and hell?

Those in heaven and those in hell. Isn't that a striking term between us and you?

[19:36] There's a great gulf fixed. A great chasm. The chasm between us is fixed.

And so that you cannot pass from one to the other. Salutory. Challenging, isn't it?

But the fact that there is one mediator, doesn't that give us hope? Doesn't it say reconciliation is therefore desirable?

Does it not say, in fact, reconciliation's possible?

The implication. There's a mediator. There's a go-between. Someone can stand in the gap between the two contesting parties for the purpose of making peace.

[20:52] And we were to blame. Creatures were to blame. Creatures are responsible for the controversy, for the hostility, for the war.

But the gulf that's unbridgeable has been bridged by the mediator.

The fact that our text tells us there's one mediator between God and men tells us something's been done about the unbridgeable gap.

Chasm. Gulf. Between the two of us. Between God and us. The mediator. The mediator. And he cried out, it is finished.

There's nothing left for us to do but walk across the bridge, as it were.

[22:02] It's all been done. What's the gospel? The gospel is an announcement. That God has provided a mediator whose bridge, the gap between God and us.

The gulf, the chasm. It's Christ Jesus. Isn't it wonderfully, wonderfully encouraging?

The initiative was taken by the offended party. The innocent party. It wasn't you or me that provided the mediator. We couldn't. We can't.

The one God so offended, so grieved, he's the one who provided the mediator.

Is that not wonderful? He took the initiative. He made the first move. Isn't that wonderful? Isn't that humbling?

[23:16] There's one God, and there's one mediator between God and men. The man, Christ Jesus. The man, Christ Jesus.

The man, Christ Jesus is God, the second person of the Godhead from heaven.

How did he bridge the gap? How did he provide a way across the chasm?

What did he do? Well, what did he do? He placated the anger of God by atoning for the sins of human beings who will be in heaven.

God is angry with the wicked. He's angry with sin, but he provided and he sent his son to pay the price of the sins of all who will be in heaven.

[24:40] He is angry, but his anger can be put away. His anger can be put away. His anger is put away at the place called Calvary.

I remember when I did my open university degree, we had to do a course on world religions. I was absolutely terrified of that course. I thought it would destroy my faith.

But I praise God that it did the very opposite. It strengthened my faith in God, Christ and the Bible. I remember when we came to study Christianity.

The tutor gave a wonderful account of the crucifixion. So accurate. My heart just let with joy. My tutors are Christian. Wonderful.

I went to him after the lecture and said, it's so amazing to hear you're a Christian. Oh, Jesus, I'm not a Christian. I said, wait a minute. You give a most accurate, beautiful, wonderful account of the crucifixion.

[26:02] Oh, Jesus, I believe it happened. I believe it to praise. But I don't believe that man on the middle cross is praying God for sins of other people.

Do you? Do you? Was it simply three ordinary human beings that were crucified that Friday afternoon?

What made the centurion? Now, it's most likely that that centurion was the centurion in charge of crucifixions.

Maybe Friday was crucifixion day. On that Friday, there was three. Three different crosses, three different men dying on the cross.

Before Jesus died, he cried out with a loud voice. Remember what scripture says? He cried out with a loud voice.

[27 : 14] A centurion who often saw men dying on the cross, he said, it's not the way normal men die who are crucified.

If they speak at all, it's a whimper, a little breath if they can see anything at all. But Christ cried out with a loud voice, it is finished.

And it is finished. And it was finished at Calvary. But what was finished? The payment of this, for the punishment for the sins of everyone who will be in glory.

It's all paid for now. And it can shout with a loud voice, no mere man. Fully human man, definitely, but also fully God.

100% human and 100% divine. No mere man. What was he doing there? Substituting.

[28 : 32] You can describe Christianity in one word. Substitution. Or as the Negro said to the curc session that was interviewing him, as he wanted membership and to go to the Lord's table for the first time, they were having trouble speaking with him and reasoning with him, they need trouble explaining himself until eventually he simply said this.

He die, me no die. That's all he could say. That's a gospel. That's all you need to say. He die, me no die.

One mediator between God and the man, the man, Christ Jesus. But he didn't simply, a mediator didn't simply pay the punishment.

He also made reconciliation. He made friends. God and humans, friends. Amazing.

You see, I remember when we were planning to go to the, at least to the Palestine, to the Holy Land, to see what we could see there.

[30 : 06] And I remember discussing with others and people who knew more about it, and I said, oh, it's quite a good time now to go, there's peace out there. It's quite a good time to go, there's peace. But you see, it could spring up any time.

It could, war could break out any time. And as we discovered when we were out, it's a powder keg. Peace is just now, but not for long. Not for long.

When Christ made peace, it was for error. When Christ made peace between God and the man, it was for error.

Not the remotest prospect of God declaring war against us ever again. If you're in Christ, I go back to the children's story.

You have to be in Christ, this man, Christ Jesus. You have to be in him. God is angry with us who are in Christ. He's to be angry with his son first.

[31 : 16] We need to be in him. He needs to be round us. We need to be in him. And the thing is, he made us, made both parties friends.

You can make peace, but you've got to keep watching the situation. Christ, the one mediator, made real, lasting, eternal peace between God and the man.

As we close, why is Paul so dogmatic here? Maybe you see that I don't believe Paul. It's precisely the problem.

Precisely the problem. You don't believe. But you see, it's only what he believes. No, no.

Why is he so dogmatic? Because it's true. If it wasn't true, well, keep it to yourself and your friends. Just tell your friends.

[32 : 26] But the commission Christ gave the church is tell every creature. Because by proclaiming the announcement that there is a savior, that the greatest sinner can instantly be forgiven and have a right to go to heaven and glory, that news, that announcement, the proclamation of the announcement, blesses souls.

God, the Spirit, can bless the announcement of it. It's through the proclamation of the Gospel, through the declaration of salvation that sinners are convicted and saved.

It's hard to believe. It really is. You say, I can't believe all that. It is hard. That's why you need faith. And that's why you need God to give you faith.

And if you've never prayed before, there's a simple prayer. Lord, give me this faith that saves my soul.

Give me this faith in Jesus that will hide me in Him. One final thing. One mediator.

[33 : 53] This one mediator is your second chance to get to heaven. Our first chance was in Adam, but he blew it.

He blew it for us. Christ is our second chance. There will be no third chance.

There will be no second mediator. Christ is our second chance to get to heaven, and is our last chance.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and here we'll be saved, because there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man, Christ Jesus.

May God, the Holy Spirit, make His truth effectual to every one of us. Let's just bow our heads in prayer.

[34 : 57] Our gracious Father in heaven, we pray for your Holy Spirit, that He might take the things of Christ and make them ours this day.

Unite us in saving faith to Christ. Hear us in mercy, answer us in peace, as we pray only and all in the name and for the sake of the Lord Jesus. Amen.