1 TIMOTHY

Lesson 6 1 Timothy 5:1-25

In this lesson, Paul provides Timothy instructions regarding how we are to behave as part of the church body. He specifically calls out the behavior and treatment of older men and widows. He also provides some criteria for choosing church elders of the church, and he even provides some personal advice to Timothy himself.

As we read through 1 Timothy Chapter 5, consider that Paul is addressing issues of the day in Ephesus. His instructions to Timothy not only provide us practical teaching, but they also provide us with a look at how society back then was behaving—such that we are able contrast their behavior with how Christ intended the body of the church (made up of Christ's followers) to behave.

Read 1 Timothy 5:1-25 and consider the following:

1. Focusing on 1 Timothy 5:1-2, list below the specific Ephesian behaviors that Paul is correcting.

- 2. In 1 Timothy 5: 2-6 Paul addresses widows. Have you ever considered what it would be like to be a widow or even a widower? I know that several of you who study with us could show all of us a lot about living the life of a widow. Widows, especially in Timothy's day, had a very tough time. With little means of independent financial support, in need of emotional support, and facing the world seemingly alone, widows were generally pushed aside. Seen as a burden to their family as well as to society, widows struggled just to make it from one day to the next. (The book of Ruth will give you real insight into the plight of the widow.) Paul now addresses the case for the widows in Ephesus, and instructs Timothy and the church regarding how they should be ministering to them. Read the following verses and list the instructions contained therein:
 - a. 1 Timothy 5:3
 - b. 1 Timothy 5:4
 - c. 1 Timothy 5:5
 - d. 1 Timothy 5:6

3.	Paul then gives Timothy instruction regarding how families are to take care of their family members. Paul tells him that anyone who avoids this responsibility is denying the faith and "is worse than an unbeliever." We are to care for our own family first; as such, we are not to turn our backs on someone less fortunate within our family. This, of course, may sometimes not be as easy or as straightforward as it sounds—especially in the case where family members are lazy. The Bible refers to them as "sluggards," and calls them out specifically in scripture. Aside from that issue however, we are directed by Paul and scripture to care for our children, our elders, our spouses, and so on. This is due to the fact that denying that responsibility makes us "worse than an unbeliever," and, frankly, does not reflect Christ living in us. Paul also gives Timothy a list of qualifications for defining which widows are to be placed on a list to be helped. List those qualifications below:
4.	Then Paul calls out a different set of instructions for widows who are under sixty years of age. These are much different than what we just read. List those below:
5.	In 1 Timothy 5:17-21, Paul then gives instruction to Timothy about the leaders of the church, i.e., the Elders, who along with many other responsibilities would ultimately be responsible to ensure that the widows are being treated as Paul instructed. Paul then commends the Elders. List each commendation and/or instruction below.
6.	Paul then closes this section of 1 Timothy with a charge to Timothy. These specific instructions would also apply to anyone in a leadership position today. List them below, and consider if we are following these within our own local church body.
Paul's teaching in this lesson is clear: we are responsible for caring for one another, including ourselves, and for respecting our church leaders. All of us should be reflecting the Holy Spirit living within us. When we walk with Christ living in us, we become his hands and feet. This will illuminate our hearts and minds; and it will lead us to do the right things, while avoiding the pitfalls and snares that Satan may place in our path.	
Let's commit ourselves to be more aware of the physical and spiritual needs around us, and let's also commit ourselves to respond positively to those needs, in Christ's name.	
Have a blessed week!	
In Christ,	
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