

*Command these things as well, so that they may be without reproach. (1 Timothy 5:7)*

### I. Interpersonal Communications

- a. This is an old saying, "You can pick your friends, but you can't pick your family."
- b. God has called us from different backgrounds, cultures and temperaments to be together.
- c. Paul had relationship challenges in other churches and from those experiences he instructs Timothy.
- d. It is important for all of us to "major" in good communications skills, but we all fail sometimes.
- e. Ministers and church leaders must set the example in effective relationship building and communication, because this will impact the health of the church.

### II. A Practical Look at Church Relationships

- a. *Do not rebuke an older man* – This does not mean that he cannot be corrected, but *rebuke* is an expression of strong disapproval.
  1. If correction is need, we should not be disrespectful or condescending. Treat them as a father/mother.
- b. *Younger men* – need guidance, mentoring, help and encouragement in their spiritual walk.
- c. *Older women* (the mothers of the church) – regardless of their level of spiritual maturity, treat them with respect. This respect will set the example for others.
- d. *Young women must be treated like sisters* – (in all purity) – Timothy as a single-man, must not play games with their affection, flirt with them or look at them lustfully. They are sisters-in-Christ.

### III. Caring with Caution (vv.5-16)

- a. God cares for the fatherless, widow and orphans. (Ps. 68:5; Ex 22:22-23)
- b. In ancient times, there was no pension or social security, family had to be relied on.
- c. **Whether we are willing to admit or not, there are individuals and entire families that "milk" local churches, while they refuse to work or use their own resources wisely.**
- d. The church had a plan to honor widows. (v. 3) Also we see the word *enroll* (to include on a list) (vv.9,11) It appears that some widows were mistreating the benevolence of the church.
- e. What is a true widow? (vv.9-10) Three groups of widows are identified:
- f. Widows with relatives. The relatives should care for her so the church could use its resources to care for others. If a relative *does not* help they are worse than an unbeliever. (v.8)
- g. Widows who were able to work. Some women had lost their husbands when they were young and were able to remarry, have children, manage their households and live righteously (v.14).
  1. Some of these women had publicly committed themselves to remain single and serve in ministry.
  2. Other young women who were "idle" and another group were drawn away from Christ by their "passions". These widow were not placed on the "widows list."
- h. Widows who take advantage. The *self-indulgent* widow had no interest in the Word or ministry. They abused the care offered by the church. They wanted to live for themselves and what they could get. *She is dead even while she lives* (v.6)

### IV. Thoughts and Consideration

- a. Is it right for Christians to flirt with another? What kind of behavior should exist between Christian men and woman?
- b. The church has a responsibility to the needy. Should there be standards for benevolence?
- c. Every church should accept their limitations. Our primary purpose is to spread the Gospel.
- d. If the church is loving and mission focused, every need will be met.