

# THE SPIRIT AND DISCIPLINE OF RELATIONSHIPS

## 1 TIMOTHY 05:01–02

### *Introduction*

There is the duty to correct and discipline various age groups. Note that these two verses picture a family. The instructions are clear: the members of a church are to treat each other as family members. In no sense is any member to be *rebuked*. “Rebuke” (*epiplesso*) means to be severely censured, angrily reprimanded, violently reproached. When a family church member needs to be corrected, there is to be no severity, anger or violence involved; no contempt or disgust. A church member is to be corrected and disciplined through exhortation (*parakalei*), that is, through encouragement, through appeal and pleading. This passage deals with the spirit and discipline of various relationships within the church.

- I. Older men: to be treated as fathers (v. 1).
- II. Younger men: to be treated as brothers (v. 1).
- III. Older women: to be treated as mothers (v. 2).
- IV. Younger women: to be treated as sisters (v. 2).

### **I. Timothy 05:01 Treating Older Men as Fathers**

Older men are to be treated as fathers. Older men who are true Christian believers have more experience and wisdom in dealing with life. This is not to say they are always right; sometimes they are not. But they do have the wisdom of experience. Therefore, they are not to be ignored, neglected, bypassed, overlooked or set aside as useless. They are to be treated as a father, with affection, respect and honour. Their ideas, opinions, counsel and direction are to be sought. They are to be a part of the life and ministry of the church.

One other point is important as well. Because of their experience, older men sometimes hold strong opinions and become set in their ways. They can become close-minded to new ideas, ministries and methods. The end result is sometimes tragic: misbehaviour, grumbling, complaining, criticism, opposition and division.

The point is this: if an older man ever needs to be corrected, he is to be corrected and disciplined as a father, not as an enemy. He is to be approached and exhorted, appealed to and pleaded with just as we would our earthly father.

*Eph 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.*

*1 Tim 5:1 Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers.*

*Lev 19:32 Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. I am the LORD.*

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**Job 32:6** *So Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite said: "I am young in years, and you are old; that is why I was fearful, not daring to tell you what I know."*

**Prov 1:8** *Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching.*

**Prov 6:20** *My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching.*

**Prov 16:31** *Gray hair is a crown of splendour; it is attained in the way of righteousness.*

**Prov 23:22** *Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.*

## **II. Timothy 05: 01 Treating Younger Men as Brothers**

Younger men are to be treated as brothers. The young are sometimes thought to know too little and to be too inexperienced to have a part in the decisions and ministry of the church. Therefore, there is the tendency to ignore and bypass them. But this is never to be. Young men are to be treated as brothers; they are to be accepted and invited and given a part in the life and ministry of the church. The older members of a church are not to show an air of superiority in dealing with young men. They are to show brotherly affection: consideration, respect and care.

There is another need that sometimes arises among younger men. They need direction: there are times when younger men need to be taught, corrected and disciplined — no matter their age. When these times arise, there is to be no air of superiority, severe reaction, contempt or disgust. There is to be a brotherly spirit: affection and care, exhortation and direction, guidance and teaching.

**John 13:34-35** *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

**John. 15:12** *"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."*

**Acts 20:35** *In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'*

**Rom 12:9** *Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.*

**Rom 13:10** *Love does no harm to its neighbour. Therefore love is the fulfilment of the law.*

**Rom 15:1-2** *We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please his neighbour for his good, to build him up.*

**1 Cor 8:13** *Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall.*

**Gal 6:10** *Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.*

### III. *Timothy 05:02 Treating Older Women as Mothers*

Older women are to be treated as mothers. Just think what a mother gives to a family and you can see what the older women can contribute to the church:

- love
- care
- energy
- compassion
- concern
- protection
- kindness
- giving
- teaching
- discipline
- warmth
- tenderness
- affection
- nourishment
- perseverance
- provision
- guidance
- direction
- instruction
- understanding

A church is totally irresponsible if it ignores its older women who are true Christian believers. Their potential contribution to the lives and fellowship of believers is immeasurable. Therefore, the church is instructed to treat its older women as mothers. They are to be loved and protected, and their softness, tenderness, guidance, understanding, instruction and energy are to be sought and used by the church.

Again, if an older woman needs correction and discipline, it must not be done in contempt and disrespect, but rather by the appeal and pleading of encouragement.

*1 Tim 5:1 Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers.*

*1 Tim 5:4 But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God.*

*James 1:27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.*

*Exo 20:12 "Honour your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you."*

*Lev 19:3 "Each of you must respect his mother and father, and you must observe my Sabbaths. I am the LORD your God."*

*Prov 1:8 Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching.*

*Prov 6:20 My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching.*

*Prov 23:22 Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.*

### IV. *Timothy 05: 02 Treating Younger Women as Sisters*

Younger women are to be treated as sisters. But note the added exhortation: with absolute *purity*. Lust, immoral thoughts, sex — thinking about the physical attractiveness and the

bodies of the younger women — none of this is to have a place in the church. The men and women of the church are all to keep themselves pure and to treat the young Christian women as sisters. They are to be protected and guarded, nourished and taught within the church. And their energy, tenderness, understanding and compassion are to be sought and used by the church in its ministry.

In the matter of correction and discipline, young women are not to be treated with severity or disgust, but in love, encouragement and exhortation.

**Mat 5:8** *“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”*

**Mat 5:28** *“But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”*

**1 Cor 6:18** *Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.*

Now for the matters you wrote about:

**1 Cor 7:1-2** *It is good for a man not to marry. But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband.*

**Eph 5:2-3** *And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people.*

**Col 3:5** *Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.*

**1 Th 4:3** *It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality.*

**1 Tim 1:5** *The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.*

**Titus 2:4-5** *Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.*

**1 Pet 1:22** *Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.*

**Rev 14:4** *These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they kept themselves pure. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They were purchased from among men and offered as first fruits to God and the Lamb.*

(But note: a woman must guard how she dresses and makes herself up. Although not covered in this passage, other passages cover this subject. See note, 1 Tim 2:9-10). ■