

Union Bethel AME Church Bible Study

Dial-in Number: (425) 436-6260 Access Code: 141997#

Zoom Meeting ID 895 5691 3317, Passcode 650467

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Tuesday, January 19, 2021, 6:30 – 7:30 PM

1 Timothy 5:1-25



1 Timothy 5:1-2

1 Do not speak harshly to an older man, but speak to him as to a father, to younger men as brothers, 2 to older women as mothers, to younger women as sisters—with absolute purity.

Paul gives directions on how we are to speak to each other. There should be respect in all of our conversations with each other. Paul's assertions are that Timothy and the church members are already practicing the 5th Commandment to honor father and mother. Therefore, using language to speak to the elders as fathers and mothers was not a foreign concept. He includes how to speak to younger men and women. This sets a new tone for engaging each other.

How does guarding how we speak to each other have an impact on a community?

1 Timothy 5:3-8

3 Honor widows who are really widows. 4 If a widow has children or grandchildren, they should first learn their religious duty to their own

family and make some repayment to their parents; for this is pleasing in God's sight. 5 The real widow, left alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day; 6 but the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. 7 Give these commands as well, so that they may be above reproach. 8 And whoever does not provide for relatives, and especially for family members, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Paul places special emphasis on real widows. Widows at that time, and today, are vulnerable due to lack of financial resources. Paul may be saying that what resources the church has should first be presented to those who have no other means of support. Paul seems to ask family members to care for those in need. He puts no restrictions on the strength of the relationship or how the recipient acts within the family. This is in contrast to the widow that Paul states is living for pleasure and not hoping on God.

Do we differentiate today between types of widowhood?

What impact does any differentiation have on our relationships?

1 Timothy 5:9-10

9 Let a widow be put on the list if she is not less than sixty years old and has been married only once; 10 she must be well attested for her good works, as one who has brought up children, shown hospitality, washed the saints' feet, helped the afflicted, and devoted herself to doing good in every way.

Paul puts a strict age limit on widows that can be helped. The widow also must have evidence of good works in her life. This contrasts with Jesus not placing restrictions on who can follow him and receive salvation.

Why would Paul put restrictions and qualifications for who can be helped as a widow?

1 Timothy 5:11-16

11 But refuse to put younger widows on the list; for when their sensual desires alienate them from Christ, they want to marry, 12 and so they incur condemnation for having violated their first pledge. 13 Besides that, they learn to be idle, gadding about from house to house; and they are not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not say. 14 So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, and manage their households, so as to give the adversary no occasion to revile us. 15 For some have already turned away to follow Satan. 16 If any believing woman has relatives who are really widows, let her assist them; let the church not be burdened, so that it can assist those who are real widows.

Paul's words about younger widows are harsh. He equates wanting to remarry with alienating from Christ. He also directs widows to marry and bear children. He states that widows are turning from God and following Satan. Paul is likely presenting the cultural climate of the times. Since women without husbands were vulnerable, it would not be unlikely for young widows to want to remarry.

If there were widows lists today, how might the culture in church change?

1 Timothy 5:17-19

17 Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching; **18** for the scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves to be paid." **19** Never accept any accusation against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.

Elders who are good administrators, teachers, and preachers should be honored. Let these individuals continue to spread the gospel. Before charging an elder with an offense be certain to get corroboration of 2-3 witnesses. These should be people with direct knowledge and not hearsay.

How does requiring 2-3 direct witnesses honor the office of elder? Should this be a standard for most accusations?

1 Timothy 5:20-25

20 *As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest also may stand in fear. 21 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels, I warn you to keep these instructions without prejudice, doing nothing on the basis of partiality. 22 Do not ordain anyone hastily, and do not participate in the sins of others; keep yourself pure. 23 No longer drink only water, but take a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments. 24 The sins of some people are conspicuous and precede them to judgment, while the sins of others follow them there. 25 So also good works are conspicuous; and even when they are not, they cannot remain hidden.*

Paul makes sweeping final pronouncements to Timothy in these closing verses. Call out sinners publicly as a warning to others. Be impartial. Do not rush to ordain anyone. Do not get caught up in sinful situations perpetrated by others. Paul even tells Timothy to drink a little wine for medicinal purposes. Paul's final 2 verses in this chapter reminds Timothy that people will *not* be able to flee from their sins, however, good works do not need to be broadcast. Good works will come to light.

How can the church avoid partiality?

How does the AME Church process for ordination fit Paul's words?

How do we understand Paul's words to Timothy about wine today?

