

Growing Strong in Faith | Part 9

Lesson 6

1 Timothy 5:17-25, 6:1-2

August 20, 2023

Caring for Others

INTRODUCTION

As Paul continues his directions to Timothy, he spends time on the subject of Elders in the church (5:17-22) and on the relations of masters and slaves (6:1-2; also read employers and employees). He also makes a personal suggestion to Timothy (5:23) and a statement about evaluating others (5:24-25).

As always, remember the context of all passages and, in this case, it is a letter that Paul, the great apostle and missionary, is writing to Timothy, one of his key disciples, who was responsible for the important church in Ephesus which, like many churches, was facing challenges both internally and in how it related to non-Christians. Since human nature has not changed significantly, we find some of these problems in today's church. Let's see what we can apply to our lives from this passage.

Memory verse: "Those who have believing masters should not show them disrespect just because they are fellow believers. Instead, they should serve them even better because their masters are dear to them as fellow believers and are devoted to the welfare of their slaves."

—1 Timothy 6:2

Pray, and read 1 Timothy 5:17-25, 6:1-2. What questions or observations do you have about these passages?

OBSERVATION: What does the passage say?

1. How should we as church members consider elders?
Does Paul say all elders should be considered equally?
Why or why not? (1 Timothy 5:17-18)
2. What are three steps in the discipline of an elder?
(1 Timothy 5:19-21)
3. Paul lists four, short instructions. What are they?
(1 Timothy 5:22-23)
4. What are obvious? (1 Timothy 5:24-25)
5. In relation to masters and slaves, what are Paul's
instructions, and why does he say this is important?
(1 Timothy 6:1-2)

INTERPRETATION: What do the passages mean?

1. How are Paul's instructions for treating elders, who teach, consistent with other Biblical teachings? (Deuteronomy 25:4; 1 Corinthians 9:6-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Timothy 5:17-22)

2. Describe the parallels between Paul's instructions to have qualified elders and how discipline should occur from the Old Testament and Jesus. (Exodus 18:21; Deuteronomy 19:15; Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Timothy 5:19-21) (For a more recent example, see U.S. Constitution, Article III, Section 3, Clause 1)

3. Sometimes a new convert shows great promise, or a famous convert is put out in front as a "headline act." What does the Bible say about such promotions—even of well-educated and famous Paul? (Luke 14:11; Galatians 1:17-18; 1 Timothy 5:22a)

4. Sometimes one's reputation, whether good or bad, precedes them or catches up to them. How does this affect the way we associate with others and evaluate ourselves? (Proverbs 10:9; Ecclesiastes 11:1; 1 Timothy 5:24-25)

APPLICATION: How do the passages apply to your life?

1. Have you ever entertained an accusation against a church elder, or anyone for that matter, without two or three witnesses (i.e., proof; 1 Timothy 5:19)? If so, why did you hold that unfair bias?

2. Paul says that our sins, if not immediately obvious to others, will catch up with us (1 Timothy 5:24). Have you tried to hide any of your sins; did that catch up with you? What were the consequences?

3. Paul says that good deeds are obvious or can't be hidden forever (1 Timothy 5:25) and that those who trust in God should devote themselves to doing what is good because it is profitable for everyone (Titus 3:8). List good deeds that you have done, and explain how you think they were profitable. Do you believe you do enough good deeds, or should you be doing more? Say a prayer for God's guidance on this matter.