

## Sermon or Lesson: 1 Timothy 5:1-3 (NIV based)

[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: How Leaders Are To Treat The People In Their Ministry

INTRO: Each time you come into this ministry, what do you perceive as to how other people here regard you? How do the staff persons regard and treat you? How does the pastor regard and treat you? What have you observed how the pastor and the staff treat other attenders here?

As we are going to learn in this study, God has much to say about how people are to be treated in ministries.

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READ: 1 Timothy 5:1-3, with vv.4:6,15 for context

### BACKGROUND:

- - Good ministers are to both regularly teach and consistently model the truths of the faith to their audience people. (vv.4:11,12)
- - These qualities and practices are vital for facilitating God's transforming impact upon the audience people. (vv.4:15-16)
- - Therefore, those who do ministering to other people are to be striving to develop and enhance their skills and gifting to do ministry in the way God prescribes, as instructed in His Word. (vv.4:14-15)
- - Now let's investigate further to find out what else good ministers are instructed by God to do.

### vv.1-2 - READ

[Lesson Question: How are the men and women in the church to be treated by its leadership, and why?]

SECTION POINT: Ministry leaders are directed by God to regard and treat as close beloved family members the men and women attending their ministry.

- - Proceeding into chapter 5 of 1 Timothy, the directives from God continue to be given to those persons doing ministry work.
- - In verses 1-2, the directive pertains to how to treat the "hearers", attenders, or recipients of one's ministry functioning. (v.4:16)
- - Those persons who attend ministry activities are deserving of respect.
- - They are to be treated in a gentle, persuasive, and "exhorting" manner, which by implication would include extending care, concern, compassion, and etc. (v.5:1)
- - And furthermore, attenders are to be treated in all "purity", suggesting that respectful, decent, kindly, considerate, and honorable treatment are always to be extended. (v.2)
- - Attenders are not to be treated in a harsh, or "rebuking", or criticizing manner. (v.1)
- - This directive includes all categories of attenders, specifically cited here as including older men, younger men, older women, and younger women.
- - Essentially, the ministry worker is to treat each of their attenders like a close beloved family member.
- - Therefore, the ministry worker must possess the mental attitude of regarding each of their attenders "as if" they are close beloved family members. (v.1)

- - Certainly, extending this kind of treatment will require substantial and perhaps prolonged patient endurance when encountering a difficult, abrasive, or caustic attender.

- - Regardless of the behaviors of the attender, a ministry leader verbally reaming out, ranting or railing against, or "harshly" "rebuking" any person attending a ministry or church is forbidden by God in these verses. (v.1)

- - People included in this would be observers, participants, visitors, church members, workers, staff - in other words every person present in the ministry or the church.

- - Pastors, elders, deacons, and ministry leaders certainly need to thoroughly heed this directive from God, particularly if they want to be regarded by God as "a good minister". (v.4:6)

- - Furthermore, the effectiveness of their ministry efforts is directly tied to and dependent upon how well they heed and implement God's directives like this one. (v.4:16)

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### v.3 - READ

[Lesson Question: How are the widows in the church to be treated by its leadership and why?]

SECTION POINT: Ministry leaders are directed by God to regard and treat with honor the widows attending their ministry.

- - God is likewise concerned and directive about how ministry leaders and workers are to treat widows.

- - Widows are worthy to be "given proper recognition" or "honored", being "prized, valued, and revered". (Strong's #5091)

- - Apparently though, this recognition is to be made from the distinction that the person "really" is a widow. (Strong's #3689)

- - This "really" distinction implies that the widow is "deficient" of a means of support, having no husband or family to earn and provide food, shelter, clothing, and other basic essentials for her. (Strong's #5503; see vv.4-5)

- - Therefore, the leadership in the church or ministry has an obligation before God to monitor the situation and plight of every widow in their congregation or ministry.

- - Widows who genuinely are deficient in their means of support are worthy of honor, rather than to be viewed with disdain or annoyance because they are in need of support.

- - In the church or ministry, these widows are to be treated like family members, just like the other people are to be treated as described in verses 1-2.

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BIG IDEA: Ministry leaders are directed by God to treat each of their people with gentleness, encouragement, propriety, and honor, as a close beloved family member.

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### APPLICATIONS:

- - For those of you who are a leader in a ministry, what is the atmosphere and organizational culture you are creating and sustaining in terms of how your people are being treated?

- - Are you consistently modeling what is being described in these verses - gentleness, encouragement, honor, and proper treatment of other people?
  - - And do you treat each one of them like close beloved family members?
  - - Or are you detached and impatient with them, short-fused and prone to perpetrating disparaging lectures?
  - - Do you think you are justified in chewing them out, dispensing a verbal scolding that is disguised to sound pious?
  - - Do you treat your staff, subordinates, and workers with "harshness" or rebuke, particularly when you are having a private one-on-one meeting with them?
  - - Is this mistreatment how you interact with your spouse and close family members?
  - - Why not commit and devote yourself right now to improving your ministering functioning in this regard?
  - - Start making tangible changes and substantial progress that are evident to other people working with you and to those you are ministering to. (v.4:15)
  - - Establish and maintain the priority of striving to improve in these regards.
  - - Right now, recommit and reinvigorate your self-improvement efforts personally and/or ministerially.
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- - For all of the rest of us here, do you regard and treat everyone attending this ministry as fellow family members?
  - - Take a moment and look around the room. (pause) Some people here may be your close friends, some may be acquaintances, some may be strangers, - and some may even be your enemies!
  - - Do you always possess and exhibit the Christ-like character qualities of these verses in your regard for each of these persons? And when you interact with any of them?
  - - What do you need to do to make significant improvements in this regard?

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[Additional Lesson Question to ponder (optional, if time allows):

- - From the principles asserted in these verses, what are the implications for how genuinely poor people are to be regarded and treated in this ministry? Why?]
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Works Cited:

Bible. "The Holy Bible: New International Version." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

"Strong's Greek Dictionary." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

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File name: 1Timothy5\_1-3-SermonOrLesson.\_\_\_\_ (.htm, .doc, .pdf)  
 Translation used: NIV, quoted or referred to in various places within this document  
 Source: www.BelieverAssist.com  
 Updated: April 6, 2017