Healthy Churches

**Honor Each Other**

(1 Timothy 5:1-6:2)

***5****1 Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, 2 older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.*

*3 Honor widows who are truly widows. 4 But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household and to make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God. 5She who is truly a widow, left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day, 6 but she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives. 7Command these things as well, so that they may be without reproach. 8But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

*9 Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband, 10 and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work. 11 But refuse to enroll younger widows, for when their passions draw them away from Christ, they desire to marry 12 and so incur condemnation for having abandoned their former faith. 13 Besides that, they learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not. 14 So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander. 15 For some have already strayed after Satan. 16 If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them. Let the church not be burdened, so that it may care for those who are truly widows. (ESV)*

*Healthy Churches*

* Guard the gospel message (1)
* Pray (2)
* Develop godly leaders (3)
* Discern truth from error (4)

*Healthy churches honor each other sensitively* (5:1-2)

Older men – Younger men – Older women – Younger women

*Healthy churches honor those who are vulnerable and in need* (5:3-16)

***Exodus 22:21-24***

*21“You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. 22You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child. 23If you do mistreat them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry, 24and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.*

***Deuteronomy 27:19***

*“‘Cursed be anyone who perverts the justice due to the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’*

***Isaiah 1:16-17***

*16Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes;  
cease to do evil, 17 learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow’s cause.*

***Mark 12:38-40***

*38And in his teaching he said, “Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces 39and have the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, 40who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation.”*

***James 1:27***

*“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”*

* Direct family responsibility (vs. 3-8)
* Church family ministry (vs. 9-16)

*The Character Qualifications*

60 years old

Wife of one husband

Reputation for good works

Brought up children

Shown hospitality

Washed the feet of the saints

Care for the afflicted

Devoted herself to every good work