



The Importance of Accountability in Relationships (1 Timothy 5:1-2)

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I. Accountability Within the Body of Christ According to 1 Timothy 5:1-2

- A. In Timothy's teaching, encouraging, and correcting of people in His leadership position, he was to do so appealing to each individual as He would a person within a family context.
- B. "Paul emphasizes the minister's responsibility to care for people and to admonish them when they sin or are disobedient to God. Each person is to be treated as a family member. Older men and women are to be exhorted with respect, as parents. Younger men and women are to be exhorted as siblings, brothers and sisters in the faith."¹
- C. "Throughout the Bible various metaphors are applied to the church to emphasize particular qualities. In these verses Paul described the relationship between the pastor and the members of his congregation in terms of a family. As a family unit, believers are to interact with love and honor."²
- D. By implication, we should all treat each other within the Body of Christ as part of a family unit, appealing to them according to the family unit they most likely fit when having to address sinful issues in their lives. Every man or woman is to be loved in such a way that he or she would encounter the love of God through you as you respectfully correct them as you would a brother, sister, mother, or father.
- E. In essence, we are all responsible for holding each other accountable in the Body of Christ to maintain consistency in our communion with God, character development into Christ-likeness, and connection to others in a loving way as promoted and prescribed by God. We are responsible for handling every man and woman lovingly and respectfully, while appealing to them and correcting them as you would a brother, sister, mother, or father.

¹ George W. III Knight, "1-2 Timothy/Titus," in *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*, Vol. 3, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1995), 1107.

² Knute Larson, *I & II Thessalonians, I & II Timothy, Titus, Philemon*, Vol. 9, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 220.

Definition of Accountability: The checking on one another, the challenging of one another, and the caring for one another in the body of Christ in relation to one another's lifestyle and living conditions, in order to keep each other on track in conformity to truth and love as presented and promoted by Christ our Lord.

II. How Do We Apply 1 Timothy 5:1-2 In Our Relationships Within the Body of Christ?

- A. We are called to come alongside and to entreat one another on a consistent basis to deal with issues of sin and to develop in the practice or righteousness in order to protect each other from the pitfalls of sin. (Hebrews 3:12-13) As a result:
- B. We are called to stimulate one another to love and good deeds since we are individually and collectively apart of the Body of Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 10:24)
- C. We are called to admonish the unruly– to correct, challenge, reprimand, and advise those individuals who are out order as it relates to God's guidelines and guard rails for living; to make one aware of faults committed, warn the guilty and challenge them to correct themselves.³ (1 Thessalonians 5:14)
- D. We are called to encourage the fainted hearted– to seek to soothe and cheer up, or comfort those individuals who are discouraged, have lost hope, or lack courage; to speak to someone in a friendly way with reference to what ought to be done.⁴ (1 Thessalonians 5:14)
- E. We are called to help the weak– “to assist in supplying what may be needed”⁵ to individuals to overcome their lack of moral strength, courage or will; to be devoted to helping people overcome their indecisiveness, doubting, hesitating, vacillating in opinion or in faith.⁶ (1 Thessalonians 5: 14)
- F. We are called to watch, warn, and remove, where necessary, people from within the group who cause confusion and hinder the spiritual development of others within the group. (Romans 16:17, Titus 3:10-11)

³ Ceslas Spicq and James D. Ernest, *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 549.

⁴ Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich, and Geoffrey William Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Abridged in One Volume* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1985), 784.

⁵ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 457.

⁶ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000).

**III. Considerations for Our Relationships With The Opposite Sex In Regards to
1 Timothy 5:1-2**

- A. Every man or woman is to be loved in such a way that he or she would encounter the love of God through you as you treat them as you would want to be treated and even better than you would want to be treated as we relate as ambassadors for Jesus Christ and builders of His kingdom people.
- B. Every man or woman is to be loved in such a way that he or she would encounter the love of God through you as you treat them as you would a brother, sister, mother, or father as we relate as ambassadors for Jesus Christ and builders of His kingdom people.
- C. Every man or woman is to be loved in such a way that he or she would encounter the love of God through you as you correct them as you would a brother, sister, mother, or father accordingly as we relate as ambassadors for Jesus Christ and builders of His kingdom people.
- D. Treating the opposite sex as a brother, sister, mother, or father as you respectfully and lovingly correct would promote holiness and God-honoring love between the opposite sexes as we relate as ambassadors for Jesus Christ and builders of His kingdom people.
- E. Treating the opposite sex as a brother, sister, mother, or father as you respectfully and lovingly correct would help men and women function as God-honoring family members to one another as opposed to illegitimate lovers with one another, thereby promoting a community of relating that God intended before the fall of Adam and Eve as we relate as ambassadors for Jesus Christ and builders of His kingdom people.

Questions to Ask To Hold People Accountable

1. How is your relationship with God right now?
2. What are your greatest confusions about your relationship with God?
3. Have you spent adequate time in Bible study and prayer?
4. What have you read in the Bible in the past week?
5. What has God said to you in this reading?
6. Where do you find yourself resisting Him these days?
7. What specific things are you praying for in regard to yourself?
8. Have you fulfilled the mandates of your calling?
9. What are the specific tasks facing you right now that you consider incomplete?
10. What habits intimidate you?
11. What challenges do you think you're going to face in the coming week? Month?
12. What would you say are your fears at this present time?
13. Are you sleeping well?
14. What have you read in the secular press this week?
15. What general reading are you doing?
16. What have you done to play?
17. Have you given priority time to your family, church members, and friends?
18. How are you doing with your spouse, siblings, children, parents, church members, or friends?
19. If I were to ask your spouse, siblings, children, parents, church members, or friends about your state of mind, state of spirit, and state of energy level, what would the response be?
20. Are there any unresolved conflicts in your circle of relationships right now?
21. Are you sensing spiritual attacks from the enemy right now?
22. If Satan were to try to invalidate you as a person or as a servant of the Lord, how might he do it?
23. What is the state of your sexual perspective? Tempted? Dealing with fantasies? Entertainment?
24. Have you been with a woman or man anywhere this past week that might be seen as compromising?
25. Have you exposed yourself to any sexually explicit material?
26. Where are you financially right now? (Things under control? Under anxiety? In great debt?)
27. Have any of your financial dealings lacked integrity?
28. Have you lied to me in your answers to any of these questions?

Questions adapted from: Paul Borthwick, *Leading the Way* (Navpress, 1989, pp. 171-172) and C. Colson, *The Body*.