

**Growth Group Lesson**  
**November 19-20**  
1 Timothy 5:17-25

**Recap:** Paul calls Timothy, and by extension the church, to treat fellow believers as family members. In calling the church to live as family, Paul discusses three areas in which this applies to the life of the church: honoring widows, elders, and masters of slaves.

**Spend some time praying with your group.** Praise God for his presence and guidance in your group so far. Ask him to continue to grow and mature you so that you may be more like him.

**Get to know one another:**

1. Share an impactful story from your childhood that has shaped your life.

**Read 1 Timothy 5:17-20**

Paul reminds Timothy that faithful elders deserve double honor. Though Paul has been correcting elders that have allowed false teaching in the church, faithful elders deserve respect and honor for their “noble task.”

2. What is the honor that Paul says elders should receive? **1 Cor. 9:1-14, Lev. 6:14-18, Luke 10:1-9**
3. How are we involved in giving this honor to elders and leaders in our church? **Heb. 13:17**
4. Why does Paul require two or three witnesses against an elder? Does this mean that accusations by a single person should be ignored? **Deut. 19:15-21**
5. Clearly, Paul recognizes that some elders will be guilty of serious sin, as in the case in Ephesus. Why does Paul require such serious reproving for elders who have sinned? **Verse 20, Titus 1:5-16**

**Read 1 Timothy 5:21-25**

Paul gives Timothy direction in choosing new elders, not choosing people based on favoritism or who have not given adequate evidence for the manner of their life.

6. What’s the danger in choosing an elder or leader based on favoritism? Which traits do we typically gravitate towards as opposed to traits that God desires in a leader? **1 Sam. 16:7, James 2:1-13**
7. How has favoritism affected the people you spend time with and invest resources in? Are there some people or groups of people in your life that you struggle to accept?
  - a. What is Jesus’ heart towards all people? **1 Tim 2:3-6, Matt. 9:35-38**
  - b. Are there people in your life whom you neglect to share the Gospel with because of favoritism (or any other reason)? Would you like to change?
8. Why does Paul caution Timothy to not be hasty to choose new elders? **Verses 22, 24-25, 1 Tim 3:6-7**
9. Why does Paul tell Timothy to keep himself pure? **Titus 1:15, Heb. 5:14, Phil 1:9-10, Romans 12:2**
  - a. How are purity and discernment linked?

- b. Why is discernment such a valuable quality to have?
- c. How do we grow in our ability to discern right and wrong? **Heb. 4:11-12**
- d. Reflect on your own ability to discern right from wrong. What has helped you have discernment in your life?
- e. What areas do you need help with? Where can you find that help? **James 1:5-7**

Paul reflects on Jesus' sayings on our actions as evidence of the state of our hearts. Paul says that "our deeds that are not obvious cannot remain hidden forever (**1 Tim. 5:25**). Read these passages: **Matt. 7:15-20, Matt. 23:27-28, Luke 6:43-45, Gal. 5:16-26**

10. If you were to look at the tree of your life, what kind of fruit are you bearing? (You are allowed to say good things about yourself in front of others, so don't only go with bad fruit).
11. How could you come alongside others you know who are struggling in this area?

**Spend some time praying.**

- Ask God for wisdom in how to honor our church leaders.
- Ask God for purity and discernment in the lives of our elders, our church family, and our group members.
- Ask God for people who can support us in our walk with Christ and for people we can support.
- Ask God for a softened heart for those that do not know him. Ask for opportunities to share your faith with someone this week.