



## “HOW TO PROPERLY CONFRONT SIN”

### 1 Timothy 5:1-2

**Theme:** *Lovingly & humbly confronting sin is a commitment not only to God’s truth but to the family of God.*

**Introduction:** “You do you; I’ll do me” is a philosophy of life that possesses some merit. Of course, we are to be primarily focused on our own struggles, failures, and sins. There are some people to refuse to consider their own need for grace and focus instead on what other people ought to do. Such hypocrites give the biblical confrontation of sin a “bad rap!” At the same time, many are not interested in being assisted in their awareness of their sin because, for them, life isn’t about genuine progress toward Christlikeness, it is about self-affirmation. Such people react poorly to someone approaching them – “Get the log out of your own eye” is their defense. While Jesus’ charge for each of us to be primarily focused on our own sin, He does not intend for this to eliminate the genuine love for one another that causes us to approach someone and seek to help them progress in following Christ more.

When the motivation for confronting sin is genuine love for Christ, causing the desire for Him to be well-served; and a genuine love for another, causing the desire for them to be delivered from sin, it is not “being judgmental,” but loving. Perhaps a reason many of us struggle in defeat is that no one loves us enough to approach us and seek to help us. The “you do you; I’ll do me” mentality will destroy the church. We need each other as we battle our flesh and seek the glory of Christ Jesus in all things. Hence, ***“Lovingly & humbly confronting sin is a commitment not only to God’s truth but to the family of God.”***

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| <p>I.     <b>The Rebuke of Sin – 5:1</b></p> <p>II.    <b>The Respect for Sinners – 5:1-2a</b></p> <p>III.   <b>The Righteousness in Serving – 5:2b</b></p> |
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### I.     **THE REBUKE OF SIN – 5:1A**

#### A.     **The Obligation to Correct Error**

1.     Paul is deeply concerned about the impact that the false teachers are having on the saints in Ephesus – insisting that Timothy:

- a) *Instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines (chapter 1).*
  - b) *Insist on proper conduct in worship - (chapter 2).*
  - c) *Insist on qualified spiritual leaders only (chapter 3).*
  - d) *Isolate the Scriptures as the sole authority for the church (chapter 4).*
2. Because Timothy was charged to *“point out these things to the brethren”* (4:6), to *“prescribe and teach these things”* (4:11), and to *“pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevering in these things”* (4:16), any deviation from the truth must be confronted.
- a) *Jesus demonstrated the careful, deliberate approach to someone who has fallen into sin or strayed from the truth - cp. Matthew 18:15-18.*
  - b) *Paul tells the Galatians that they ought to seek to restore those who are wayward “... in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.” - Galatians 6:1.*
3. With this in mind, we are to be engaged in “admonishing one another” – cp. Romans 15:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:14.

## **B. The Objective in Correcting Error**

1. The spirit with which we do this is not one of glee or spiritual superiority.
2. Our desire is to be engaged in seeking the restoration of the errant brother, calling them back to obedience to the truth.
3. In Paul’s follow-up letter to Timothy, we are told that the goal is the ability to deliver a person from the error of their ways – cp. 2 Timothy 2:24-26.
4. Also, Jesus had indicated that the “winning of the brother” – cp. Matthew 18:15.
5. It is the responsibility of every believer to be involved in the lives of others, to be engaged in helping others follow Christ more – to care enough about them to seek to fulfill the love of Christ by helping them through difficulties by pointing them back to the truth – cp. Galatians 6:2.

## **II. THE RESPECT FOR SINNERS - 5:1-2A**

### **A. The Attitude of Honor**

1. Given the fact that Timothy is a young man, he must demonstrate the greatest levels of spiritual integrity as he engages others who need to follow Christ more.
2. He cautions Timothy that his approach to confronting others must be one

of respect and honor, even if they are errant.

3. He says to Timothy, *“Do not sharply rebuke ...”* [ἐπιπλήσσω] – a term that is used only here in the NT and conveys a harshness or to rail against someone.
4. It has the sense of censuring someone with severity or angrily.
5. Instead, we are to *“appeal”* to one another [παρακαλέω] - to call to one’s side for consultation, comfort, or confrontation.
  - a) *This suggests that it should not be done in public (at least initially).*
  - b) *It should be done privately - cp. Matthew 18:15.*
6. The desire must be one seeking to honor the person being confronted so that there is no question but that the motivation is one of love for both Christ, who deserves our faithfulness to Him as well as to the person who needs to follow Christ more.

## B. The Affections that Honor

1. The Church is described in Scripture with various metaphors, including a Body, a Bride, a Flock, and a Family – cp. Galatians 2:19; Galatians 6:10.
2. God is our Father, and Jesus describes Himself as our “brother” – cp. Hebrews 2:11-13.
3. Thus, our affection for one another is described as “brotherly love” [φιλαδελφία] – cp. Romans 12:10.
4. Hence, our love is a familial love that ought to dominate all our interactions within the family.
5. Here, Paul instructs Timothy to honor the family dynamic of devotion to one another in an age-appropriate approach to those to whom he must make an appeal – *“do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father ....”*
  - a) *The responsibility is to honor older men [πρεσβύτερος] - cp. Leviticus 19:32; Isaiah 47:6.*
  - b) *Notice that Paul doesn’t state Timothy should avoid confronting an “older man,” but simply that the approach must provide honor to him.*
6. Timothy must also approach *“the younger men as brothers”* – or as equals so that no air of superiority tarnishes the approach.
7. He then must approach *“the older women as mothers”* – conveying the highest respect and honor with a spirit of humility.
8. Finally, Timothy is charged to approach *“the younger women as sisters, in*

*all purity.”*

- a) *In this charge, Paul informs Timothy that he must approach a young woman indifferently to her sexuality and without the slightest impropriety.*
- b) *He deals with her and her errors as an older brother who seeks her welfare and honor.*
- c) *The highest ethical standards must be present - with the excellent care that those who observe can see propriety, modesty, respect, and honor being preserved in an exemplary way.*

### III. THE RIGHTEOUSNESS IN SERVING – 5:2B

#### A. The Caution re: Purity

1. In a day of rampant immorality, sensuality, and disregard for chastity, Paul’s charge to Timothy rings like a singular bell among the silence of standards.
2. Some would scoff at the need to be careful that one remains above reproach and free from even the appearance of evil – cp. *1 Thessalonians 5:22*.
3. If we will remain examples of the believer in conduct and purity (cp. 1 Timothy 4:12), we cannot be careless in the way we interact with people of the opposite sex.
4. Instead of having to mourn the inadvertent indulgence in some temptation, we must deliberately avoid placing ourselves in a position where temptation can entrap us – cp. *Romans 13:14*.
5. As rampant as sexual temptations are in our society and culture – we are tempted to view our casual dalliances with sexual temptation as “not that bad.”
6. Some may justify defrauding behavior – that is, raising desires in others for indulgence – because others around us are doing far worse.
7. Yet, Paul tells Timothy and, by extension, all of us that our interactions with others must be *“in all purity.”* –
8. One of the reasons this is crucial is that when we begin to interact on levels where our souls are being addressed, attractions can spark that must be deliberately managed and controlled.

#### B. The Commitment to Purity

1. In the attempt to provide practical ways to maintain a commitment to “all purity,” we rely on God’s Spirit to provide us with integrity.

2. Our participation in this can be summarized with the following acrostic for PURITY:
- a) P - Peering - looking upon someone with desire - *Proverbs 6:25.*
  - b) U - Unreservedness (Flirtation) - *Proverbs 5:3-4.*
  - c) R - Rendezvousing - *Proverbs 7:7, 15, 18.*
  - d) I - Isolating - *Proverbs 5:8.*
  - e) T - Touching - *1 Thessalonians 4:3-5.*
  - f) Y - Yearning (Fantasy) - *Matthew 5:28.*

### So What?

1. Can you recall an occasion when you were helped spiritually by someone caring enough about you to confront you with sin?
2. Have you ever biblically confronted another believer when they were in sin?
3. Why is it difficult to maintain a loving spirit when confronting someone with sin?
4. Is there a prompting by God's Spirit to seek to help another follow Christ more?

***Our obedience to Scripture has a significant impact on the faith of those around us.***