
Sermon Notes

May 9, 2021

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

Family Matters 1 Timothy 5:1-8

The Church

- ❖ Scripture uses many different word pictures to describe the unique qualities and characteristics that make a church a church
 - a holy nation
 - a kingdom
 - a priesthood
 - a vine
 - a temple
 - a body
 - an assembly
 - a flock
 - a family
- ❖ Paul underscores the intimacy, care, openness and love shared among the members of God's family (Ephesians 2:19, Galatians 6:10)

What Family Is

- ❖ Every Christian has the same Father (“Our Father”)
- ❖ We all become members of God's family in the same way, through adoption
- ❖ Once we become members of God's family, we enter into a close relationship with our Father through the Holy Spirit
 - we cry out: *Abba, Father*
 - we eat at the same table
 - we look forward to sharing in the same family reunion in heaven
- ❖ Jesus' words on family ties: Mark 3:31-35
- ❖ God calls Christians to find their personal and their family identity in Jesus Christ

What Family Does

- ❖ Lovingly confronts sin
 - disobedience must be dealt with
 - protecting one another against sin is the true sign of a loving family
- ❖ Problems and issues that plague the early church
 - the condition of the spiritual family in Ephesus needs some straightening out
 - the effects of sin spread around among God's people like leaven (yeast) spreads in bread dough
- ❖ Respecting those who are older

- this does not mean “anything goes”
- the heresies and scandalous behavior of the Ephesian elders cannot simply be overlooked or ignored
- the issue is not **whether** this is to be done but **how** it is to be done
- an exhortation is meant to be an encouragement for the one to whom it is addressed
 - a reminder, not a reprimand
 - such rebukes are meant to be restorative, redemptive and remedial
- ❖ Respect flows both ways
 - treat younger men as brothers
 - don’t “talk down” to those who are younger
 - “Older men should treat their juniors with fraternity; younger men should treat their seniors with humility.” (Philip Ryken)
- ❖ Older women should be treated as mothers **should** be treated
 - mothers are to be loved and listened to
 - mothers must be protected and cared for
- ❖ Treat *younger women as sisters, in all purity*
 - tender affection
 - no impropriety

- ❖ Looking out for widows
 - Paul provides extended teaching about how God’s family is intended to care for widows
 - the Ephesians needed help knowing how to care for their widows
- ❖ God is frequently referred to as “the protector of widows” in the Old Testament (Deu 10:17-18, Psalm 68:5)
 - widows were especially vulnerable in the ancient world
 - God wants His children to share His heart for the fatherless and husbandless
- ❖ ***Honor widows who are truly widows***
 - “A widow in need is a widow indeed”
 - watching out for widows not only demonstrates family loyalty but it is also pleasing to God
 - those who are ***left all alone***
- ❖ The example of Anna in Luke 2:36-37
 - the prayers of widows give strength to the church
 - all who make up the body of Christ are blessed by and benefit from their prayers

Personal Application

1. After reading and considering what Paul writes in 1 Timothy 5:1-8, where do you “fit” in the family of faith? What role do you believe God is calling you to in terms of serving either fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers and/or widows within the church? What practical steps will you pursue to fulfill this calling?