

Respect for Each Other

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Respect for Each Other

Our nation has changed in so many ways, and this is so evident in the respect we have for each other. This is reflected in the way we sometimes speak to others. Since the words which come from our lips show what is in our hearts, to solve the problem we need to change the way we see each other. Jesus said, “For out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks” ([Matt. 12:34](#)). The way we talk to each other should be that which edifies and builds up, and imparts “...grace to the hearers” ([Eph. 4:29](#)). How should we regard others as we speak with them? How do we show our respect for them?

Paul’s instruction to young Timothy illustrates the attitude of respect which should characterize each of us. Evidently, Timothy was faced with rebuking older men who were Christians and needed to make changes in their lives. Paul said, “Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father” (1 Tim. 5:1). The Greek word for “rebuke” in this passage literally means “to pound, to flatten, to strike with blows.” There is never a time for young men to look at older individuals and treat with disdain. Yet, so often in our day the respect for those who are older no longer exists.

Look at how the Holy Spirit of God described for this young man to deal with those older men in his world. There is never a time for harsh words from arrogant hearts to berate anyone. Paul told this young man to speak to those older as he would his own father.

Paul then turned his attention to the way Timothy was to speak to those near his own age or even younger. How should young men treat their peers? Deal with them as you would deal with your own brother. The term “brotherly love” says so much about the respect we must have for each other ([Rom. 12:10](#); [Heb. 13:1](#); 2 Pet. 1:7).

How should Timothy treat older women? Paul says he should have the same respect he gives his own mother (1 Tim. 5:2). That special place mothers have in our hearts reflects the attitude we need to have toward all older women.



Do your behaviors and words show respect?

Finally, Paul discusses the respect young men should have toward young women. They should be treated as sisters with all purity. Barnes' commentary says it this way, "He was therefore to guard his heart with more than common vigilance in such circumstances and was to indulge in no word, or look or action which could be by any possibility construed as manifesting an improper state of feeling."

Take time to apply these principles to every relationship and the respect we should have for each other. Respect everyone, older and younger, with the dignity God sees in them. It might not change the world, but it will change yours!

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