

Introduction

We are in the midst of a study of the book of 1 Timothy. The Apostle Paul wrote an urgent letter to Timothy to get the church back in order. There were six main areas that Paul addressed in his letter. I have entitled this series Six Characteristics of a Healthy Church.

(1 Timothy 3:14-15) "I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; {15} but in case I am delayed, I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth."

In the first week, we covered Sound Doctrine. It is critical that the foundations of our faith in Christ are solid. It is critical that the foundations of our church are solid. It is critical that the foundations in our relationships are solid. A solid foundation is essential for healthy lives and a healthy church.

David said in Psalms 11:3, "if the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?" We have been repairing some of the foundations that were laid in the past and making sure that they are in great shape so that we can move forward.

(Psalms 11:3) "If the foundations are destroyed, What can the righteous do?"

Jesus said in Matthew 7:24-27 that a wise man builds his house upon the rock. The rock is referring to a foundation. We build houses on solid foundations. The word of God is the foundation that we build upon. Jesus said that a foolish man does not hear and act on the words of Christ. His house is built on sand, and will come down in the storms of life. As a church, we want to build on a solid foundation, the solid foundation of the word of God. It is important that we build on sound doctrine.

(Matthew 7:24-27) ""Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock. {25} "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock. {26} "And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. {27} "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall.""

Six Characteristics of a Healthy Church

September 9, 2012 Healthy Church # 1: Sound Doctrine
September 16, 2012 Healthy Church # 2: Prayer (1 Tim 2)
September 23, 2012 Healthy Church # 3: Order Part 1 (Elders, 1 Tim 3:1-7)
September 30, 2012 Healthy Church # 3: Order Part 2 Service (Deacons, 1 Tim 3:8-12)
October 14, 2012 Healthy Church # 4: Godliness
October 21, 2012 Healthy Church # 5: Honor (1 Tim 5-6)
October 28, 2012 Health Church # 6: Focus on God

The second characteristic was prayer. Paul exhorted the church to pray. He exhorted them to pray with entreaties, prayers, petitions or intercessions, and thanksgivings. Jesus said, "My house is to be a house of prayer." We want to be a church that prays. The third characteristic of a healthy church is order. Proper order in the church involves setting in elders and deacons in the church.

Characteristics of Healthy Churches # 5: Honor

Last week Tony shared with us the fourth characteristic of a healthy church, godliness. He shared how we are to discipline ourselves for godliness. Godliness is a theme that runs throughout the book of 1 Timothy. Sound doctrine produces godly living. Paul uses the word godliness nine times in the book of Timothy.

In chapter two, Paul says that we are to pray for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. Paul also said that we need to live uprightly, because our conduct affects our prayer life. When talking about the way women, he says that they should dress modestly, and with an inward beauty. They should have be submissive, as befits women making a claim to godliness. The second characteristic of a healthy church, prayer, also produces godliness.

(1 Timothy 2:2) "for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity."

(1 Timothy 2:9-11) "Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; {10} but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness. {11} Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness."

Paul wraps up chapter three, where he has been talking about leadership, with a hymn. In this hymn, he says, "by common confession great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, beheld by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory." This mystery of godliness is referring to how we obtain our godliness. The Jews thought that it was by the works of the law. The works of the law never could produce godliness. The law gave us a standard. The law made us accountable for our actions. The law was a tutor to bring us to Christ, but the law could not produce godliness. The mystery, or hidden secret, was that we obtain salvation and godliness through faith in Christ.

(1 Timothy 3:16) "And by common confession great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Beheld by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory."

Paul wrote that "He who knew no sin was made sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." We are made godly by the blood of Christ shed on our behalf. Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth in the flesh and lived a sinless life. He died and was resurrected to life. He was vindicated in the Spirit. Now, He is proclaimed among the nations and believed on in the world. It is by believing in Christ that we obtain this mystery of godliness.

(2 Corinthians 5:21) "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

Paul said in Ephesians that we are saved by faith, and that not of ourselves. It is the gift of God, not as a result of works, that no one should boast. Our godliness does not come as a result of good works. It comes as a result of our faith in Christ. The question this morning is do you believe that Christ Jesus came to earth, that He is the Son of God, and that He died for our sins? Have you received Him and confessed Him as Lord? That is the confession of the mystery of godliness.

Characteristics of Healthy Churches # 5: Honor

(Ephesians 2:8-9) "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; {9} not as a result of works, that no one should boast."

Then, in chapter four, Paul said that we are to discipline ourselves for the purpose of godliness. I discipline myself for the purpose of bodily discipline. I try to run every day at lunch time. I am interested in maintaining good health. I am committed to a regular exercise program. But, that does not produce godliness. We are to discipline ourselves for the purpose of godliness. We need to be disciplined in our prayer life. We need to be disciplined in our devotionals. We need to be disciplined in our fellowshiping together. We need to be disciplined in our finances, so that we can honor God with the first of our produce. We need to discipline ourselves for the purpose of godliness.

(1 Timothy 4:7-8) "But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; {8} for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come."

In chapter six, Paul revisits his thoughts about sound doctrine. He says that if anyone advocates a different doctrine, and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing. Again, sound doctrine helps mold us or conform us to godliness.

(1 Timothy 6:3-6) "If anyone advocates a different doctrine, and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, {4} he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, {5} and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. {6} But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment."

He goes on to say that some of these false teachers think that godliness is a means of gain. The church is full of prosperity preachers that promise great gain from their Christianity. He states that these men are depraved of mind and deprived of truth. Then, Paul says that godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment.

Paul finished up chapter six with an exhortation to Timothy to pursue six things. He tells him to flee from pursuing worldly things. He tells him to flee pursuing the desire to be rich. Instead, he wants Timothy to pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness. Notice that godliness is a thread that runs throughout the book of 1 Timothy. Godliness is the fourth characteristic of a healthy church.

(1 Timothy 6:11) "But flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness."

The fifth characteristic is honoring one another. The sixth and final characteristic is having proper focus in our lives. We must fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, and not on the uncertainty of riches. We must have a proper perspective on wealth.

Characteristics of Healthy Churches # 5: Honor

This morning we are going to look at the fifth characteristic of a healthy church, honor. Chapter five and the first two verses of chapter six are about how to honor one another. He speaks of honoring older men, younger men, older women, and younger women. Paul speaks about honoring widows in the church. He also speaks of honoring leaders in the church. Finally, he speaks to slaves about honoring their masters, particularly those who have believers as their masters. The most obvious application for us today, is to honor those in authority over us in the workplace.

Two more quick thoughts about honor before we get to chapter five. In chapter one, we saw that Paul acknowledged that he was the chief of sinners, the foremost of all. He recognized God's great mercy towards him and it produced a grateful heart. He breaks out in praise to God. He says, "now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."

(1 Timothy 1:17) "Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."

Paul also ends this letter to Timothy by honoring God. He says, "He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen." Paul begins the letter honoring God and he ends the letter by honoring God.

(1 Timothy 6:15-16) "which He will bring about at the proper time-- He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords; {16} who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen."

We want to be a church that is full of thanksgiving and praise to God. We want to be a church that honors God with our songs. We also want to be a church that honors God with our tithes and offerings, with the first of our produce. Most of you know that I do not harp on finances. I encourage people to be faithful. Faithful people will honor God in their giving. We want to be a church that honors God in our worship, in our lives, in our giving, and in our relationships.

(Proverbs 3:9-10) "Honor the LORD from your wealth, And from the first of all your produce; {10} So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine."

Earlier this year, we did a series on Healthy Relationships. In that series, I did a message on honor. I spoke more extensively on honoring God with our finances. I encourage you to revisit those notes or listen to the CD, as we will not be covering those points this morning.

The last thing I want to mention before diving into our text is the meaning of Timothy's name. It is no coincidence that Paul writes this special letter to Timothy. The word Timothy means one who honors God. The two Greek root words are time and Theos. The word time means the price paid for something. A good way to look at this was an Olympian athlete. They paid the price for their honor through extensive training and conditioning. When they received the prize for winning, it was something they had earned. They had paid the price.

G5092. time, tee-may'; from G5099; a value, i.e. money paid, or valuables; by analogy esteem (especially of the highest degree), or the dignity itself:--honour, precious, price, some.

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G2316. theos, theh'-os; of uncert. affin.; a deity, espec. (with G3588) the supreme Divinity; figuratively a magistrate; by Heb. very:--X exceeding, God, god [-ly, -ward].

So let's dive in and look at how we are to conduct ourselves in the church, the pillar and support of truth.

1. Honor One Another As Family Members

Paul gives us a number of different examples of how we are to honor one another. All four of the examples that he gives involves family members. He tells us to honor an older man by appealing to him as a father. He tells us to honor older women, as a mother. We are to honor younger men as brothers. We are to honor younger women as sisters. This tells us the importance of the family. We learn how to properly relate to one another in the family.

Karen has home-schooled all of our children. We have received lots of criticism about this decision over the years. The most widespread criticism has been about social development. People have said that our children would be socially reclusive and have poor people skills if we do not put them around other children in either a public or private school. They said that they need to learn how to relate to other children.

What we have found is that our children did not suffer at all in social development. We found that in the home, they learned to have love for one another. They learned how to honor their mother and father. They learned, with the guidance of parents, how to properly relate to one another. Our children were taught how to relate to one another, how to get along with one another at home. They had the right kind of training needed to develop healthy social skills.

The results were that our children knew how to talk to adults, outside of our family. They could carry on intelligent and mature conversations with adults. They could also relate well to other children. People were surprised at how well our children related to others. We were not surprised, because the family is where our social skills are supposed to be developed. The primary place we should learn how to relate to one another is in the home.

In the family, we are called to honor our mother and father. Paul shares that in the same way we would honor our father or mother, we need to honor older men and women in the church. This is based on the ten commandments found in Exodus 20.

(1 Timothy 5:1-2) "Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers, {2} the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity."

(Exodus 20:12) ""Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you."

In Leviticus 19, we are told to rise up before the grayheaded, and honor the aged. Scripture is clear in both the New Testament and Old Testament that we are to honor older people. In the Hebrew culture, it was clearly understood that fathers were to be honored.

Characteristics of Healthy Churches # 5: Honor

(Leviticus 19:32) "You shall rise up before the grayheaded, and honor the aged, and you shall revere your God; I am the LORD."

In the New Testament, Paul expounds on this in the book of Ephesians, where he tells us that this is the first commandment with a promise. The promise is that if we honor our father and mother, it will go well for us and we shall also have a long life. In the context of the verse, they honor their parents through obedience. On the flip side, disobedience to their parents dishonors them.

Eph 6:1-3 "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. {2} HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise), {3} THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH."

Jesus came down very hard on the Scribes and Pharisees because they were dishonoring their parents in the name of religion. Notice what he tells them in Mark 7:9-13. They were dishonoring their parents by not taking care of them financially. They would say that the money they had available had been pledged to God, and therefore, it could not be used to help their parents.

(Mark 7:9-13) "He was also saying to them, "You nicely set aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition. {10} "For Moses said, 'HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER'; and, 'HE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER, LET HIM BE PUT TO DEATH'; {11} but you say, 'If a man says to his father or his mother, anything of mine you might have been helped by is Corban (that is to say, given to God),' {12} you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother; {13} thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that.'"

Another way to honor parents is by consulting them for decisions. Responding with “yes sir”, “no sir”, “yes mam”, “no mam” are all ways of honoring parents. Honoring their friends is also a way to honor them. Serving and helping parents is a way to honor them. Mother’s Day and Father’s Day are not mentioned in Scripture, but these are great opportunities honor mothers and fathers.

In Proverbs we are told not to forsake our friends or our father’s friend. This is just another way for us to honor our parents – honoring their friends.

(Proverbs 27:10) "Do not forsake your own friend or your father's friend, And do not go to your brother's house in the day of your calamity; better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away."

Honoring our parents is not just for children. As we become adults, we need to continue honoring our parents. They need more help as they get older. We can honor them by taking care of some of their practical needs. I prune trees, clean swimming pools, run errands, and do a host of odd jobs to help them. I am always looking for ways to honor my parents. I call them almost every day. I try to get by and visit them a couple of times a week. Another way of honoring parents, particularly those that live in different city or state, is to call or visit them regularly.

He tells us to honor young men by treating them as brothers, and younger women as sisters. The way we treat people in the church is based on the way that we treat our own family members. Relational skills are learned primarily at home.

(1 Tim 5:1-2) "Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers, the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity."

2. Honoring Widows

Next, Paul then tells us to honor widows, who are widows indeed. He goes on to define for us who the widows are that the church needs to provide for. We notice that the principle of honor has many different uses. In this case, Paul is not just talking about respect, but in providing financial assistance to these particular widows.

(1 Timothy 5:3-5) "Honor widows who are widows indeed; {4} but if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family, and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God. {5} Now she who is a widow indeed, and who has been left alone has fixed her hope on God, and continues in entreaties and prayers night and day."

He tells families to learn to take care of their own family members so that the church is not burdened with them. The family members include children and grandchildren. In our culture, we let the parents and grandparents take care of themselves. We do not bother ourselves with them. Scripturally, this is a wrong attitude. The children and grandchildren are taught to take care of and honor their parents and grandparents, particularly the widows.

The widows that the church is to take care of have several criteria that need to be met. First, they need to be widows. Their spouse must have died. Second, they must be alone. If they remarry and are not alone, the church is not responsible for them. If they have family members who can take care of them, they are not alone. Third, the widow must have fixed her hope on God. She must be a believer. Fourth, the widow must be a woman of prayer and entreaties.

Seven Criteria For Widows (For Church Assistance)

1. Be a widow.
2. Be alone.
3. Have hope fixed on God.
4. Be a prayerful woman.
5. Be at least sixty years old.
6. Been the wife of one man.
7. Have a reputation for good works.

Paul takes a pause in his requirements to tell us that if we do not take care of our own, and especially for those of our own household, we have denied the faith and are worse than unbelievers. I believe our own includes our relatives, but the household refers to all those living in our house. In many countries this would include parents, grandparents, and sometimes other extended family members.

(1 Timothy 5:8) "But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever."

Paul continues with his qualifications by saying that she must be at least sixty years old. Sixth, she must have been the wife of one man. She could not have been remarried at any time. Seventh, she must have a reputation for good works. This included bringing up children, showing hospitality to strangers, washing the feet of saints, and assisting those in distress.

Characteristics of Healthy Churches # 5: Honor

(1 Timothy 5:9-10) "Let a widow be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man, {10} having a reputation for good works; and if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work."

3. Honoring Pastors

Next, Paul tells us to honor the elders or pastors in the church. He says that those who work hard at preaching and teaching should be considered worthy of double honor. In other words, they need to be paid especially well. Too often, churches try to pay their pastors the minimum possible wages. This is particularly true with youth pastors. Scripture says that we need to honor these men by paying them well.

1 Tim 5:17-18 "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. {18} For the Scripture says, "you shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages."

Paul does not stop with the financial honoring of pastors. He continues on by telling us to honor their reputation. He tells us to give pastors the benefit of the doubt. He says not to receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. Paul has already shared in chapter three the qualifications of an elder. These men are already proven men of God. They have proven characters. They are men above reproach in the community and in their homes. Therefore, we are to honor them.

1 Tim 5:19-20 "Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. {20} Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also may be fearful of sinning."

In our church, we have sought to honor the ministers that have sowed into our lives. Paul says, "if we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we should reap material things from you?" We give a minimum of \$500.00 to guest ministers that come preach. That works out to between \$20.00 and \$25.00 an hour. If we consider that we pay our plumbers and electricians between \$65.00 and \$100.00 an hour, this is really not very much.

(1 Corinthians 9:10-11) "Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops. {11} If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we should reap material things from you?"

In Scripture, the use of the tithe in the Old Testament and in the New Testament is consistent. Tithes went to take care of those who were doing the work of the ministry. The Levites and Priests lived off of the tithes. In fact, Scripture tells us that the tithe was the inheritance of the Levites. They did not get a land inheritance, they received the tithes.

(Numbers 18:21) ""And to the sons of Levi, behold, I have given all the tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service which they perform, the service of the tent of meeting."

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(Numbers 18:24) ""For the tithe of the sons of Israel, which they offer as an offering to the LORD, I have given to the Levites for an inheritance; therefore I have said concerning them, 'They shall have no inheritance among the sons of Israel.'""

Part of the tithe went to take care of the widows, orphans, and strangers. Because many people in the church do not tithe, funds are not readily available to take care of the widows, orphans, and poor.

(Deuteronomy 26:12) ""When you have finished paying all the tithe of your increase in the third year, the year of tithing, then you shall give it to the Levite, to the stranger, to the orphan and to the widow, that they may eat in your towns, and be satisfied.""

A tithe of the tithe went to the high priest. Because of this verse, many apostolic ministries require the pastors under them to give a tithe of the tithes to them. Many of these "apostles" are merely itinerant preachers who call themselves apostles. Apostles are fathers. Apostles lay foundations in churches. They don't just come and preach once a year. You cannot mentor pastors and you cannot lay foundations in churches by visiting them once a year. Paul customarily spent 1 ½ to 3 years in each church that he planted.

(Numbers 18:26-28) ""Moreover, you shall speak to the Levites and say to them, 'When you take from the sons of Israel the tithe which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then you shall present an offering from it to the LORD, a tithe of the tithe. {27} 'And your offering shall be reckoned to you as the grain from the threshing floor or the full produce from the wine vat. {28} 'So you shall also present an offering to the LORD from your tithes, which you receive from the sons of Israel; and from it you shall give the LORD'S offering to Aaron the priest.'"

In the American church, much of the tithes that come in go towards buildings. In other countries, much of the tithes go towards the work of the ministry. Earlier this year I was on the plane from Houston to Dallas with a building contractor. His company builds churches around the country. He was on his way home from a building project in Houston. The church that he was doing work for has a campus that is worth over one hundred million dollars. The audio visual budget for the new sanctuary that they were building was about five million dollars. I would venture to say that the majority of their budget is not going into the workers in the church, and to the widows, orphans, and strangers in need.

Taking care of the poor is on God's heart in the Old Testament and also in the New Testament. When Paul met with the apostles in Jerusalem, they told him to remember the poor, which he was eager to do.

(Galatians 2:9-10) "and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we might go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised. {10} They only asked us to remember the poor-- the very thing I also was eager to do."

James also speaks about honoring the poor in God's household, or assembly. He says that when we show favoritism and tell a rich man to sit up here and a poor man to sit over there, we dishonor the poor man. Furthermore, he tells us that we have violated the royal law, which is to love our neighbor as ourselves. We are not walking in love when we dishonor people in the church.

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(James 2:1-9) "My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism. {2} For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes, {3} and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, "You sit here in a good place," and you say to the poor man, "You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool," {4} have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives? {5} Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? {6} But you have dishonored the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you into court? {7} Do they not blaspheme the fair name by which you have been called? {8} If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law, according to the Scripture, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF," you are doing well. {9} But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors."

In Matthew 25, Jesus talks about separating the sheep from the goats. In that passage He makes a statement, "to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me." When we dishonor someone in the church, whether they are poor or rich, black or white, male or female, we are dishonoring the Lord. When we treat one another with honor in the church, we are also showing honor to the Lord.

(Matthew 25:40) ""And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'"

4. Honoring Masters

Next, Paul tells slaves to honor their masters. He is actually repeating what Malachi said. Sons were to honor their fathers and slaves were to honor their masters. In that time, there was no law against slavery. In fact, some of the slaves had believers as their masters. The slaves were told to honor and serve their masters all the more when they were fellow believers. The application that I make for this is that we should honor those we work for. Our employers and our managers over us should be treated with respect and honor.

(1 Tim 6:1-2) "Let all who are under the yoke as slaves regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine may not be spoken against. {2} And let those who have believers as their masters not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but let them serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and preach these principles."

(Malachi 1:6) ""A son honors his father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My respect?" says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests who despise My name. But you say, 'How have we despised Thy name?'"

5. Honoring Others

In this section of Scripture, Paul does not address all the relationships. For example, he does not talk about honor in a marriage. Peter tells us that husbands are to grant honor to their wives as a fellow heir of the grace of life.

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(1 Peter 3:7) "You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered."

There are many ways that we can dishonor or honor our wives. I encourage you husbands to spend some time talking with your wife about how she feels dishonored, and what things she feels honored by. Karen feels honored when I spend quality time with her. When I have time for everything or everyone else, but do not give her time, she feels dishonored. Giving your wife your undivided attention when she is speaking to you honors her. Including your wife and consulting them before making decisions honors them. Introducing them to a new person that you are speaking with honors them. Giving a gift to your wife on special occasions, or even on other occasions, honors your wife.

Wives are also told to honor their husbands. Peter tells wives to honor their husbands by being submissive and respectful. What is challenging about this is that wives are to be respectful, even if their husbands are disobedient. Our obedience to the Lord is never dependent upon the actions of others.

(1 Pet 3:1-2) "In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, {2} as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior."

Peter goes on to say that Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him lord, which is a term of respect and submission. I have pondered this many times. Abraham betrayed Sarah twice, pawning her off as his sister to save his own neck. Instead of laying his life down for his wife, he tried to save his own neck. Despite all of this, Sarah did not dwell on her husband's previous shortcomings and failures. The Scriptures say that she obeyed Abraham, and called him lord.

(1 Pet 3:6) "Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear."

In Ephesians 5, Paul tells wives to respect their husbands. Respecting a husband can take many forms. Showing respect to your husband may include respecting his decisions instead of arguing or ignoring them. Showing respect may be the way that you speak to others about your husband. You can also dishonor them by disclosing his shortcomings to others. Our words can easily dishonor others. Listen to what Solomon says. A woman who shames her husband is rottenness to his bones. Words that bring shame to our husband dishonor him.

(Eph 5:33) "Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband."

(Proverbs 12:4) "An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, But she who shames him is as rottenness in his bones."

Another group of people that we are to honor is those in authority. Our passage today does not mention honoring kings, but in chapter two we were told to pray for kings and those in authority. That is one way to honor them.

Characteristics of Healthy Churches # 5: Honor

Peter tells us to honor all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king. I grew up in a country with a king. They showed a picture of the king and played the national anthem before every movie, sporting event, etc. We pledge to a flag; they pledged to the king. They honored the king at all times. The king really represents authority. The principle is still valid for us today. How do we speak about the President of the United States in front of our children? Do we honor or dishonor the President? How do we speak about our Employer? How do we speak about our pastors? Do we honor those who are in authority over us? We may not agree with our authorities, but we are commanded to honor them.

(1 Pet 2:17) "Honor all men; love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king."

One of the things that really bothers me about politics in America is the dishonoring of the President of the United States. I hear so many negative comments about the President. Politicians continually make derogatory and dishonoring comments about the President. A few weeks ago I saw a bumper sticker that said, "You can't fix stupid, but you can vote him out." This is dishonoring to President Obama. We may not like his decisions about homosexual marriages, abortion, and other things, but we should not make derogatory statements like that. Instead, we should pray for our president.

Conclusion

In the church we are to honor one another. Sometimes, this honor is through obedience. Sometimes honor is showing respect and esteeming them highly. And sometimes, honor means to financially take care of someone. The common thread running through most of the examples in Scripture is the family relationships. Older men are to be honored like fathers. Older women are to be honored like mothers. Younger men are to be honored like brothers. Younger women are to be honored like sisters. Widows are to be honored as a family member. Honor was learned in the family and then applied into other relationships. Honor is a foundational teaching that must be taught in the home. Without this foundation, the church family will have great difficulty conducting itself properly. Without honoring one another in the church, we will not have healthy relationships. Without honoring others, we will not have an effective ministry to the poor.

Prayer: Father, in this house, we want to honor You. We want to honor You with our lives. We want to honor You with our words. We want to honor You with our tithes and offerings. We want to honor one another. Father, help me and the other men to honor their wives. Help the women to honor their husbands. Help all of us to honor older people in the same way we would honor our parents. Help us to honor younger people like brothers and sisters. Help us to honor widows, orphans, and others in need. Lord, help us to be a church that honors one another. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Introduction (1 Tim 3:14-15, 2 Cor 5:21, Eph 2:8-9)

- A solid foundation means that we build upon _____ . (Ps 11:3, Matt 7:24-27)
- _____ is a theme that runs throughout the book of 1 Timothy. (1 Tim 1:17, 2:2, 9-11, 3:16, 4:7-8, 6:3-6, 6:11, 6:15-16)
- Timothy (time + theos) means one who respects or _____ God.
- We are to honor God with our lives, our praise, and our _____ . (Pr 3:9-10)

1. Honor One Another As Family Members (1 Tim 5:1-2)

- Honor older men like a _____ . (Ex 20:12, Lev 19:32, Eph 6:1-3, Mark 7:9-13, Pr 27:10)
- Honor older women like a _____ .
- Honor younger men like a _____ .
- Honor younger women like a _____ .
- The primary place we should learn how to relate to one another is in the _____ .

2. Honoring Widows (1 Tim 5:3-10)

- Honor widows, who are truly _____ . (1 Tim 5:3-5)
- Honor widows who are _____ .
- Honor widows who have their _____ fixed on God.
- Honor widows who are _____ .
- Honor widows who have been _____ wives.
- Honor widows who have a good _____ .
- Honor widows who are not less than _____ .

3. Honoring Pastors (1 Tim 5:17-20, 1 Cor 9:10-11)

- Honor pastors who _____ well. (1 Tim 5:17-18)
- Honor pastors who work hard at _____ and _____ . (1 Tim 5:17-18)
- Honor the _____ of pastors. (1 Tim 5:19-20)
- The primary use of the _____ was for those doing the work of ministry. (Num 18:21, 18:24)

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- Part of the tithe also went to take care of _____, _____, and strangers. (Deut 26:12, Gal 2:9-10, Jam 2:1-9, Matt 25:40)
- A tithe of the tithe went to _____ (the high priest). (Num 18:26-28)

4. Honoring Masters (1 Tim 6:1-2)

A good application of this for today is for _____ to honor their employers.

5. Honoring Others

- Husbands should honor their wives by being _____. (1 Pet 3:7)
- Wives are to honor their husbands by being _____, chaste, and respectful. (1 Pet 3:1-2, 3:6, Eph 5:33, Pr 12:4)
- We should honor those in _____. (1 Pet 2:17)

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