

1 Timothy 5.1-2 Inter-Relational Prudence

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[0 : 00] In our work through 1 Timothy, we've been looking at the office and the work of a minister. In chapter 3, we saw the qualifications of an elder, of a minister of the word, of a pastor, and then we continue to work through the duty or the work in which he is engaged in, and what makes a faithful minister.

And ideally, there would be a plurality of elders. In some cases, there is but only one elder, only one pastor or one shepherd. And the office of elder, the office of a pastor, is to shepherd believers of all walks of life.

So it's not like church members are broken up into different demographics according to gender and age, and then a person of that particular demographic is assigned to that age or that gender of people.

If there is but one pastor, then he is responsible to shepherd all of them of the church membership. If there is a plurality of elders, then they are all responsible for shepherding all of the church members.

And the office of an overseer, the work that is done by the office of the overseer, is God's given means of nourishing and growing Christians.

[1 : 25] In Ephesians, we looked at Christ's victory gifts. And some people like to try to find a celebrity preacher whose personality they like and to follow that personality.

But the gift isn't the personality of the person that fills the office. The gift is God feeding people through the ministry of the word that happens instrumentally through the man who meets the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3.

So the office or the work of the overseer is God's means of God nourishing and growing God's people, Christians. And some people will argue that somebody other than the pastor or somebody other than the elders of a specific demographic is required in order to be relevant with a specific demographic of people in the membership or the congregation.

So, for example, I might say instead of the pastor, a young person would be more relatable to or more relevant to young people or that a woman would be more relevant or relatable to that specific demographic.

But in doing so, what people are doing is that they're not arguing against the personality of the pastor. They're not arguing against the personality of Timothy. But what they're actually arguing against is the Holy Spirit because it's the Holy Spirit who enables, equips, attends, and uses instrumentally as the ordained means for the ministry of the word.

[3 : 03] It's the Holy Spirit that does this work instrumentally through the pastor. So it's an argument not against the demographic or the personality but against the work of the Holy Spirit.

And it's the Holy Spirit that makes the word of God effectual according to Christ's victory gifts, which in Ephesians 4 we saw for today is preachers and teachers.

The Holy Spirit makes the word effectual not by somebody being relatable according to their demographic or according to their personalities.

So the pastor, or in our case here in this text of Timothy, is to admonish all church members of different stations and different demographics and to do so with prudence.

So today we're going to look at 1 Timothy chapter 5 verses 1 to 2. But for further context, we'll start reading in chapter 4 verse 6.

[4 : 10] So please follow along with me in your copies of God's word. Chapter 4 verse 6. If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourishing in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.

But reject profane and old wives' fables and exercise yourself toward godliness. For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.

If these things command and teach, let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word and conduct.

In love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of hands of the eldership.

[5 : 31] Meditate on these things. Give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them.

For in doing this, you will save both yourself and those who hear you. Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father.

Younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity. Amen.

Lord, we thank you that we have your word. We thank you for the ministry of the word. We pray that you would graciously attend your word this morning and that you would, pray, Lord, that you would use me and bless the preaching of the word, that you would enlighten our minds.

And I pray, Lord, that you would also bless the hearing of the word by attending the word and illuminating your word to the hearers. And I pray, Lord, that you would help us to free ourselves from all distractions, which keep us from focusing on you.

[6 : 35] We pray that you would be at work, that you would edify and nourish and grow the saints, that you would convict and save the lost, and that you would be glorified. We pray this in Jesus' name.

Amen. This morning, we'll be looking at verses one and two, just two verses. And in those two verses, what's going on is this, that a minister who's called to command and teach will require prudence with diverse interpersonal shepherding of men and women, seniors and juniors, treating them as family members.

That was a lot, so I'll say it again. A minister called to command and teach will require prudence with diverse interpersonal shepherding of men and women, seniors and juniors, treating them as family members.

So our text is naturally divided into two parts. We'll keep those divisions, the first one being men and the second one being women. So we'll divide it into prudence with men and prudence with women.

Now when we go back before chapter five in the greater context, in verse 11, well, go back to six, and it says, if you instruct the brethren.

[7 : 58] So Timothy, as a minister, is to instruct the brethren. And then in verse 11, it says, these things command and teach. So as a minister, as a faithful minister, he is to command and teach.

And then we see that because by virtue of being young, already he has against him that it's harder for somebody who's older to be commanded or to be taught or to be told that you're wrong or that you're in error by somebody who's younger.

So already he has that difficulty. But furthermore, these things command and teach, let no one despise your youth. With that being the context, a pastor, regardless of their age, is to shepherd everyone who is in his care.

So, who exactly is in the care of the minister? Who is he exactly to shepherd? Is it that everybody in the world is the responsibility of one pastor or of one elder?

Well, obviously not. What about the community? Is everybody in the community under the responsibility of the pastor? Well, that's not what's in mind here.

[9 : 16] Is it everybody who calls themselves a Christian? Are they the responsibility of the pastor? Well, that would be, that would be a lot for one person or for a plurality of elders. So, what about the church?

Is it that everybody who goes to the church, including a person who just stops in one time, are they the responsibility? Is that what's going on here? And while certainly, I think a faithful pastor would

have concern and care for everybody that comes through the doors or even for other Christians in their town, that's not exactly what it's getting at here.

The specific care of the shepherding of the church is something that's the privilege of church membership. And that's what it's getting at here is the members of the church.

And membership of church isn't divided into demographics. Church membership isn't that you have the church of older men and you have an older man as the pastor and you don't have the church of younger men and the younger men as chapters.

You have in church membership a diversity of demographics. And the pastor, the minister, the overseer is responsible for overseeing, for shepherding those in his care.

[10:32] And we're not going to go into detail about ecclesiology here, but in Acts 2.42, well, starting back in Acts 2.36, we see the preaching of the word and we see they're convicted by the word.

And actually, let's turn there. I'll just read it quickly, but Acts 2, because this is good for us particularly in our progress as a church plant.

But notice in verse 36 what happens. So Peter's preaching, therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.

So to summarize what he's been doing is he's preaching Christ crucified. Jesus, and then he says, now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart.

So the word is made effectual to them and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do? So we see there's a response to the preaching. And then verse 38, then Peter said to them, repent, the call to repentance, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

[11:50] For the promise is to you and to your children and to all who are afar off as many as the Lord our God will call. So all those like Romans 8, 29 and 30 we see happening here.

All those whom are called, they hear the word, they respond to the word, there's repentance, there's faith, the word faith isn't used here but there's evidence of faith and then there's the call of repentance and then for those whom have faith and repentance are to be baptized.

Verse 40, and with many other words he testified and exhorted them saying, be saved from this perverse generation. So there's much preaching going on here, a response to the preaching, faith and repentance and then notice this in verse 41, then those who gladly received his word were baptized and that day about 3,000 souls were added to them.

They heard the word through the preaching, they responded to the word, they were convicted by the word, there was faith, there's the call of repentance and then they're baptized and 3,000 souls were added to them.

This is the church of Jerusalem. This is before it was spread and taken further but the church of Jerusalem where this happened, 3,000 souls were added to the church of Jerusalem and this isn't the only text which would be used for church membership or for ecclesiology but it helps us see a glimpse of it happening.

[13:17] So 3,000 souls are added to the church, to the church of Jerusalem and so now we have through their baptism church membership. Notice verse 42 and they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship in the breaking of bread and in prayers.

So then the functioning of the church continues through the means of grace. So all those whom are in the church membership regardless of age, regardless of gender, gender, regardless of demographic is the responsibility of the minister, of the pastor, of the overseer.

Actually flip over to Titus 2 and we'll see that working out a little more of the minister's duty that it's not restricted to his personal demographic.

So it's not that Timothy being a young minister or Titus, they are only to shepherd those within their category of demographic, but who are they to shepherd?

Sorry, in Titus 2, I'm going to read 1 to 6. Titus 2, 1 to 6, but as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine, that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience.

[14:51] The older women, likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things, that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.

Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded. So he is not just to exhort those whom are of the same demographic of him, but we see older men, older women, and younger men and younger women.

A pastor is responsible for shepherding everybody within his care. So, our first division in 1 Timothy, chapter 5, is older men.

Sorry, the first division is men. So prudence with men. Sorry, I just lost my place in my Bible.

Okay, so prudence with men. It starts off by saying, do not rebuke an older man. So let's flesh this out a little and see what's going on here, what this means.

[16:05] Now the word older man, some translations that you have might say an elder. The New King's Version says an older man, but if your version says elder, let's understand what exactly it does say and what it doesn't say.

It's not referring to the office of an elder. It's not saying that somebody in the office of an elder in the church cannot be rebuked. It just simply does not fit with the context.

It would say, do not rebuke somebody who's in the office of an elder and then deal with older women and then, or younger men, older women, and younger women. It's speaking to the demographic of the age and gender.

So, an older man is the proper translation. somebody who's advanced in age. Now, being only two verses, it was much easier to cover a vaster, that's not a word, but a broader variety of commentaries and I like to consult commentaries of different ages, particularly before the Enlightenment.

But along with that comes wording that isn't our common wording and sometimes it's actually kind of funny. but in referring to commentaries from the patristics, from the early church to the medievals and the Reformation era and the Puritan era, I've gathered some good sayings that I've included throughout the sermon.

[17:34] One of them, by Matthew Poole, his translation of this word is an ancient man. So, do not rebuke an ancient man.

So, if you think that you meet the category of not being rebuked, then you are an ancient man, according to Matthew Poole. Well, according to the annotators of Matthew Poole.

It's someone who's advanced in age. It's a comparative thing. It's somebody who is older than you. Comparatively older. So, we're speaking of an older man, somebody who is comparatively older, and it says, do not rebuke.

Does that mean that somebody who is advanced in age is beyond being rebuked? Now, when we draw in the fuller context of what's going on here, you remember Timothy is to instruct the brethren, and he is to command and teach, and that encompasses everybody.

So, older men are not exempt from being the recipients of the minister's duty to command and teach, nor are they exempt from being recipients of convince, rebuke, and exhort.

[18:55] A minister is called to convince, rebuke, and exhort. A man who is more advanced in years is to be reprovved when in faulty doctrine or conduct.

So, you might be asking, what's the difference between rebuke and reprove? The word rebuke is more of a heavy-handed term. It's as though a strike, as though you were to strike somebody.

That's more the sense of rebuke, like a verbal strike, heavy-handed, whereas reprove is correcting. They both pertain to correcting, but reprove is a gentle and a respectful way of doing it.

So, a man more advanced in years is to be reprovved when in faulty doctrine or conduct. We've seen throughout Ephesians, as well as Timothy, that what is very important is right doctrine and right conduct, and that right doctrine informs right conduct.

Therefore, what would be of concern would be wrong doctrine and wrong conduct, which would fall under the responsibility of shepherding by a faithful minister.

[20:12] And when doing so, do not rebuke harshly or roughly or sharply or with severity, severely.

Now, for such a stress in scripture on there being right doctrine and right conduct, it's for a reason. And the reason is that, particularly for Christians, but for non-Christians, there's much wrong doctrine and wrong conduct, and sin is what puts us at enmity with God.

But for Christians, it's still important to grow in right doctrine and right conduct, because there is consequences to wrong doctrine and wrong conduct, both for the person themselves, as well as for the congregation who would be affected or leavened, if you will.

So if a faithful minister who is shepherding somebody in the church sees them straying, then because he cares for them, he is concerned that they are going in the wrong direction and where that leads and what they're going away from.

John Trapp from the 1600s, in his commentary on Do Not Rebuke an Older Man, he says, lash him not with the scourge of the tongue as a puny boy.

[21 : 49] And I think that actually gets to the point pretty well. I don't know how a woman would relate to being called puny, but I think if somebody who's younger than you treats you in a way that makes you feel as though you are puny, I think he really actually is using some pretty good terminology here to be treated as a puny boy when you're actually more advanced in years than the person who is treating you this way.

And the word rebuke has that harshness, that heavy handedness of a lashing. Lash him not with the scourge of the tongue as a puny boy. Timothy, again we don't know his age, probably early thirties, but he's referred to as being young, do not be despised for your youth.

Timothy's already easily despised on account of his youth. And in Proverbs 15 verse 1 it says, a harsh word stirs up anger. So, reprove with respect to their age.

John Calvin in his commentary, he said, the vinegar must always be mingled with oil. So, how exactly is this to be done?

When shepherding an older man and reprovng fault, our text tells us, exhort him as a father. So, again, when shepherding an older man and reprovng fault, exhort him as a father.

[23 : 25] father. Now, as a person treats their father, what should come to mind is the moral principle of the fifth commandment. Now, when we think of the ten commandments, what probably comes to mind is Mount Sinai, the delivery of the ten commandments.

commandments. But the ten commandments isn't the introduction of God's moral law. The ten commandments on Sinai is God's moral law being summarily comprehended.

And the moral principle behind each of the ten commandments is more than what just the ten commandments are. And we see much of that in scripture, the fleshing out of that.

So, the fifth commandment is to honor and obey parents. A child is to honor and obey their parents according to the moral law of God.

And the moral law of God is written on man's heart. So, we see this, that even outside of the church, those who have never been to church, there is an understanding that their children are to obey them and are to honor them while it is done or carried out at different levels.

[24 : 41] By nature itself, by God's moral law written on man's heart, we know that children are to honor and obey their parents. The fifth commandment requires the preserving the honor and performing the duties belonging to everyone and their several places and relations as superiors, inferiors, or equals.

Our focus right now obviously is in the home in regards to fathers and their children. So if a child is to honor and obey their father, that is to preserve the honor of their father, then that's what should come to mind when in our text we see exhort him as a father.

honor and respect is due to a father, so with the erring man, the erring elder man, exhort him as a father.

That is, exhort him as though he were your father through whom you would preserve his honor.

Preserve the honor of the older man in exhorting him and reprovng a fault.

fault. So what does this look like? What are some examples that we can take from scripture of showing honor to the older man? Leviticus 19.32, it says, you shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man and fear your God.

[26 : 18] And earlier I read Proverbs 15.1, the part B, the last part of verse 1. The first part of Proverbs 15.1 is this, a soft answer turns away wrath.

Now our text here when it says, do not rebuke an older man but exhort him as a father, this is not speaking about cases of apostasy, of heresy, of scandal, of obstinate, unrepentant error, or of the dishonor of Christ.

John Calvin wrote that the pastor ought to have two voices, one for gathering the sheep, and another for driving away wolves. So the elder man who is faulty in doctrine or conduct, who is a church member but has strayed, and sin is deceptive.

It's not, heretics don't, heretics don't know that they're heretics typically. Sin is deceptive, it's blinding, so Christians can be deceived by sin, and they need, as sheep, the way in which a

shepherd would call sheep to gather sheep back, they need to be, they need to be exhorted in such a way, and those whom are heretics need to be driven away the way in which a shepherd would drive away wolves.

Thomas Aquinas wrote, an old man, still speaking of the fact that this is within the context of a Christian man in church membership who has strayed, does not apply, it's not talking about cases of apostasy, heresy, scandal, obstinate, unrepentant error, or obvious dishonor of Christ.

[28 : 20] Thomas Aquinas on this, he says, an old man of unusual wickedness is a disgrace to old age. Which I think puts it well because in showing honor to the older man because of their age, and showing them honor as though a father because of their age, is not the case in these instances of apostasy, heresy, scandal, unrepentant sin because their unusual wickedness despite their age is a disgrace to older age and deserves to be accursed.

So, speaking of younger men, he then goes on to speak of younger men. Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers.

brothers. So, a lot of what we went through will carry through into this as brothers, and that younger men as brothers still require shepherding. Younger men as brothers still sin.

Younger men as brothers still need command and teach. But in interacting with them, that is, when reproving a younger man, remember that they are brethren.

What's used here is relations of family, and Christians are adopted as sons of God, are adopted into God's family, and are members of the family of God.

[29 : 49] And in dealing with members of the family of God, we are to remember and treat them as brethren, which means in a brotherly way, with brotherly love.

Psalms 133 says, Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. So this brings us to our second division, that a minister called to command and teach will require prudence with women, treating them as family members.

A minister called to command and teach will require prudence with women, treating them as family members. So second of all, prudence with women.

He first speaks of older women as mothers. Now, when we think of older women in the church, maybe in your life, you can picture someone that you've known, you just think of that sweet old church lady that wouldn't even hurt a mouse, and you just think so highly of her, ask the question, does even that lady still sin?

And the answer is yes. On this side of glory, we all sin. We are not yet perfected in body and soul. We are not in a state of glory, we are in a state of grace, and we still have remaining corruption, we still have sin.

[31 : 14] While we are justified, we still have remaining sins. So even that sweet old church lady that wouldn't hurt a mouse, she still sins.

everybody sins, and everyone requires shepherding. So everybody requires to be recipients of what verse 11 says, command and teach.

The minister is to command and teach to all demographics. And the fifth commandment applies to women as well.

So actually I'm going to, it's a an answer of the catechism of what is required and the duties of the fifth commandment. And the fifth commandment requires the preserving the honor and performing the duties belonging to everyone in their several places and relations as superiors, inferiors, and equals.

So that certainly pertains to parents and children, but it also is within marriage as well and other places in life. But as far as the fifth commandment applies to women, is that God has appointed the husband as head of the home and the wife as his helper.

[32 : 31] And since the beginning of time, there has been sin. Well, not since the beginning of time, sorry, since the fall, there has been sin. There has been violation of God's moral command.

And this violation of women, a woman's violation against the fifth commandment goes back as right back to the fall. So, we see the reality of feminism as old as time.

In the garden, the fall, Eve, in the garden, was to follow Adam as her head and Adam to follow God. But Eve, instead of following her head, she went the other direction. She reversed God's order and decided to go her own way and follow the serpent and to get her head to follow her into sin.

And then in the curse, we see that her desire will be to rule over her husband. And the curse, this is still a sin-cursed world. Ever since the fall, it's been a sin-cursed world.

[33 : 38] So, for the woman's desire to rule over her husband is throughout all ages and is still here today. So, it is still a threat, it is still a concern, and it still occurs.

So, even older women will sin, and even older women, whether it be in the fifth commandment or other ways, will require shepherding.

And they are to be exhorted. They are to be exhorted in a way by commanding and teaching an older woman as your mother. And I think particularly today, it should come to mind that that is to be in a way of showing much honor and respect.

As a person would to their own mother, so also, when exhorting, when reproofing an older woman to show her the honor and respect as to a mother.

Then goes on to speak of younger women. So, older men, younger men, older women, now younger men, or younger women. Younger women as sisters with all purity.

[34 : 50] Now, women are to behave, especially Christian women are called to behave and to conduct themselves with much purity, to be chaste.

And in 1 Peter 3, 2, when speaking of the conduct of wives, he uses the language chaste, conduct accompanied by fear. chaste, and this is not without reason.

First of all, for things to be said, there's a need for it to be said, because it's not necessarily natural. And also, for it to be said, it's because it's important to obey it.

Now, in our culture today, in our American culture, it is a hookup culture of casual sex that is a full-on disregard of the seventh commandment.

The seventh commandment is chastity. And our culture today, with how it's geared with being a hookup culture, is words, thoughts, actions, attire, everything is geared towards it for the next one night stand, or whatever it might be.

[36 : 09] And it's become so normalized in our culture, that whether it's for that reason or not, it's just our whole culture. And we see it everywhere, and sex sells. And so it's just, it's all around us.

And it's normalized, and it's how everyone behaves, or it's how everybody dresses, or it's what everybody does. And in the unbelievers community, they would even probably be expected to commit adultery, or to approve of it, or to not be concerned about it.

And that's the culture that we live in. That's the world around us. And there's always been the temptation to adapt, or to adopt, or to become like the nation around us. And in a culture where that's what's around us, we're called to treat younger women as sisters with all purity, which increases that challenge.

Now, the Westminster Larger Catechism, question 138, and speaking of the seventh commandment, it says that the duties required in the seventh commandment are chastity in body, mind, affections, words, and behavior, and the preservation of it in ourselves and others, watchfulness over the eyes and all the senses, temperance, keeping of chaste company, modesty and apparel, marriage by those who have not the gift of continency, conjugal love and cohabitation, diligent labor in our callings, shunning all occasions of uncleanness and resisting temptations thereunto.

So the moral principle behind the seventh commandment applies to everybody, not only for our own purity and chastity, but for those of others. And so the minister is to be concerned not only of his own purity, but also of that of others and of sisters, and likewise the younger sisters should be concerned about their chastity and purity and that of younger men.

[38 : 19] And in this world of cultural impurity, where it's permeated actions and it's permeated dress and it's permeated speech and it's permeated our thoughts, it's the way that the culture operates around us.

And our culture, their method of dating is a reversal of God's intention for marriage. Marriage is a covenant commitment where in that covenant commitment it's a picture of Christ in the church. There's the covenant commitment first and then the privilege that come from that covenant commitment. So marriage points to that. A covenant commitment and then the privileges that come from it and the intimacy from that covenant commitment.

whereas the world's view of dating is the complete opposite. Not only a lack of covenant commitment but probably a I can't think of the word but wanting as little commitment as possible but wanting the intimacy, wanting the benefits of marriage without that covenant commitment.

And then this hookup culture, that's what they're looking for is a one night of that, the benefits without the covenant commitment.

[39 : 46] So our culture's idea of dating is not something we want to emulate. So while there's no one here today who is currently in the place where they're ready to settle down and support a family and is looking for an appropriate suitor, certainly there are children here and years to come will find themselves in that position.

And we don't want to date as the world does. That is not in step with what's going on here in our text of treating younger women as sisters with all purity, which means being intentional, being intentional to not be like the world.

It's astonishing when you see the world doing its thing to see the darkness behind the way in which people are who walk according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air.

But with the cultural idea of dating, they put intimacy first, and then if that intimacy, if those privileges first serves their personal passions of the flesh, then they'll consider covenant commitment.

And then because that is their perspective, there is a cultural impurity in attire where it is seductive by nature.

[41 : 29] Because it's not looking for the covenant commitment, it's looking for those privileges, then a person's approach in attire and behavior is to get the benefits, to attract the benefits, or to seduce the benefits, not to win, or to seek after that covenant commitment.

So it's seductive in nature itself. So you can imagine if Timothy, or if a young minister who thought like our culture, and a younger woman who thought like the culture, and dressed like the culture, if he was to meet with her, to shepherd her, it would be a recipe for disaster.

daughter. So what is pious relation between sexes and the church? To treat older women as mothers, younger women as sisters.

So if the concept of, the worldly concept of dating is backwards and not to be emulated, then if a person who is single and is able to support a family and wants to find a suitor, a potential suitor, what should their approach be?

Well, in courtship, when those opposite sex are together, they might ask the question, they might be attracted to each other, they might ask the question, well, just exactly how far can we go?

[43 : 05] What can we do? And I think our text is very good here in giving us an answer. Ask yourself the question, well, what would you do with your sister? If the person you are with is not your wife, treat her as your sister.

Treat younger women as sisters with all purity. You've probably heard of those masquerades, those parties where they wear different masks to come together and dance or whatever they do.

Imagine if in your dating you took a picture of your sister and put it on your potential suitor to make sure that you treated her as such. There's a stark difference in treating a younger woman as a sister with all purity to how the world treats a younger woman as a potential hookup.

What are examples that are helpful? Well, think of Joseph. Joseph. Remember Joseph when there was an attempt by Potiphar's wife to seduce him.

His response was that he fled. He fled from the adulterous seduction. Thomas Aquinas in his biography, when he decided that he wanted to commit his life to a religious vocation, his family disapproved of it and they wanted to dissuade him.

[44 : 32] so they essentially kidnapped him and put him in a cell. They brought in an attractive escort to put into his room to seduce him in order to turn him from Christ, from his commitment to Christ.

His reaction when this attractive mistress, this escort, was there to seduce him, was that he grabbed a hot poker iron from out of the fire and chased her out of the room with the hot poker iron and burned the door.

So I wouldn't recommend that. You'd probably have the cops at your door if you did that. Joseph's approach is probably better just to flee. But both of these instances, it shows that they understand the danger of the fire of seduction.

Now as I said, if someone like Timothy, a young minister, to be alone with a younger woman would be like playing with fire. A shepherd, a pastor shepherding a woman would ideally have her husband there.

If that's not possible or if she's not married, then having another elder or another deacon present instead of being alone with somebody of the opposite sex.

[45 : 54] So you should never be alone with somebody of the opposite sex, of course, outside of relations of family and marriage. Out of prudence not to purity, it says here younger women as sisters with all purity.

So one's own purity is in mind here. But more than that, should never be alone with somebody of the opposite sex, not just for all purity, but as well as avoidance of accusations of scandal or suspicions of scandal.

And furthermore, in regards to younger women, not in a replacement of shepherding, but in supplement to it, Titus 2 says, Older women admonish younger women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.

So there's also here the admonishment of older women admonishing younger women. This isn't a replacement of shepherding. It's not that older women are to shepherd younger women, but that in supplement to it.

So, some concluding uses that we can take out of our text. First of all, as I mentioned before, we are not in a state of glory. We are not perfected in body and soul.

[47 : 17] We are not in a new creation kingdom, indefectible, with glorified body and soul. We are currently in the state of grace, where we are made a new creation.

We are regenerated. We are now able to not sin, but we are still able to sin. And we are in a sin-cursed world. We are affected by sin.

And no Christian, this side of glory, has been made perfect in conduct or in knowledge, which means that everybody sins.

This side of glory, everybody sins. Everybody of every age and everybody of every gender strays from God's holy standard in varying forms and fashions.

Everybody sins and sin is deceptive. Sin seduces, sin lies, sin is a darkness, it blinds, and sin is a problem.

[48 : 24] And it says sin is to stray into danger and away from the way. So if everybody sins, even Christians in a sin-cursed world with remaining corruption still sins, their sinning is straying from the way, from God's way.

sin, which means they are straying into danger. So whether that be wrong doctrine or wrong conduct, to sin is to stray from what is blessed into what is danger.

sin is to stray into danger and away from the way, which is good. God's way is good, it is right, it is just, it is holy, and it is blessed.

And when you put it quite simply with that, well, why would I not want to walk in that way if it is good and right and just and holy and blessed? Because sin is deceptive, sin is blinding, sin is darkness, but yet we still do it.

And it causes us to stray from God's way into danger. Furthermore, regardless of our own sin, everybody in this sin cursed world suffers on account of the sin of people around us.

[49 : 48] We suffer on account of the sin in a sin cursed world. So everybody needs shepherding. Everybody, regardless of their age, needs shepherding.

Everybody, regardless of their sex, needs shepherding. And God's means of providing for the spiritual needs of his people is through the church to its members.

And this will include correcting faults. God's means of nourishing his people is through the church and this will include correcting faults.

And sometimes that is merely through the preaching of the word, just the faithful exposition of the text. The spirit of God will attend it and convict the hearer of it.

And sometimes it might be more in going to your brother and showing them their sin or admonishing them, whatever it may be. This will include correcting faults.

[50 : 52] and how shepherding is to be carried out requires discretion and prudence to preventatively avoid scandal, but also snuff out any suspicion, any accusation, or unfavorable reports of not being above reproach.

So second concluding use is in regards to God's moral law. we looked at the fifth commandment and the seventh commandment and the fifth and seventh commandment guide our interpersonal behavior.

And it guides our interpersonal behavior quite comprehensively. And if you'll pick up a catechism that asks questions about the ten commandments, read it on all the commandments.

One of the fifth commandment and seventh commandment that we looked at today, when you looked at all that it involves of what's required, both what not to do and what we are to do, it's very comprehensive.

And when we think about how comprehensive it is in the pursuit of obedience to authorities, submission to authorities that God has placed in our lives, as well as purity in thoughts, words, and actions, not only for ourselves, but promoting the purity of others, it's so comprehensive that it's going to be convicting for all of us.

[52 : 16] So if you are feeling convicted of violating these moral standards in some way, because the truth is you have, we all have, and that's the point of the ten commandments, that it shows us the sin that is inside of us.

It doesn't show us how righteous we are, it points out our sin. So if you're feeling convicted of violating these moral standards in some way, remember that there is forgiveness in Christ. Christ. So confess your sin to God and plead the blood of Christ, the mediation of Christ, and the merits of Christ. Christians with remaining corruption are to continue in their duty of repentance. And that is the process of sanctification. The process of sanctification continues, it's progressive throughout our life. And sanctification means being renewed, and the whole man after the image of God, and enabled more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness.

This is sanctification. This is all Christians in this life, this side of glory. Because we have not yet been perfected in body and in soul. And third concluding use is that sanctification, this process which I just mentioned, sanctification is God's working in those in whom he has justified.

[53 : 38] We cannot be justified by our sanctification. We cannot be justified by dying unto sin and living unto righteousness more and more.

We are not justified by our acts, by our works, by us, by what we do. So if you have not been justified before God by your sins being imputed to Christ, your sins imputed to Christ on the cross, your sins nailed to the cross, your sins paid in full by Christ on the cross, and Christ's righteousness imputed to you to be declared by God as righteous, know that the only way to be made right with God, the only way, that is the only way to the Father, is through the Son, through Jesus Christ, by believing on him alone for salvation.

So if when the veil of the flesh is drawn from you and you are before God, if you are expecting your works, your righteousness to justify you, it won't, it will but only condemn you because what is required by God is perfect, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience, which is only what Christ has done.

So the only way for God to see us as righteous is for him to see Christ's righteousness. And what's done with our sin problem, it's nailed to the cross, Christ as a substitute has paid for it in full.

So the only way to be made right with God is through Jesus Christ by believing on him alone for salvation, by laying hold of Christ as freely offered in the gospel, by laying hold of the promises of the gospel as your own.

[55 : 31] Let's pray. Our great God, we thank you for your word. We thank you for the ways in which you feed and nourish your people through the word. And we thank you, Lord, for the time we've had this morning. We pray that you would help us to continue to meditate on the things which we have heard in your word, and that you would continue to bring it to mind and bring us to a greater understanding of truth, not only for the sake of knowledge, but for the sake of glorifying you and of obeying you and of doing your will in this life.

We pray that you would build your church. I pray, Lord, that if there are those who are not saved, who have not received Christ alone for salvation and Christ's righteousness for salvation and all of the benefits and mediation and merits of Christ as their own, then I pray, Lord, that you would indeed shine light in darkness and transfer them out of the kingdom of darkness of this world into your marvelous kingdom of light and life, the glorious kingdom of Christ.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.