A Tribute To Our Older Ladies

Ponder: How do I treat older sisters in Christ?

Scripture: “Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine” (Rom. 16:13, NKJV).

A couple of years ago I was invited to speak in chapel to a group of students in a nearby school of preaching. My assigned topic: “Three lessons from my first work.” The first of those three was, “Pay attention to the older ladies.”

My first work after graduating from Bear Valley (School of Preaching, it was then) was in the Hill Country of central Texas. My bride of less than two years and I were one of only two young couples in the congregation. The rest were senior citizens (mostly retired). It was ideal for us, like having thirty sets of grandparents!

Several of our older ladies were widows. All of them played a vital role in the church and helped me tremendously as a preacher. They loved us without reservation and shared a storehouse of sorely needed wisdom. No wonder Paul instructed young Timothy to exhort the “older women as mothers” (1 Tim. 5:2). Timothy had gotten his start on the knees of his mother and grandmother, both of whom were women of faith. Do you suppose he paid them any mind in his adult years? If he took Paul’s charge seriously, he would also treat the older sisters at Ephesus with gentleness and respect!

As Paul sent personal greetings to various friends in the church at Rome, he included a brother named Rufus and “his mother and mine” (16:13). Paul and Rufus weren’t biological brothers, but the apostle considered Rufus’ mother to be his own. Somehow, she had been like a mother to him – and Paul was no spring chicken!

Our older ladies have life experiences that enable them to encourage and comfort us when we’re down. That doesn’t mean men or younger ladies can’t help us, but senior sisters often excel at it.

I suspect our older ladies often feel overlooked and neglected. Let me take this opportunity to say, “Thank you, sisters, for blessing my life in countless ways. You are unsung heroes, and the body of Christ functions better because of you!”

Hymn: “We’re Part Of The Family”

Prayer: Gracious God, we thank you for our older sisters in the church. Help us to honor them as we should. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Joe Slater (Justin, TX)

jaslater1954@gmail.com