

1 Timothy 5

Vs 1,2 Honor the elderly (*presbuteros*) and do not put them in a place where pride will keep them from listening by being arrogant in your approach. It is an example of the clothing of gentleness and compassion Paul exhorts us to wear in Col 3. The younger men as brothers - the older women are to be treated like mothers. Honor your father and mother. The younger women treat as sisters in all purity- do not allow lust to be a part of the body of Christ. Think of younger female believers as you would a younger sister, looking out for them and seeing they are safe. We are a family and should have that kind of familial closeness and love for each other. This family will last forever.

Vs 3 This is clarified (in the rest of the chapter) as older women who will not remarry. In this culture they had no way of making an income and were not physically able to earn enough to feed themselves. The church picked up the need that society was not meeting. Each culture must examine where the true need is so that we help where help is truly needed. James 1:27

Vs 4 Family should take care of their own and not depend on the Church for assistance. Immediate family - the children or grandchildren should take care of that widowed mom if they are physically able. We can get in the way of what God is trying to teach someone by jumping in to assist. It pleases God when we help our family in need, giving without expecting return, for all of us have received from them.

Vs 5-7 Here is the description of the kind of person the church should help on a regular basis. They have no other support, they depend on God with continual prayer. How can you give to someone who will use it for worldly pleasures (Thayer says "to live luxuriously" – Expositors says "wasteful") instead of needs? What do we live for? If pleasure is our motivation we are dead while we live, for it is a fleeting thrill at best. There is no life in the world's pleasures. Godly pleasures abound everyday and at his right hand are pleasures evermore Ps 16:11. Those pleasures bring glory to God and point us to Him. The worldly ones pull us away from Him. If the church supported those who lived wastefully the taking of offerings from sincere people would then cause outsiders to reproach the church. Indeed this happens in many churches today and outsiders despise the offering because they have seen the wasteful use of it.

Vs 8 These widows should be cared for by immediate family and even relatives, but if we refuse to help our own kin in need, we love money more than our sense of duty to our family. This is worse than the unbelievers who have a natural sense that they should care for their relatives.

Vs 9,10 To be put on the list to receive support she should be aged so that she can't physically do the work, and must have ? either had only one husband or been a faithful wife not fooling around, similar to the one woman kind of man in the elder requirements. The Greek could be taken either way. Does this mean if her first husband died when she was 35 and she remarried and he died she is not eligible? I don't think so.

Paul must have felt the church was under too much financial pressure to support this part of society. He is clarifying who really should be supported and who should not. Known for good deeds, raising her children, being hospitable, serving the saints, helping the troubled, and devoted to all kinds of good. We should consider such things when we take an offering for a needy person. Not just anyone with a need should be helped but those with this kind of life.

Vs 11,12 Younger women will remarry (and can work physically) so they are not eligible. Is this saying any that remarry are going to deal with judgement for breaking the first commitment to their dead husband. In Romans we have the fact that the woman is free if the husband has died? Also see vs 14. If remarrying was breaking a pledge he would not counsel them to do it. It may be that widows took an oath in joining the supported widows in which they pledged not to remarry.

Vs 13-15 Here we have a clarification on verse 11,12. They should remarry and have children and manage a home. The enemy should not be given opportunity to slander the body of Christ because of the actions of individuals in it, especially those the church supports. Gossip is still a problem in the church today.

Vs 16 There are those widows who truly have need and should be supported. Believing women should help any widows in her family. Women handled the finances in a Jewish home. Again the idea that the church was under a financial burden arises. When money is offered there needs to be discernment about who should receive it.

Vs 17,18 Instead of supporting younger widows or those whose family can support them, the church needed to doubly honor (*time* - pay or price as in Mt 27:6,9 Acts 4:34, 7:16; 1Cor 6:20) those who direct the affairs of the church well and especially those who preach and teach. Notice it is not directed to one individual as the church of today has the Senior Pastor, but to those who serve in their calling as elders in a faithful manner. It may mean they were to receive twice the allotment that a widow received. Vincent mentions it may not mean an actual doubling but a greater share. The reformed church used this to make two classes of elders, leaders and teachers. The verse actually combines them so that the one who is to be rewarded is the one who not only leads well but also teaches the Word well. It may have especially applied to those who taught in opposition to heresy. It has been brought up that many have supported themselves and ministered. They must have a great reward. There is a danger of thinking we pay someone to be the one that ministers when all should be ministers. It is not clear here, but I believe these

men devoted themselves completely to the ministry and were supported so that they could do so without concern for physical needs. Are the men in chapter one who took people captive for profit, claiming to be elders in need of support while they preached false doctrine? There is probably a connection here in the word, "well".

Another truth we can glean is that the elders direct the affairs of the church. I don't believe they were congregational churches (decision by vote of the members) but elder directed autonomous churches.

Vs 19,20 The Greek here would imply some type of official hearing. Elders had a high calling and their decisions may have made enemies. No accusations were to be accepted unless two or three bear testimony. It reminds us of the Law and the witnesses that did not agree at Jesus' trial. Once they agreed, because of the public position of leading, they were to be publicly rebuked. The others probably refers to the other elders. That would put the fear of God in them. The tendency in the church today is to bury it and move on. The reason is fear of losing numbers not the fear of God. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. It was a high standard that the church today needs to return to.

Vs 21 When it comes to the disbursement of offerings we must be very careful not to be partial or in favor of those closer to us. This whole chapter is about use of offerings. (Paul never uses the word tithes as it is a part of the Law) This specific instruction is given to help us avoid favoritism in disbursement. If you recall, the creation of the office of deacons in Acts is because of this very problem. We can go beyond money to any giving or ministry which should be impartial.

Vs 22 The laying on of hands for healing or calling or baptism of the Spirit should not be done without the leading of the Spirit. It may also refer to restoration of the rebuked elder. That may encourage them to fall again. Sin can be shared by remaining silent or by working together with another who is not under the right motivation. Watch that their sin does not drag you along so that you are entangled by it. Stay dedicated to God alone, not a person or a selfish cause.

Vs 23 Tim may have made a pledge not to drink wine but Paul encourages the moderate use medicinally. Red wine actually lowers cholesterol.

Vs 24,25 In this life they start to reap the results of the sin. Others will seem to escape those results until the final judgement. No one escapes that without the blood of the Lamb. Is Paul still referring to these errant elders? In the reverse, the last verse is an encouraging Scripture! Do everything as unto the Lord. He sees and rewards! Every man will be rewarded according to his own labor. Some of that blessing will be in this life but much of the secret worship, giving, prayer, will only see its rewards in the next life.