

# 1 Timothy 5 Commentary

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## GODLINESS AND PASTORAL CARE

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Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission

Another Overview Chart - [1 Timothy - Charles Swindoll](#)

THE PASTOR'S PRIMER: PAUL'S PRACTICAL PASTORAL INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING THE LOCAL CHURCH				
1 Timothy 1	1 Timothy 2-3	1 Timothy 4	1 Timothy 5	1 Timothy 6
TIMOTHY'S CHARGE...	TIMOTHY'S INSTRUCTIONS...			
Concerning Sound Doctrine	Concerning Prayer & Church	Concerning Last Days Apostasy	Concerning Widows & Elders	Concerning Conflict & Contentment
Danger of False Doctrine	Public Worship Church Officers	Antidote for Apostasy	Pastoral Duties Toward Others	Instructions for the Man of God
Warning	Worship	Wisdom	Widows	Wealth
Written in Macedonia Circa 62-64AD				

(Source: [Swindoll's Insights on 1 Timothy](#))

Possible Route of Paul's "Farewell Tour" after release from his first Roman imprisonment. ([see notes below](#))

**Key Verses:** 1 Ti 1:15, 1 Ti 3:15-16, 1 Ti 6:11, 1 Ti 6:12

**Key Words -- Key Words** -- see importance of [key words](#) - learn how to [mark key words](#) and the associated discipline of how to [interrogate them with 5W/H questions](#). Practice "interrogating" key words as well as [term of conclusion](#) (therefore), [term of explanation](#) (for), [terms of purpose or result](#) (so that, in order that, that, as a result), [terms of contrast](#) (but, yet), [expressions of time](#) (including [then](#); [until](#), after) and [terms of comparison](#) (like, as). You will be amazed at how your Teacher, the Holy Spirit, will illuminate your understanding, a spiritual blessing that will grow the more you practice! Be diligent! Consider the "**5P's**" - **P**ause to **P**onder the **P**assage then **P**ractise it in the **P**ower of the Spirit. See also [inductive Bible study](#) - [observation \(Observe With a Purpose\)](#) , [Interpretation \(Keep Context King, Read Literally, Compare Scripture with Scripture, Consult Conservative Commentaries\)](#) , and then be a doer of the Word with [Application](#). Do not overlook "doing the word" for if you do you are deluding yourself, and are just a "smarter sinner," but not more like the Savior! As Jesus said "blessed are those who hear the word of God, and observe it." (Lk 11:28+, cf James 1:22+)

**1 Timothy 5:1 Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers,**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:1 Πρεσβυτ ρ μ πιπλ ξς λλ παρακ λει ς πατ ρα, νεωτ ρους ς δελφο ς,

KJV 1 Timothy 5:1 Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren;

NET 1 Timothy 5:1 Do not address an older man harshly but appeal to him as a father. Speak to younger men as brothers,

CSB 1 Timothy 5:1 Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers,

ESV 1 Timothy 5:1 Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers,

NIV 1 Timothy 5:1 Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers,

NLT 1 Timothy 5:1 Never speak harshly to an older man, but appeal to him respectfully as you would to your own father. Talk to younger men as you would to your own brothers.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:1 Do not speak harshly to an older man, but speak to him as to a father, to younger men as brothers,

NJB 1 Timothy 5:1 Never speak sharply to a man older than yourself, but appeal to him as you would to your own father; treat younger men as brothers,

NAB 1 Timothy 5:1 Do not rebuke an older man, but appeal to him as a father. Treat younger men as brothers,

YLT 1 Timothy 5:1 An aged person thou mayest not rebuke, but be entreating as a father; younger persons as brethren;

- **Rebuke:** 1Ti 5:19,20 Lev 19:32 De 33:9 Ga 2:11-14
- **an older man:** 1Ti 5:17 Ac 14:23 15:4,6 20:17 Titus 1:5,6 Jas 5:14 1Pe 5:1 2Jn 1:1 3Jn 1:1 Rev 4:4
- **appeal:** Ro 13:7 Ga 6:1 2Ti 2:24,25 Phm 1:9,10 Jas 3:17 1Pe 5:5,6
- **as brothers:** Mt 18:15-17 23:8

#### Related Passages:

Leviticus 19:32 'You shall rise up before the gray headed and honor the aged, and you shall revere your God; I am the LORD.

Job 32:4; 6 Now Elihu had waited to speak to Job because they were years older than he. (32:6) So Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite spoke out and said, "I am young in years and you are old; Therefore I was shy and afraid to tell you what I think.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR DEALING WITH OLDER MEN

In chapter 5 Paul gives instructions on how to deal with different groups of members in the church beginning with the oldest first.

**Wiersbe** adds "Since Timothy was a younger man, he might be tempted to ignore the older members; so Paul urged him to love and serve all of the people, regardless of their ages. The church is a family: Treat the older members like your mother and father, and the younger members like your brothers and sisters. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Lowell Johnson** - The Church is described in the New Testament by many metaphors and analogies: Sometimes they are referred to as Soldiers in an army; Sometimes they are referred to as Members of the body; Sometimes they are referred to as Competitors in a race; Sometimes as fellow servants in the household of faith. But more frequently than any other way, the members of the congregation are referred to as members of a family. God is our Father; Jesus is our elder Brother; we are joint heirs with Him; and we are brothers and sisters in Christ. These verses picture a family. So, how are we to treat one another in our spiritual family? How are we to treat each other in our church family? Paul says members of a church family are to treat each other with great, deep, Christian courtesy. Paul deals with three groups: The Church Family as a whole; The Widows Specifically; and The Leaders Practically. Paul speaks of the care, the openness, and the love we are to have for one another as believers. But what happens when sin enters the church? Sin must be confronted; disobedience must be dealt with. But HOW is it to be dealt with in the Lord's family? That is the important issue Paul deals with in these verses in Chapter 5. ([How To Treat Folks in the Congregation](#))

**What the Bible Teaches** - As in any family, differences of age and sex in the household of God are to be recognised and respected. The servant must set the pattern of courteous and godly behaviour towards the different groups comprising the assembly. ([1 Thessalonians through Titus](#))

**Brian Bell** - The church is not a corporation...it's a family! One thing we've observe in the last 200 years of church history...If a church has people, that church has problems! We are a Fallible Flock of Flawed saints! Q: How should we treat people w/in the church? What if an elderly man steps out of line & needs rebuked? What if a young lady is after every guy in the church? How do you counsel the Don Juan flirt of the fellowship? What if an older lady is complaining? How do we handle her complaints? What about benevolence? "I once heard about a person/couple that the church didn't help, they just sent them away?"

**Philip Towner** - "As with an article of clothing, the church has its seams, created naturally by age differences, gender differences, economic differences and so on. These seams, where these various groups come together, often show visible signs of stress. It falls to the Christian leader to cross all these lines from time to time in order to minister effectively. But crossing these lines requires sensitivity and care." ([1 Timothy 5 Commentary](#))

**Do not sharply rebuke** ([epiplesso](#)) **an older man** ([presbuteros](#)) - Note this is not referring to the office of an elder or overseer. "Do not speak harshly to an older man." **NJB** = "Never speak sharply to a man older than yourself" This word depicts a violent rebuke, a lashing out at another person! The instruction is to not give verbal blows, so to speak! (We all know what that sounds/looks like don't we!) Timothy was probably younger than many men to whom he was ministering so this would be especially appropriate instruction. Of course Paul is not saying Timothy should NEVER rebuke an older man, for circumstances may require it, but even then he is not to harshly lash out in giving the rebuke. "Even old age does not shield from folly." (Hiebert) While [presbuteros](#) can refer to the office of an elder, that is not the meaning in this passage.

**Lowell Johnson** - Older men who are true Christian believers have more experience and wisdom in dealing with life. That's not to say that they are always right, because they are not. But they do have the wisdom of experience. Therefore, they are not to be ignored, neglected, bypassed, overlooked, or set aside as useless. They are to be treated as fathers, with affection, respect, and honor. Their ideas, opinions, counsel, and direction are to be sought. They are to be a part of the life and ministry of the church. The Bible makes it quite clear that older men are to be treated with respect. "Don't sharply rebuke an older man." Don't admonish them harshly or abrasively, for that would be disrespectful. Always preserve an older man's dignity and worth. Proverbs 30:17 warns in graphic terms of the consequences of not showing that respect: "The eye that mocks a father and scorns a mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out, and the young eagles will eat it." The point is this: if an older man ever needs to be corrected, he is to be corrected and disciplined as a father, not as an enemy. He is to be approached and exhorted, appealed to and pleaded with just as we would our earthly father. Though we don't compromise the Word or condone sin, we speak with love, respect, and gentleness, as to a father. If rebuke must be given, it must be done gently. ([How To Treat Folks in the Congregation](#))

Of course **rebuke** is a vital component for a healthy church, which is why Paul commanded Timothy to **preach** ([aorist imperative](#) see [need to depend on the Holy Spirit](#)) the word; **be ready** ([aorist imperative](#)) in season and out of season; **reprove** ([aorist imperative](#)), **rebuke** ([aorist imperative](#)), **exhort** ([aorist imperative](#)), with great patience and instruction." (2 Timothy 4:2+) So it is not a question of whether we should rebuke, but more of a question of when and how. And the answer is gently!

**MacArthur** - A sinning Christian is not to be hammered with harsh words. That is foreign to family love. (See [1 Timothy Commentary](#))

**William Barclay** - It is always difficult to reprimand anyone with graciousness; and to Timothy there would sometimes fall a duty that was doubly difficult—that of reprimanding someone older than himself. The fourth-century Church father John Chrysostom writes: 'Rebuke is in its own nature offensive particularly when it is addressed to an old man; and when it proceeds from a young man too, there is a threefold show of forwardness. By the manner and mildness of it, therefore, he would soften it. For it is possible to reprove without offence, if one will only make a point of this; it requires great discretion, but it may be done.' Rebuke is always a problem. We may so dislike the task of speaking a warning word that we may avoid it altogether. Many people would have been saved from sorrow and disaster if someone had only spoken a word of warning in time. There can be no more poignant tragedy than to hear someone say: 'I would never have come to this, if you had only spoken in time.' It is always wrong to hold back from speaking the word that needs to be heard.....It was said of Florence Allshorn, the great missionary teacher, that, when she was principal of a women's college, she always rebuked her students, when the need arose, as it were with her arm around them. The rebuke which clearly comes from love is the only effective one. If we ever have cause to reprimand anyone, we must do so in such a way as to make it clear that we do this not because we find a cruel pleasure in it, not because we want to do it, but because we are under the compulsion of love and seek to help, not to hurt.

**David Guzik** - Any godly person will show a deference to those who are aged. You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and fear your God: I am the Lord. (Leviticus 19:32) The silver-haired head is a crown of glory, if it is found in the way of righteousness. (Proverbs 16:31). There is another reason to exhort rather than rebuke an older man – he may simply not receive a rebuke....Apart from this particularly severe word, in general rebuke is an important duty of a pastor. It is the simple, clear, presentation that someone is wrong, either in their conduct or thinking. Its main goal is not encouragement as much as to clearly confront someone with their wrong behavior or thinking. In another letter to a pastor, Paul made the importance of rebuking clear: Rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you. (Titus 2:15) In 1 Timothy 5:20 – this very chapter – Timothy is told there are times are when not only an elder should be rebuked, but times when he should be rebuked publicly. Therefore, in this verse Timothy was not told to never rebuke, but to never rebuke too harshly.. The problem is that many people amass all their defensive ability at a rebuke – if not at the time, then later, after having time to think and listen to their pride. Some become experts at criticizing the one who brought the rebuke, and consider their hurt feelings more important than the truth of the rebuke. No one likes to be rebuked; but the wise person uses the rebuke as a valuable means to growth. ([1 Timothy 5 Commentary](#))

**Spurgeon** said, "A sensible friend who will unsparingly criticize you from week to week will be a far greater blessing to you than a thousand indiscriminating admirers if you have sense enough to bear his treatment, and grace enough to be thankful for it."

**J Vernon McGee** - Timothy was not to rebuke an elder publicly, but he was to entreat him privately. Timothy was a young man, and he needed to be very tactful in his relationship with these older men in the church. In other words, he was not to take the position of a know-it-all or of a dictator over these older men. He was to encourage them and have a word privately with them if he thought it was necessary.

**But** (term of contrast) **rather appeal** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) **to him as a father** - **NJB** = "but appeal to him as you would to your own father." Instead of rough rebukes Timothy was to give gentle exhortation. The verb **appeal** is [parakaleo](#) meaning literally to come alongside with the idea of giving help or aid. **Parakaleo** also conveys the ideas of giving comfort or exhorting with idea of enabling a person to meet some difficult situation with confidence. As a father is a picture we can all identify with especially if we have had to exhort our own father (My children have exhorted me!)

**David Guzik** Exhortation is encouragement to do what needs to be done; it has the manner of an encouraging coach, helping the athlete to achieve their best.

Paul has a parallel instruction for all believers in Galatians 6:1-2+ - "Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, **restore present imperative** see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#) such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. **Bear** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ."

**MacArthur** notes that "Confronting sin in the church is not to be done by violently attacking fallen brothers and sisters. Rather, sinning saints must be lovingly confronted, strengthened, and encouraged toward holy living. It is to be a restorative, redemptive, remedial confrontation, one that must be done with an attitude of gentleness (cf. 2Ti 2:24-25)." (See [1 Timothy Commentary](#))

**To the younger men as brothers** ([adelphos](#)) - **Adelphos** means of the same womb, so Timothy is to treat them as fellow believers or brothers in Christ.

**Lowell Johnson** - We are not to be offensive or needlessly abrasive with young men either, but we don't have to approach them as

gingerly as we would older men. With brothers, we can be more direct and to the point than with fathers. We appeal to them as equals and peers – not with an air of superiority – remembering that their good and God's glory are our goals. ([How To Treat Folks in the Congregation](#))

**Brian Bell** - Don't "talk down to" younger men. Remember back older men...what was important to us in our 20's? We wanted respect! - We wanted to be treated as equals!

**Hiebert** - "The younger men as brothers" reminds him that he is to avoid all show of self-exaltation over them because of his position. Paul's mention of father, brothers, mothers, sisters, shows that he is thinking of the church as a family and each member must be treated with family affection. (Borrow [First Timothy](#))

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**Sharply rebuke** (1969)(epiplusso from **epi** = upon + **plusso** = strike) literally strike upon or to inflict with blows but only in 1Ti 5:1 where it is used figuratively meaning to reprove, rebuke (sharply). The word contains a note of severity; to censure severely. To pound with words, to reprimand. **Gilbrant** - This verb is not common in secular writings, but the cognate noun does appear with the meaning of "a severe rebuke, a punishment." Its noun form occurs once in the Septuagint (2 Maccabees 7:33). Its only use ([Hapax legomenon](#)) in the New Testament is Paul's instruction in 1 Timothy 5:1 to treat elders respectfully. The literal meaning of epiplēssō was "to strike, beat upon" with physical blows. Paul, however, used the figurative meaning "to rebuke or censure severely." The word presents the picture of one striking another verbally, rather than with blows of the fist." ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Older man** (4245) [presbuteros](#) the comparative form of **présbus** = an old man or an ambassador) referred to men who were older or more senior with no negative connotations but rather a sense of venerability. **Presbuteros** is transliterated into English as "presbyter" (a leader in one of the Jewish communities--especially a member of the [Sanhedrin](#)--or of the early Christian churches) and from which the word "priest" (from Late Latin presbyter) was derived.

**Henry Blackaby** - 1 Timothy 5:1 You've heard the saying "Respect your elders." Sometimes that's easier said than done, would you agree? As a young man, Paul was extremely ambitious, eager to make his mark on the world. He saw the way many older men and women were living, and he was not impressed. He set out to show them what a man of vision and energy could do! Maybe they were content to sit around, but he would make things happen! And Paul did! He had saintly Stephen stoned to death. He threw Christians into jail, devastating their families. In his youthful exuberance, he became one of the church's greatest enemies!

Maybe it was his past that made Paul so sensitive to the need for respecting the older generation. Perhaps he regretted his own failure to do so as a young man, considering the horrible consequences of his actions. He certainly understood that young people would not always agree with the older generation. Timothy had some older church members who didn't respect him as a leader, and they were causing him a lot of trouble. Timothy must have been tempted to put them in their place. Paul's advice, however, was to show them respect. Paul didn't say they were right, but he did say to treat them respectfully.

The Bible gives young people no liberty to show disrespect to their elders. This may be hard sometimes. Regardless of who is right and who is wrong, you are called to honor the older generation. Sometimes they may not earn your respect, but God calls you to treat others the way you would like to be treated. It may seem a long way off, but one day you will be the senior citizen, so treat people today the way you will want to be treated when that day comes. (Borrow [The experience : a devotional and journal : day by day with God](#))

### 1 Timothy 5:2 the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity.

BGT 1 Timothy 5:2 πρεσβυτ ρας ς μητ ρας, νεωτ ρας ς δελφ ς ν π σ γνε .

KJV 1 Timothy 5:2 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

NET 1 Timothy 5:2 older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters— with complete purity.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:2 older women as mothers, and with all propriety, the younger women as sisters.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:2 older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:2 older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:2 Treat older women as you would your mother, and treat younger women with all purity as you would your own sisters.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:2 to older women as mothers, to younger women as sisters-- with absolute purity.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:2 older women as mothers and young women as sisters with all propriety.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:2 older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters with complete purity.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:2 aged women as mothers, younger ones as sisters -- in all purity;

GWN 1 Timothy 5:2 older women as if they were your mothers, and younger women as if they were your sisters, while keeping yourself morally pure.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:2 To the older women as to mothers, to the younger as to sisters, with a clean heart.

RSV 1 Timothy 5:2 older women like mothers, younger women like sisters, in all purity.

NKJ 1 Timothy 5:2 older women as mothers, younger as sisters, with all purity.

ASV 1 Timothy 5:2 the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, in all purity.

MIT 1 Timothy 5:2 older women as mothers, younger women as sisters—in total purity.

- **older:** 1Ti 5:3 Mt 12:50 Jn 19:26,27
- **in all purity:** 1Ti 4:12 Php 4:8 1Th 5:22 2Ti 2:22

## TREATING MEMBERS AS MOTHERS AND SISTERS

**Lowell Johnson** - A church is totally irresponsible if it ignores its older women who are true Christian believers. Their potential contribution to the lives and fellowship of believers is immeasurable. Older women are to be loved, respected, and protected. Their softness, tenderness, guidance, understanding and energy are to be sought and used by the church. Again, if an older woman needs correction and discipline, it must not be done in contempt and disrespect, but rather with compassion. ([How To Treat Folks in the Congregation](#))

**The older women as mothers** - So clearly young Timothy was to exhort them with respect, love and honor just as he would show his own mother Eunice (2Ti 1:5). Don't miss Paul's pattern -- fathers, brothers, mothers, sisters. So his point is to treat church members like your own family members (because they are your own family, and sometimes closer than your own family if your family has unbelievers!)

**Brian Bell** raises a very interesting thought- Having various groups in the church seems to be normal! Some churches today are trying to gear towards reaching one age group. Is this healthy? What does a family look like with only sisters, or all fathers? What dynamics would be lacking? The body of Christ contains people of all ages, abilities, & levels of maturity. Being aware of this diversity will help us respect, & when necessary, rebuke the saints in a way that glorifies God & strengthens the church. (Chuck Swindoll; pg.98)

**And the younger women as sisters** - How would you treat your own little sister? Clearly there is to be not even a hint of impropriety in your interactions. This is the way Timothy was to engage with younger women.

**Lowell Johnson** - How should a brother treat his little sister? He should treat her gently, recognizing that she bruises easier than his rowdy friends at the schoolyard. He should protect her, respect her, set an example for her. And he should keep his relationship with her pure, avoiding any suggestion of sensuality or immorality that will cause her to compromise her integrity. Nothing so easily makes or breaks a pastor as his conduct with women. The book of Proverbs gives some very practical advice on how to maintain purity in relationships with younger women. – Avoid the look Proverbs 6:25; Job 31:1 – Avoid the flattery Proverbs 5:3; 6:24; 22:14 – Avoid the thoughts Proverbs 6:25 – Avoid the house Proverbs 7:25-27 – Avoid the touch Proverbs 7:13!!! Father, brother, mother, sister. These are family terms. Co-worker, boss, and employee are no where found in this passage. Paul's point is clear – the church is not a corporation. It's a family. We should approach one another with the love modeled by our heavenly Father. ([How To Treat Folks in the Congregation](#))

**J Vernon McGee** - A sweet relationship should exist between Timothy and the older men and also with those of his own age.

**in all purity** (propriety) - **Purity** is the rare word *hagneia* (from *hagnos*) and describes freedom from defilements or impurities, primarily referring to that which is inwardly pure, but also to purity which affects one's conduct.

So what does the phrase **in all purity** modify? In context (of previous related passages) it could relate to "appeal" in the previous passage. The idea is that Timothy's appeals to older men, younger men, older women and younger women, would be in a manner which is above censure or criticism. That is not unreasonable. But given that Timothy is young, it would be especially important that his dealing with younger women be not just in purity but **in all purity**. **GWT** paraphrases it "while keeping yourself morally pure." How many church scandals would have been avoided if every pastor dealt with young women "above board," even practicing an



"open door policy" like Billy Graham did when counseling women. I have most often called in my godly wife to appeal to the younger women!

[David Guzik](#) A godly man is not flirtatious or provocative, and does not use double entendre' (witty words that can be taken in a flirtatious or provocative way).

[William Barclay](#) - The Arabs have a phrase for a man of honour; they call him 'a brother of girls'. There is a famous phrase which speaks of 'Platonic friendship'. Love must be kept for one; it is a fearful thing when physical matters dominate the relationship between the sexes, and a man cannot see a woman without thinking in terms of her body.

[J Vernon McGee](#) - A minister of a church should be very careful in his relationships with the opposite sex. Nothing hurts a church more or has more frequently wrecked the ministry of a church than sin in this area. When a minister must leave a church because of such a problem, the spiritual deadness in the church is very noticeable. Nothing can destroy the spiritual life of a church more than this kind of an experience. The "new morality" cannot and will not work in the church.

[Life Application Study Bible \(borrow\)](#): Men in the ministry can avoid improper attitudes toward women by treating them as family members. If men see women as fellow members in God's family, they will protect them and help them grow spiritually.

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**Gregory Brown - How can we perform the ministry of correction? ([The Ministry of Correction](#))**

1. In Performing the Ministry of Correction, We Must Not Rebuke Others Harshly
2. In Performing the Ministry of Correction, We Must Correct in an Encouraging Manner
3. In Performing the Ministry of Correction, We Must Use Familial Respect and Affection
4. In Performing the Ministry of Correction, We Must Guard Ourselves from Temptation, Especially with the Opposite Sex

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**Steven Cole - [The Ministry Of Correction \(1 Timothy 5:1-2\)](#)**

If you've ever done any boating, you know how essential it is to stay on course. If you steer just a few degrees off the desired course, you can wind up far from where you wanted to go. I read once of a shipwreck that happened because a sailor broke off the small tip of his knife blade while he was cleaning the ship's compass. He didn't remove it, and that little bit of metal pulled the compass off its true reading, resulting in the ship's running aground. A slight deviation, if left uncorrected, can result in great devastation.

It's the same spiritually. Correction is not a nicety; it's a necessity. If our lives veer off-course and continue in that wrong direction, it can result in shipwreck of our faith. Because of that fact, God wants every believer to be involved in the ministry of correction. Often a brother or sister is off course and doesn't know it. God calls us to correct that person in love.

**The ministry of correction is essential in the family of God.**

It's essential, but never easy. I dislike nothing in ministry more than to have to confront someone with sin in his life. But it must be done. As I emphasized last week, every believer is in the ministry. And one of the most helpful ministries you can perform is the ministry of correction. Quite often, you can correct a member of the body whom I or the elders cannot effectively correct, because you know the person better than we do. He is your friend, so he's more likely to listen to you than to someone he doesn't know. But it's still not easy to do.

Today I want to talk on how to carry out this ministry of correction properly. We will examine Paul's instructions to Timothy (1 Tim. 5:1-2); but we will also go to some other Scriptures to give us the big picture. I encourage you to take some notes, because you are not exempt from this ministry. Some of you know of fellow believers who need correction. But you haven't gone to them in love and offered correction. Maybe you don't know how or maybe you're chicken. But you're not loving your brother or sister if you let them head toward shipwreck and don't try to correct him or her.

We will look first at some hindrances to this ministry; then at some preliminary questions; finally, at the procedure.

### **Hindrances to correction**

There are a number of barriers which prevent us from correcting those who need it. These need to be removed if we want God to use us in this vital ministry.

#### **1. FEAR**

We're chicken! It's threatening to confront someone who is out of line. I'll be honest: I struggle with anxiety when I have to correct

anyone.

How do you overcome this fear? The only thing that helps me is to fear God more than men and to realize that God will hold me accountable if I see someone going astray and do not warn them and seek to correct them. So I do it out of obedience to God.

If your kids, without your knowledge, were playing on a dangerous street, and if another adult saw them in danger and merely shook his head and said, "They shouldn't do that, they'll get hurt," you would be angry if you found out about it. You would say, "You mean to tell me that you saw my kids in danger, and you didn't do anything about it? Don't you care about anyone except yourself?"

In the same way, God isn't pleased when we see one of His children, whom He purchased with the blood of His own Son, straying onto a dangerous path while we merely look, shake our heads and say, "He shouldn't do that; he'll get hurt," but do nothing about it.

If you care, you must confront. You must warn the person of the danger of His ways, if for no other reason, at least to absolve yourself of responsibility (Acts 20:26-27; Ezek. 3:17-21). Sheep are valuable to the Shepherd (Acts 20:28). If we love Him, they must also be valuable to us.

If you are faithful in this ministry of correction, you'll often get accused of not being loving. But love is not syrupy sentiment. If someone is heading downstream toward a waterfall, is it loving to stand by shaking your head and watching the person cruise toward destruction, or is it loving to do all you can to warn him? Real love has the courage to confront someone who is going astray. We're all accountable to God to love others. Obedience to God means that we must swallow our fears and correct those we know of who are going astray.

## **2. A MISUNDERSTANDING OF MATTHEW 7:1--"DO NOT JUDGE LEST YOU BE JUDGED."**

This is one of the most misapplied verses in the Bible. We see another believer engaging in sin or heading in a wrong direction and we say, "Well, the Bible says, 'Judge not,' so I can't judge what he's doing. It's none of my business."

If that's what Jesus meant, it would be impossible to shepherd anyone! To minister to people, you must honestly evaluate where they're at in their walk with Christ and do whatever you can to help them move more toward where they ought to be.

Jesus was talking about hypocritically condemning others for their sins, while you ignore major sins in your own life. He didn't say that we aren't to remove specks from our brother's eye. He did say that we are to deal with the log in our own eye first. That leads to another hindrance:

## **3. AWARENESS OF PERSONAL SINS**

Sometimes we're hesitant to correct others because we know we have sin in our lives that needs to be cleaned up. If we went to correct a sinning brother, he could point the finger back at us and say, "What about you?" So we don't say anything.

If that's the case, then the obvious solution is, deal with your sins! Confess them to the Lord and turn from them. It is those who are spiritual (spiritually mature) who are to help restore those caught in sin (Gal. 6:1). They do it cognizant of their own propensity toward sin ("looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted"), but not with any known, unconfessed sin in their lives.

## **4. LAZINESS**

It's always easier not to confront or correct someone. Always! It's always a hassle. It takes effort to arrange a time and get together so that you can deal with the issue. But laziness is hardly a good excuse if a person is heading toward spiritual ruin. Love takes effort. Somewhere we got this crazy idea that love is a spontaneous, effortless feeling. But if love just flowed naturally, we wouldn't have to be commanded so often to do it. To obey, you have to confront your love of self above others, which is where laziness comes from. If you love someone, you're willing to inconvenience yourself to help the other person become what God wants him to be.

## **5. RELATIVE MORALITY**

We live in a culture that believes there are no moral absolutes and that tolerance is the chief virtue. The church has been tainted by this, as seen when a Christian sees another believer doing something clearly against God's Word, but he rationalizes, "Well, it wouldn't be right for me to do that, but maybe it's okay for him."

But if it's against God's Word, it's wrong for anyone. Period! God's Word is our unchanging standard. If someone is violating His Word, then we have the responsibility to correct him in the proper way. Correction assumes that there is such a thing as absolute right and wrong, revealed in God's Word.

## **6. UNCERTAINTY AS TO WHETHER OR NOT TO CORRECT**



This is the hardest area for me. Sometimes it's a judgment call to know whether a problem will correct itself or whether it needs my involvement. Some Christians ride around with their biblical six-shooter and whenever they see someone slightly out of line, with lightning speed they let him have it right between the eyes with a well-chosen verse. But often they do it out of spiritual pride, not love, and it usually does more harm than good.

We need sensitivity to the Holy Spirit to know when to let something go and when to move in with correction. If you know someone who is engaging in obviously sinful behavior, then correction is not optional. You may not be the one to do it, but you can't let it go without making sure that it gets done (Gal. 6:1). Also, if there is a major doctrinal issue at stake which is affecting many people, you must confront it (Paul and Peter, Gal. 2:11-14). Correction is also needed when you detect a wrong or dangerous habit-pattern in someone's life. For example, if you as a Christian man know a brother who is always checking out and flirting with women, you need to help him before he gets into worse trouble.

Beyond these guidelines, you must be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's promptings in your own life to know whether or not you should correct someone. I recommend that you study Scripture for models, especially how Jesus and Paul corrected others.

Assuming that you have removed the hindrances and you think that God wants you to correct a brother or sister, how do you go about it? I want to give you seven questions to ask yourself before you go to the person; and then, seven guidelines for giving biblical correction.

## **Preliminaries to correction**

### **1. IS MY LIFE AN EXAMPLE?**

In 1 Timothy 4:12, Paul exhorts Timothy to set an example of godliness. From that foundation, he then can appeal to older men and women, as well as to those younger than himself (5:1-2). (Note also Acts 20:26-27, 31, 33-35; Paul admonished the Ephesian elders from the basis of setting a godly example.) This doesn't mean that you must be perfect, but it does mean that you are walking uprightly with God.

### **2. DO I HAVE AN ADEQUATE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PERSON?**

In 1 Timothy 5:1-2, Paul tells Timothy to couch the ministry of correction in family-like relationships, treating the older men as fathers, the older women as mothers, the younger men as brothers, and the younger women as sisters. (See also Acts 20:37-38; 1 Thess. 2:7-11).

It's not always possible to have a deep relationship with those we must correct. But as a rule, the most effective correction takes place when the other person knows from experience that you love him.

### **3. DO I HAVE THE FACTS?**

Proverbs 18:13 states, "He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him." Biblical communication is based on truth. Before you correct someone, you need to make sure that you have the full truth about what is going on, and not just one side (Prov. 18:17) and not hearsay.

### **4. DO I HAVE THE RIGHT MOTIVES AND OBJECTIVES?**

Your motive should be to obey God by loving your neighbor (Matt. 22:39). Your objectives should be to restore the person to a right relationship with God and others and to help him grow to maturity in Christ (Matt. 18:15; Gal. 6:1; Col. 1:28). You need to check your heart before you go.

Your goal is not to embarrass or ridicule the other person. Nor is it to prove yourself right and the other person wrong. Your goal isn't "to give the other person a piece of your mind," or "to put him in his place" or "to get it off your chest." If you take pleasure in doing it, you probably shouldn't do it until you examine your own heart. Remember, your motive should be love and your goal should be to build up the person in Christ.

### **5. DO I HAVE THE RIGHT WORDING?**

Jesus says (Matt. 18:15) that we are to "reprove" our brother with a view to winning him. "Reprove" was a legal word used of a lawyer convincing the court of his case. Any attorney worth his salt thinks through what to say and how to say it so as to convince the judge and jury of the truthfulness of his case. So we need to think carefully about what we're going to say so that our brother will be reconciled with God and with anyone he has sinned against.

The classic biblical example is Nathan when he went to confront King David about his sins of adultery and murder. He told David a

story about a rich man who was unwilling to slaughter one of his many lambs, but instead took a poor man's pet lamb and slaughtered it for his dinner guest. When David grew angry at this injustice, Nathan sprung his trap by saying, "You are the man!" David was broken with repentance (2 Sam. 12:1-7). Remember, the goal is to help restore your brother, not blow him away or prove that you're right and he's wrong.

## **6. IS IT GOD'S TIME FOR ME TO GO?**

When David sinned with Bathsheba the Lord waited about one year, and then sent Nathan. Before that, David probably wouldn't have listened. As it was, he was miserable in his guilt, so he was ready for God's way out (Psalms 38, 51). You must be sensitive to the Holy Spirit as to the right timing.

It's usually not God's time for you to correct someone if you haven't spent time praying about it. A good rule is, "Don't approach a person about a problem until you have approached God about the person." Sometimes God answers your prayers and you don't even have to go to the person. At other times, He will often work to prepare the other person's heart, and He will work on you to give you the right motives and goal.

## **7. AM I PREPARED TO RISK REJECTION AND ATTACK?**

Even when you follow all of these preliminary steps, a person often will be defensive and angry at you. Many times he will respond by criticizing or attacking you. If you lose your cool and counterattack him, you just lost your ability to correct biblically. You can't take the person's attack on you personally. You're God's spokesman, and being a prophet is sometimes a hazardous job. But you just calmly stand your ground and keep speaking the truth in love.

After running through this check list of questions, follow this procedure:

### **Procedure for correction**

#### **1. BE AS PRIVATE AS THE WRONG.**

If it's a private matter, don't correct the person in front of others. Don't take someone with you at first if it is a strictly personal matter. Matthew 18:15-17 gives the order: First private confrontation, then one or two more with you, then church action (on a serious matter).

Some matters require public confrontation. In Galatians 2:11-14, Paul confronted Peter "in the presence of all." It was a public matter affecting many people, so Paul dealt with it publicly.

#### **2. BE CAUTIOUS AND WISE**

Paul tells Timothy to deal with the younger women as sisters "in all purity" (1 Tim. 5:2). Many pastors fall into sin because they disregard Paul's warning. I heard of one pastor who fell into adultery with his secretary. The way it started was that he was on a crusade against pornography. He and his secretary were looking together at pornography that he was going to speak against! That's dumb, but it shows how if you play with the enemy, he'll eat you up!

If you don't want to fall over the cliff, don't go near the edge! You are not invincible. No matter how well-meaning you may be in trying to help another person with their problem, you are susceptible to the same sin (Gal. 6:1, "looking to yourselves, lest you too be tempted.")

#### **3. BE DIRECT AND OPEN.**

Don't beat around the bush. Don't go behind the person's back and talk about the problem to others who aren't involved. In Galatians 2:11, Paul confronted Peter to his face. He didn't bring up the problem when Peter was not there and try to build support for his point of view. He spoke directly and openly.

#### **4. BE HUMBLE, NOT JUDGMENTAL.**

You are a fellow sinner (Gal. 6:1). The next time, you may be the one needing correction. So you go in humility, with understanding. You do not attack the person, but try to help the person attack the problem.

#### **5. BE GENTLE, BUT FIRM.**

"Do not sharply rebuke" (1 Tim. 5:1). The word means, don't strike him with words. Don't ride roughshod over the person. "Appeal" is the same word translated "exhortation" in 4:13. It means to come alongside to help. Correcting or giving counsel is the same as teaching, except it's done personally, to help the individual see how Scripture applies to his situation. Many Scriptures that talk about

correction also mention the need for gentleness (Gal. 6:1; 2 Tim. 2:25). Don't blast.

But also, don't let the person rationalize or minimize his sin or shift the blame. You may need to point out the gap between what he is saying and what he's doing. You may need to show him Scripture and ask, "How does what you said (or did) fit with what God's Word says?" You aren't helping him if you allow him to justify sin. You must be gentle, but firm.

## 6. BE ABLE TO POINT HIM TO GOD'S WORD AND TO THE NECESSARY STEPS TOWARD RESTORATION.

God's Word is our common source of authority. You need to have your case for correction solidly built upon God's Word so that you can gently, but firmly, keep bringing the person back to the issue: What does the Bible say? You want him to know that his problem is not with you; it is with God, whose Word he is violating. Also, be able to direct him to some biblical steps of action. Confrontation alone is not sufficient; you must also bring restoration and healing through the Word. Your goal is to restore.

## 7. BE PERSISTENT IF NECESSARY.

Once may not be enough. (Acts 20:31, "night and day for three years ...") You don't give up if the person doesn't respond immediately. You may need to back off and continue praying while you wait for the right opportunity. You don't want to nag and drive him further away. But neither do you give up and say, "I tried once to correct him, but he just wouldn't listen!" Where would you be if the Lord gave up on you after His first attempt to correct you?

## Conclusion

Back during the Communist regime in Russia a joke was going around about Boris the Russian who arrived at the Pearly gates and was welcomed by St. Peter. Showing him around, Peter said, "You can go anywhere you want except on the pink clouds." "Why can't I go there?" Boris asked. "Because," Peter replied, "the pink clouds are reserved for those who did something great." "But I have done something great," Boris protested. "I made a speech at the Kremlin confronting the government and all the corrupt leaders." "Really," said Peter. "When did this happen?" Boris looked at his watch. "About two minutes ago."

One moral of that story is that confronting sin doesn't always work! Sometimes you pay a price! But we shouldn't do it because it works or doesn't work. We do it because God has commanded us to love one another. Part of love is this ministry of correction, done in the context of God's family, in the manner I have outlined today.

Some of you may not have immediate occasion to apply this. But you will soon, if you are committed to the ministry of building people as God wants you to be. Others have immediate situations that require loving correction. I encourage you to obey the Lord in this matter. "My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth, and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death, and will cover a multitude of sins" (James 5:19-20).

## Discussion Questions

1. Which hindrance to correction is the most common excuse for not doing it? Can you think of others?
2. Many think of "confronting" as being abrasive. Others think "gentleness" means not being strong. Where's the biblical balance? Consider how Jesus corrected others.
3. What are some biblical guidelines for knowing when to let something go and when to confront?
4. What is the most difficult part of the ministry of correction for you? Why?

## 1 Timothy 5:3 Honor widows who are widows indeed;

BGT 1 Timothy 5:3 Χ ρας τ μα τ ς ντω ς χ ρας.

KJV 1 Timothy 5:3 Honour widows that are widows indeed.

NET 1 Timothy 5:3 Honor widows who are truly in need.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:3 Support widows who are genuinely widows.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:3 Honor widows who are truly widows.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:3 Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:3 Take care of any widow who has no one else to care for her.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:3 Honor widows who are really widows.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:3 Be considerate to widows -- if they really are widowed.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:3 Honor widows who are truly widows.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:3 honour widows who are really widows;

- **Honor** (KJV): 1Ti 5:2,17 Ex 20:12 Mt 15:6 1Th 2:6 1Pe 2:17 3:7
- **widows**: 1Ti 5:9 De 10:18 14:29 16:11,14 27:19 Job 29:13 31:16 Ps 68:5 Ps 94:6 146:9 Jer 49:11 Mt 23:14 Lu 7:12 Ac 6:1 9:39 Jas 1:27
- **indeed**: 1Ti 5:4,5,9-11,16 Lu 2:37 Jn 1:47

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 10:18 **“He executes justice for the orphan and the widow,** and shows His love for the alien by giving him food and clothing.

Deuteronomy 24:17 **“You shall not pervert the justice due an alien or an orphan,** nor take a widow’s garment in pledge.

Isaiah 1:17 Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, **Defend the orphan,** Plead for the widow.

Deuteronomy 14:29 “The Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance among you, and the alien, **the orphan and the widow** who are in your town, shall come and eat and be satisfied, in order that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.

Malachi 3:5 “Then I will draw near to you for judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against those who swear falsely, and **against those who oppress the wage earner in his wages, the widow and the orphan,** and those who turn aside the alien and do not fear Me,” says the LORD of hosts.

Acts 6:1 Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, **because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food.**

Acts 9:39 So Peter arose and went with them. When he arrived, they brought him into the upper room; and **all the widows stood beside him,** weeping and showing all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was with them.

## SHOW HONOR TO GENUINE WIDOWS

1 Timothy 5:3-16 is the longest section in Scripture on widows.

**John Phillips** gives some background on widows - Under the Law of Moses, a woman who was left widowed and childless was automatically married to the brother of the deceased, and the first child born of this marriage took the name of the widow’s first husband to keep that name alive in Israel (Deut. 25:5-6). It was by means of just such a marriage-the marriage of Ruth and Boaz-that Jesus came into this world (Ruth 1-4). Just the same, the Jews regarded widowhood and barrenness with horror (Isa. 54:4). The Levitical marriage provided some protection for destitute widows, but the custom was really a device to keep property in the right family. Paul freed widows from unwelcome and forced second, third, or fourth marriages when he told Timothy to “honour widows that are widows indeed” (1 Tim. 5:3). (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**A. Duane Litfin** - Throughout the Old and New Testaments widows, along with aliens and orphans, are viewed as special objects of God’s mercy. As such they are to be taken under the wing of the congregation (cf. Deut. 10:18; 14:29; 24:17-21; Acts 6:1-7; James 1:27). As early as Acts 6 the church had established a charitable outreach to widows. Now about 30 years later the ministry to widows, of whom there were no doubt many, showed signs of being a major burden to the congregation. Paul was therefore eager in this passage to identify those who did not truly need help in order to leave enough for those who did. (See [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

“The true test of a civilization is the way it treats its old people.”

-- David Lloyd-George

**GotQuestions** - Today’s Western societies, where independence takes precedence over family relationships, have lost sight of the value of God’s purpose for creating extended families. But among God’s people, families ought to be the primary source of support for widows.

[Brian Bell](#) suggests some basic principles that relate to church widows (and anyone in the church who has need) - Not everyone who asks for help should receive it. Charity begins at home. Church leaders must exercise discernment lest they create more problems than they solve.

**Honor** ([timaō](#) in [present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) **widows** ([chera](#)) **who are widows** ([chera](#)) **indeed** (truly) - NIV has "widows who are really in need." NLT is an accurate paraphrase rendering it "any widow who has no one else to care for her." Note that this is command for the church to care for widows. Does your church have a ministry that cares for widows? The verb **honor** ([timaō](#)) was used in Pe 2:17 "to honor the king," and here means to ascribe worth to the widow and in context includes the idea of providing for her financially as a means of showing due respect. The idea is appreciating the widow's worth as a sister in Christ and paying proper respect to her. And note the command calls for the church to keep on honoring them! This is not one (handout) and done! This command was important for the church to understand for widows were often poor with no source of ongoing income. So yes, show **honor** by showing proper respect, but show honor by providing material and monetary support.

**Charles Swindoll** on **Honor** ([timaō](#)) - The term also means "to set a price," strongly suggesting this "honor" was to be given tangible expression in the form of money; after all, we financially take care of the people we value. This probably took the form of a stipend in return for required service to the church (cf. 1Ti 5:17-18). We would call it an [honorarium](#) today. Supporting this view is the fact that the "honor" was conditional—unlike charity, which is not. Paul reserved this honor for true widows, or "widows indeed." He defines this special group in 1Ti 5:4-15. (See [Insights on 1 & 2 Timothy](#))

**Lowell Johnson** - Notice the first two words of Verse 3: "Honor widows." The word means "to fix the value" as in our word "[honorarium](#)," a price paid to a speaker for services. It also means "to show respect or care," "to support," or "to treat graciously." Paul has been accused by some of being hard on women. But not so. He uses the word "honor" to show his great respect for them. God has always designed that women be the special objects of care (which is not true of other world religions who mistreat women). They are to be under the umbrella of male protection, provision and direction. Did you notice that no command is given to support men who are alone, but special care is given to care for women who are alone? It is not surprising that the first ministry to develop in the early Church involved the care of widows (Acts 6:1-4; 9:36-41). It was one of the reasons deacons were chosen to help care for them ([How To Treat Folks in the Congregation](#))

**Widows indeed** - 1 Timothy 5:3, 5, 16b

- She has no family – no children or relatives to support her.
- She has her hope fixed on God.
- She worships and communes with God night and day.
- The church is to help support her when needed.

[J Vernon McGee](#) - "Honor" is a very interesting word, and in the Greek it is the same word from which we get our English word [honorarium](#). It has in it the thought of value being attached to something. Sometimes when I speak at a church on a Sunday or for a week of special services I receive a check that says on it, "[honorarium](#)." In other words, they have attached value to what I have done....The instruction given in the Word of God is very practical. It uses a whole lot of common sense and is not moved by sentimentality. Christians are known to be tenderhearted, and there are a lot of people today who have their hands out to us. We need to be very careful. The early church took care of widows, but they didn't do it in some haphazard, sentimental way. The deacons were to make an investigation to see who were truly widows, where the need was, and how much need there was. There are not many liberal or even conservative churches who are taking care of the widows in their midst. This is a much neglected area today.

[David Guzik](#) In the days the New Testament was written, there was no social assistance system from the government. In that day there was one especially vulnerable class – elderly widows, who were without means of support from husbands or grown children, and without means to adequately support themselves. These are those who are really widows. Any pastor can give you many, many stories about strangers who call the church and ask for some kind of assistance – and any pastor can tell you how hard it is to deal with such situations with love, but without getting ripped off. The writer has had several experiences with the kind of man who call you from a hotel with the big, sad story, pleading for money in the name of Christian love. Upon arrival, the man's room was a mess, his TV turned to filth, phone book open to the Yellow Pages section of churches because he had been calling all around town for pastors to tell his sad story too. When asked to describe his favorite Bible verse, the man was dumbfounded. Upon many other occasions when helping those who are in need, the needy are asked to have their home church pastor call with a word of thanks – and it never happens.

**NET NOTE** - The word **honor** here carries the double meaning of respect and financial support. This Greek word can imply both

senses, and both are intended in this context.

**Hiebert** - The basic thought in the word “**widow**” is that of loneliness. The word comes from an adjective meaning “bereft” and speaks of her resultant loneliness as having been bereft of her husband. The added word “indeed” places the emphasis upon those whose circumstances are characteristic of real widowhood....the word (HONOR) used “suggests that such relief is not to be dealt out to them as to mere paupers, in a manner to degrade them, but as to Christian women whom the Church holds in honor, and to whom it thus shows honor” (Borrow [First Timothy](#))

**William Barclay** has an interesting comment on **widows** noting that "it was not uncommon in the Gentile world, in certain places, for a man to have more than one wife. When a man became a Christian, he could not go on being a polygamist, and therefore he had to choose which wife he was going to live with. That meant that some wives had to be sent away, and they were clearly in a very unfortunate position. It may be that such women as these were also considered to be widows and were given the support of the Church."

**John MacArthur** - The responsibility of the church thus extends to all qualifying women who have lost their husbands. With divorce and desertion rampant in our society, we face an even greater challenge than the Ephesian church. The treatment of widows tests the spiritual character of the Christian community. Believers' devotion to Christ can be seen in how they treat those without resources. Through the care it provides, the church manifests Christ's love to the needy and gives witness of Christlike love to the watching world. Such care has been a part of the church's life throughout its history. The welfare system of Western nations is a direct legacy of the church's influence. (See [1 Timothy Commentary](#))

**John Phillips** - Our society is impoverished by its departure from this Pauline principle. Social welfare is a poor substitute for spiritual welfare; a state or private institution is a cold replacement for a loving home. A widowed mother who lives in one's home can be a benediction. She can also be a trial, as well as a spur to her family to grow in grace. (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

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**Honor** (5091) **timao** for **time** = honor, prize) means to show high regard respect for and so to count as valuable, to esteem, to value, to estimate or fix the value, venerate to honor or to revere. To show respect to someone is to recognize their worth as a person (and if they are a parent to recognize the validity of their role and their authority) and implies a considered evaluation or estimation. Therefore, **timao** means to ascribe worth to someone. To hold in awe. To assign value to something, including people considered as property (slaves). It means to fix a value or price upon something and so to prize it. The idea is to treat as precious! To honor is a social action describing how people within a society should evaluate one another. Honor usually results in people being elevated in the eyes of the community. Honoring involves a proper attitude as well as appropriate behavior.

**Widows** (5503) **chera** = feminine of **cheros** = bereft of one's spouse) derives from a root meaning “forsaken,” and it may thus refer to any woman living without a husband. It means bereaved as would be a widow whose husband had died. Figuratively **chera** spoke of the city of Babylon stripped of her citizens and her wealth (Rev 18:7<sup>±</sup>). The idea of neediness is often associated with **chera**, and it is also often linked with orphans (Mt 23:14; Mk 12:40, 42-44). In the New Testament the widow remains a picture of neediness, destitution, and poverty. The basic thought in the word “**widow**” is that of loneliness. The word comes from an adjective meaning “bereft” and speaks of her resultant loneliness as having been bereft of her husband.

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**Henry Blackaby** -1 Timothy 5:3 Paul's world was a man's world. Women had few rights. They could not vote. Few women had jobs. Their identity was wrapped up in the men they married. Their testimony was not even accepted in court. In light of the way women were looked upon back then, it speaks volumes about Jesus that he treated women so respectfully. Because they were so dependent upon their husbands, women who became widows had a hard time surviving. Their best hope was to find another husband to care for them.

Some widows were cared for by their families, and a few had wealth of their own. But Paul mentions other widows who needed their church to care for them. Since Timothy was a young man, he may not have given much thought to the care of widows. Paul reminded him that it is the church's duty to care for any member who is weak, elderly, or in need.

When you're young, strong, and busy, it's easy to overlook the needs of people like widows. Perhaps an elderly woman (or man) in your church needs a helping hand around the house or the yard. God may want you to be the one who helps out. Perhaps God wants you to befriend an elderly person who is lonely. You might be surprised to find that the person you help out has a lot to offer you as well! Is there an elderly person whom you regularly spend time with right now? If not, ask God to guide you to someone. It will enrich your life far more than you realize.

(Borrow [The experience : a devotional and journal : day by day with God](#))

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**Lowell Johnson summarizes this section** - Paul has four groups of women in mind who have lost their mates:



### 1. Widows indeed (1Ti 5:3, 5, 16b).

These women are desolate, without means of support or relatives to assist them.

### 2. Widows who have living relatives (1Ti 5:4, 8, 16a).

These widows have children, grandchildren, or other relatives who can help support them.

### 3. Widows who live carnal lives (1Ti 5:6, 11-13, 15).

These women, rather than using their new position in life to worship God and serve the saints with undistracted devotion, are living a loose lifestyle.

### 4. Widows who are “on the list” or “in the number”(1Ti 5:9-10).

This refers to widows who qualified for financial support from the church. Some widows were to be kept on the list, others excluded.

The church today has the responsibility to care for widows. James 1:27+ says "Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world."

Far from being a liability for the church, the older widows are a valuable asset. They have a wealth of wisdom and experience to share with younger women. They also have time to participate in a wide range of ministries. They are also some of the most faithful members in the church.

**It doesn't take much for some young folks to miss church, but in every church I've pastored, I've seen older widows come when they were stooped in pain; yet, always with a smile and encouraging word for others, especially their pastor. ([How To Treat Folks in the Congregation](#))**

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## QUESTION - [What does the Bible say about how widows are to be treated?](#)

**ANSWER** - A widow is a woman whose husband has died. Often in Scripture, when widows are referred to, it appears to carry the idea of a woman whose husband has died who also has no one to provide for her. Thus, widows are often grouped with [vulnerable members of society](#) such as the fatherless, aliens, and the poor (Deuteronomy 14:29; 16:11; 24:20; 26:12). The Bible says widows are to be treated with honor and compassion and offered protection so that no one takes advantage of them.

In ancient times, the primary purpose of women in marriage was to produce children and heirs to carry on the family line. A childless widow endured double adversity, with no husband to provide for and protect her, and no son to carry on the family name and care for her in her old age. She might have been considered a disgrace to her family and left in a precarious position.

God recognized the widow's plight and rose to her defense: "A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling" (Psalm 68:5). A person who denied justice to a widow was cursed by God: "Cursed is anyone who withholds justice from the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow" (Deuteronomy 27:19). Laws and special provisions were put in place to safeguard widows against neglect and abuse.

At harvest time, widows could [glean in the fields of grain](#) and gather leftover grapes and olives: "When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf, do not go back to get it. Leave it for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands" (Deuteronomy 24:19).

The primary Old Testament law that protected widows from poverty and cruel treatment was that of the [levirate marriage](#). The purpose of the law was to ensure that a man who died before producing a son might still be guaranteed a male heir. The unmarried brother of the widow's husband would take the widow as his wife and perform "the levirate duty." The first son born to the widow was regarded as the legal descendant of her deceased husband. The law of levirate marriage is illustrated in the stories of [Tamar](#) and Onan and of [Ruth and Boaz](#).

In the New Testament, widows are also given special consideration. Proper religious work, according to God, involves caring for widows and orphans: "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world" (James 1:27). Jesus condemned the Pharisees for their ill-treatment of widows (Mark 12:40).

God has deep compassion for those who are left alone, and the church is to demonstrate that same compassion. In 1 Timothy 5, the apostle Paul gives a detailed outline of how the church and individual families are to care for widows.

According to Paul, a widow who received financial and material support from the church had to meet certain qualifications. First and



foremost, the widow had to be truly in need and completely alone in the world: “But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God” (1 Timothy 5:4).

It is the duty and obligation of families to care for their aging and needy family members. Christian children and grandchildren have a special privilege and opportunity to put their faith in action by giving back love and support to their parents and grandparents, and especially to widows who are alone.

Today’s Western societies, where independence takes precedence over family relationships, have lost sight of the value of God’s purpose for creating extended families. But among God’s people, families ought to be the primary source of support for widows.

Paul goes on to give guidelines for a widow to be eligible to receive the church’s support. Besides having no one to take care of her, she ought to be a woman of prayer, a dedicated servant of the Lord, more than sixty years of age, faithful to her husband when he was alive, and committed to good deeds like caring for children, showing hospitality, and serving God’s people (1 Timothy 5:9–10). Apparently, in order to receive charity in the early Christian church, eligible widows were enrolled on a list (1Ti 5:11). The age designation was likely because sixty was considered the age of retirement in the first century, and these women were probably past the age of remarrying. Younger widows were more likely to remarry; in fact, Paul counsels them to do so (1Ti 5:14).

Since God honors widows and treats them with compassion, believers should do the same: “Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow” (Isaiah 1:17). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

#### **Related Resources:**

- [What does the Bible say about orphans and widows? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)
- [What are some Bible verses about widows? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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#### **Steven Cole - [Caring For Widows \(1 Timothy 5:3-16\)](#)**

A U.S. News & World Report (4/3/81) article uncovered the ugly fact of brutality against the aged by their own families:

Each year, perhaps a million elderly Americans—or about 1 out of every 25—are abused by relatives.... Few people are aware of such abuse, although it occurs with a frequency only slightly less than child abuse.... Only one in six cases ever comes to the attention of authorities.... Victims are likely to be 75 or older, and women suffer more often than men. The most likely abuser is the son, followed by the daughter and spouse....

Though the article described physical, sexual, and extreme emotional abuse, we in the church are sometimes guilty of another form of abuse toward the elderly: apathy. Perhaps many of you reflect such apathy by responding to the topic of this sermon, “Caring for Widows,” with a wide yawn. I must confess that it isn’t a hot topic that I would pick to preach on. But the very length of Paul’s discussion (14 verses) makes it hard to miss. Maybe God is trying to get our attention on a subject we’re inclined to shrug off. God is concerned that His people be concerned about widows.

It’s a problem that will only continue to grow in our culture, as our population ages. By the year 2000, 13 percent of Americans will be 65 or older, with the greatest increase in the over-75 group, which is more in need of physical and financial care. One-half of women over 65 have lost their spouses, and two-thirds of those over 75. Four times as many widows are alive as widowers.

There are numerous passages in the Bible dealing with widows. God has a special concern for them, along with orphans and others in difficult circumstances. Many passages lay down laws to protect widows. God is described as their protector and judge: “A father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows is God in His holy habitation” (Ps. 68:5). “The Lord protects the strangers; He supports the fatherless and the widow” (Ps. 146:9). “Cursed is he who distorts the justice due an alien, orphan, and widow” (Deut. 27:19). “This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world” (James 1:27).

It’s significant that Paul, learned theologian and visionary apostle, was concerned about the care given to widows in the local church. In these verses to Timothy, he gives some wise, practical counsel, telling us that ...

#### **The church should wisely care for the widows in her midst.**

Due to the difficult nature of this passage, I think it best to follow the outline of the text to explain what Paul is saying. Then we’ll draw some practical lessons. There are two sections: (1) The duty to support needy widows (5:3-10); (2) The duty not to support younger widows (5:11-16).

#### **1. The church has a duty to support needy widows (1Ti 5:3-10).**

There are four types of widows in these verses:

- (1) The “widows indeed” (NASB; NIV = “really in need”), who do not have family members to care for them (1Ti 5:3-5, 9-10);
- (2) Widows with children and grandchildren (1Ti 5:4, 16);
- (3) Younger widows, who should remarry (1Ti 5:11-15);
- (4) Widows who live for pleasure rather than for the Lord (1Ti 5:6).

#### **A. NEEDY WIDOWS SHOULD BE CARED FOR BY THE CHURCH (1Ti 5:3-6, 9-10).**

A “widow indeed” is a godly woman over 60 (1Ti 5:9) who has been left alone. Either she has no children and grandchildren, or they have died or are so far away as not to be able to render aid to her. This woman has fixed her hope on God (v. 5) and is a woman of prayer. Anna, the godly old woman in the Temple who held the baby Jesus, is an example (Luke 2:36-38).

Paul says that the church should “honor” such widows (v. 3). This is not to imply that we may disrespect other widows! Paul means that the church should help them financially. (In a moment we’ll look at the further stipulations, vv. 9-10). The Greek word translated “honor” has a double meaning. First, it has the idea of a “price” paid or received. From there it came to refer to honor or esteem attached to something or someone due to their value. Thus the word can refer both to material support and/or esteem. In 1 Timothy 5:17, the word has both senses. In 1 Timothy 6:1, it clearly refers to esteem. In our text (5:3), it seems weighted toward material support.

Scholars differ as to whether there was an “official order” of church widows in Paul’s time. We do know from a fourth century work called “The Apostolic Constitutions,” that there came to be an official order of widows later in church history. It seems at least that Paul is giving requirements for widows who could qualify for church aid. They were to be actively devoted to the ministry of the church, and the church gave them financial help.

In 1Ti 5:9-10, Paul elaborates on the conditions of 1Ti 5:3-5 concerning needy widows. They are to be at least 60 years old. Younger widows Paul advises to remarry. They are to be the wife of one husband, literally, “a one-man woman,” the same qualification laid down for elders and deacons (1Ti 3:2, 12). She is to have a reputation for good works (v. 10), including “bringing up children.” This probably means that if she has had children, she has raised them in the faith. But it may also include caring for unwanted orphans. In the Roman world, unwanted children were often left unattended to die. Unscrupulous people would sometimes take them for slavery or prostitution. But a godly Christian woman would take them into her own home to care for them.

Furthermore, she must have shown hospitality to strangers and have washed the saints’ feet, a sign of her humility in serving the church. She must have assisted those in distress, which could refer to everything from visiting the sick and helping them to giving counsel and comfort to the distraught. To sum up, she has “devoted herself to every good work.” The widows in the church who met these qualifications were recognized by the church as being on “the list” (1Ti 5:9) and they were to serve in various capacities in the church.

In contrast to these godly women, Paul mentions widows who live for “wanton pleasure” (1Ti 5:6). The word means “to live in luxury” (see Ezek. 16:49, LXX, where God condemns Sodom because “she and her daughters had arrogance, abundant food, and careless ease, but did not help the poor and needy”). Thus Paul is referring to a widow who lives in luxury and has no concern for others. Such a woman is “dead even while she lives.” She is insensitive to the things of God.

This verse sounds a warning to us American Christians. The spirit of our age is, “I’ve worked hard all my life. I’ve saved up enough to enjoy myself. Now that I’m retired, I don’t want to be bugged. I’m going to block out the world and its problems and live for me.” But a godly person approaching retirement should see it as an opportunity to be freed up so that he or she can devote more time to serving the Lord. Real fulfillment is not found in living for pleasure and self-gratification; that is death. Real fulfillment is found in living for Christ and serving others for His sake.

What about a widow with children or grandchildren?

#### **B. WIDOWS WITH FAMILIES SHOULD BE CARED FOR BY THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS (1Ti 5:4, 7-8).**

Paul plainly commands that a widow with children or grandchildren should be cared for by them. The parents have contributed immeasurably to their children and grandchildren’s welfare. Now it is their turn “to make some return” (v. 4) to their widowed mother or grandmother. This is “acceptable” or pleasing in the sight of God (1Ti 5:4).

In fact, Paul goes so far as to say that if a person does not provide for his own family (and he clearly includes elderly parents), he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever (v. 8)! Even most unbelievers were kind enough to provide for aged parents. It

was Greek law from the time of Solon that sons and daughters were morally and legally bound to support their parents ([William Barclay, The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon \[The Westminster Press\], p. 106](#)). The word “provide” (1Ti 5:8) is literally, “to think ahead” or “to take thought for,” and is a pretty good case for a man to have adequate life insurance or other provision for his family. (Any insurance salesman owe me a buck.) Thus Paul is saying that if you don’t provide financially for your family—not luxury, but for their needs—you are behaving worse than unbelievers.

To sum up, the principle is, if the family can provide for older widows, they should do so. If there is no family to provide, then such older widows may be supported by the church if they are godly women devoted to serving Christ. If they are living for pleasure, then the church has no responsibility for them. But what about younger widows?

## **2. The church has a duty not to support younger widows (1Ti 5:11-16).**

Paul is wise and practical. He does not want the church to turn into a welfare agency, supporting those who are not serving or who should be carrying their own load.

### **A. YOUNGER WIDOWS SHOULD NOT BE SUPPORTED, BUT SHOULD MARRY AND BE DEVOTED TO THEIR FAMILIES (1Ti 5:11-15).**

These verses are not easy to interpret. Some understand that the older widows made some kind of pledge to the Lord and to the church to the effect that they would remain single so as to devote their remaining years completely to serve the Lord. If a younger widow made such a pledge, but then started wishing to marry again, she would thus go back on her pledge and incur the censure of the church. Paul is not condemning the natural desire of a younger widow to remarry. What is wrong is the breaking of a pledge.

Others take it differently. The words “previous pledge” (1Ti 5:12) are literally, “first faith.” Coupled with verse 15, they argue that Paul was addressing an existing problem, namely, that these younger widows who were put on the support of the church were allowing their desire to remarry to be greater than their faith in Christ, so that they even would remarry an unbeliever.

Furthermore, they were falling into the errors of the false teachers (the terms used to describe these women in 1Ti 5:13 parallel those used of the false teachers, 1Ti 1:6-7; 4:7; 6:3-4, 20). Thus they were actually turning away from their first faith in Christ, promoting false teaching, and marrying on the basis of sensual desires, not marrying in the Lord. Thus Paul instructs that they not be supported, but rather marry and devote themselves to home duties, so as to give the enemy no occasion for reproach (1Ti 5:14).

### **B. UNMARRIED WOMEN IN THE CHURCH WITH DEPENDENT WIDOWS SHOULD SUPPORT THEM (1Ti 5:16).**

Some later manuscripts add “any believing man,” probably added by a copyist because the original, “believing woman,” is difficult. Probably Paul, as an afterthought, is answering a question which might arise, “But what if there is no man as the head of the household? Should the church then support the widows in that family?” Paul says that a believing woman should do all that she can to support or assist widows in her family so that the church is freed up to minister to widows truly in need.

## **Practical Lessons**

### **1. GODLY FAMILIES ARE AT THE HEART OF A GODLY CHURCH.**

And, godly mothers are indispensable to godly families. In 1Ti 5:10, 14, bearing and raising children are mentioned first in the list of good deeds. We live in a day when many Christian women are putting their careers ahead of their duties at home. The notion that a woman should be “just a homemaker” is viewed as a cultural anachronism that we no longer need to follow.

I contend that the biblical model is that the husband normally should be the main provider (5:8), even as Christ provides for His bride, the church; and that the wife should be a godly homemaker who manages the home under the husband’s loving supervision. To put it bluntly, a mother’s place is in the home with her children, not in a career. I realize that there are difficult situations where a mother of young children has no alternative but to work. I’m not speaking against that. But I know Christian women who put their young children in day care and go off to work because they’re bored at home! Such a thing would have been unthinkable to the early church!

Listen to this quote arguing that the woman’s proper place is in the home (cited in “Quit You Like Men,” 12/93, p. 20):

Man is, or should be, women’s protector and defender. The natural and proper timidity and delicacy which belongs to the female sex evidently unfits it for many of the occupations of civil life. The constitution of the family organization, which is founded in the divine ordinances, as well as in the nature of things, indicates the domestic sphere as that which properly belongs to the domain and function of womanhood. The harmony, not to say identity, of interests and views which belong or should belong, to the family institution is repugnant to the idea of a woman adopting a distinct career from that of her husband. The paramount destiny and mission of women are to fulfil the noble and benign offices of wife and mother. This is the law of the Creator.

You might be surprised to learn that this quote came from the United States Supreme Court in an 1873 decision sustaining a state law denying to women the right to become attorneys! When the Supreme Court sounds more in line with the apostle Paul than many modern evangelical Christians, you might say, "We've come a long way, baby!" We need to elevate again the importance of godly mothers and godly homes.

## **2. AS GODLY FAMILIES, WE EACH HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO HONOR AND CARE FOR OUR ELDERLY PARENTS, ESPECIALLY WIDOWS.**

Again, this is countercultural. Our society views the elderly as being a bother to our pursuit of personal pleasure. We're so utilitarian that we discard people who no longer can function in a contributing way. But the Bible says that it pleases God when children and grandchildren practice piety by making some return to their parents (1Ti 5:4). It would be judgmentally wrong to say that every family must take elderly parents into their homes. There are situations where that is not a viable option. But even if an elderly parent must be put in a nursing facility, the children should not abandon them. Even if their minds no longer function properly, they still deserve our loving care and respect.

In a Newsweek "My Turn" article (9/10/79), Milton Gwartzman noted, "Although Shanghai is one of the five largest cities in the world, it has just one home for the aged. Older people in China don't need Golden Age clubs or retirement communities. They have the most important life-support system of all: active, dignified work in an atmosphere of close family life and community respect." Maybe American Christians can learn from the Chinese what the Bible affirms!

The film series, "[Whatever Happened to the Human Race](#) (full 4 hour series on youtube)," has a graphic scene depicting the way our culture neglects and abandons our old so that we can pursue our own interests. An elderly lady is wheeled down a white corridor by her children and grandchildren. They kiss her on the forehead and assure her that she will be all right. They leave and a nurse wheels the confused old woman into a darkened room where a TV set is blaring with the obnoxious voice of a game show host. She is abandoned by her family to live out her final days in front of the TV set! It almost makes euthanasia seem like an option! At least it's quicker! But God's way is not abandoning or killing the elderly; it is honoring and caring for them.

## **3. GODLY ELDERLY PEOPLE CAN MAKE A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST.**

Although they may not have the energy of the young, the elderly have more time and the wisdom of a lifetime of walking with Christ. They can be involved in a ministry of prayer (1Ti 5:5) and good deeds (1Ti 5:10). This can be about as broad as the person wants to make it. They can offer spiritual and practical counsel to younger families. They can serve on church committees. They can visit shut-ins or those in hospitals and nursing homes. They can call on church visitors. They can help in church office work. They can help Sunday School teachers in preparing materials or in managing their classes. They can assist in child evangelism ministries or by calling on the homes of Sunday School youngsters. They can open their homes in hospitality, help out with church socials, volunteer to babysit an evening for a younger couple, correspond with missionaries, help mission organizations, collect clothing for the needy, help a shut-in clean house, or use their individual skills in various ways. You name it! There are many opportunities available to the godly older person who wants to serve Christ. Again, I would emphasize that we must deliberately reject the world's thinking about self-centered retirement living. As long as God gives us life and strength, we should live to serve Him.

## **4. GODLY LIVING AFFECTS THE PRACTICAL AREAS OF LIFE.**

Many people in our day claim to be Christians, but their lives are no different than those who do not know Christ as Savior. The gospel Paul preached urged people to "repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance" (Acts 26:20). Believers are to be zealous for good deeds (Titus 2:14). We don't live to serve ourselves, whether we're 20 or 80. We live to serve Jesus Christ and to lay down our selfish interests for the sake of those for whom Christ died. We are deliberately to reject the cult of self-fulfillment, and "through love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13), not just in "spiritual" ways, but ministering to the total person.

**Amy Carmichael**, the missionary to India, was criticized for becoming too involved in humanitarian efforts because she sought to rescue little girls from being sold as temple prostitutes. She retorted, "*One cannot save and then pitchfork souls into heaven.... Souls are more or less securely fastened to bodies ... and as you cannot get the souls out and deal with them separately, you have to take them both together*" (cited by Ruth Tucker, Borrow [Guardians of the great commission : the story of women in modern missions](#) p. 134).

So, as a church and as individuals, we must be involved in practical good deeds that minister to the total person. We must minister wisely. We are not to support someone who is living for pleasure. The church must not take on responsibilities that God has assigned to families. If people are able to work but refuse to do so, Paul was clear: they shouldn't eat (2 Thess. 3:10)! Each one must bear his own load (Gal. 6:5). But neither can we, as the church, turn our backs on the truly needy, especially on elderly widows. God cares for the widow who trusts in Him. So must we!

## Discussion Questions

1. Agree/disagree: The many convalescent homes in America reflect our lack of concern for the aged.
2. Is a live-in arrangement for aged parents always in the best interest of all parties concerned? Why/Why not?
3. Can you build a biblical case for a Christian woman choosing a career track rather than motherhood? Is it sin for Christian mothers to work outside the home?
4. Why do you think that more elderly people are not involved in actively ministering in the church?

**1 Timothy 5:4 but if any widow has children or grandchildren, they must 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.**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:4 ε ὁ τις χ ρ α τ κ ν α κ γ ο ν α χ ε ι , μ α ν θ α ν τ ω σ α ν π ρ τ ο ν τ υ δ ι ο ν ο κ ο ν ε σ ε β ε ν κ α μ ο ι β ς ποδιδ ναι το ς προγ νοις· το το γ ρ σ τ ι ν π δ ε κ τ ο ν ν π ι ο ν τ ο θεο .

KJV 1 Timothy 5:4 But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.

NET 1 Timothy 5:4 But if a widow has children or grandchildren, they should first learn to fulfill their duty toward their own household and so repay their parents what is owed them. For this is what pleases God.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:4 But if any widow has children or grandchildren, they must learn to practice godliness toward their own family first and to repay their parents, for this pleases God.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:4 But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household and to make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:4 But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:4 But if she has children or grandchildren, their first responsibility is to show godliness at home and repay their parents by taking care of them. This is something that pleases God.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:4 If a widow has children or grandchildren, they should first learn their religious duty to their own family and make some repayment to their parents; for this is pleasing in God's sight.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:4 If a widow has children or grandchildren, they are to learn first of all to do their duty to their own families and repay their debt to their parents, because this is what pleases God.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:4 But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let these first learn to perform their religious duty to their own family and to make recompense to their parents, for this is pleasing to God.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:4 and if any widow have children or grandchildren, let them learn first to their own house to show piety, and to give back a recompense to the parents, for this is right and acceptable before God.

- **children or grandchildren:** Jdg 12:14 \*marg: Job 18:19 Isa 14:22
- **learn:** 1Sa 22:3,4 Pr 31:28 Lu 2:51 Jn 19:26,27
- **piety:** Mt 15:4-6 Mk 7:11-13
- **make some return:** Ge 45:10,11 47:12,28 Ru 2:2,18 Eph 6:1-3
- **this is acceptable:** 1Ti 2:3

## CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME

**but** (term of contrast) - Now Paul deals with widows who have relatives. Paul is going to define what he means by a **widow indeed**, but first he will describe a widow who does not fit that classification. And so he will show that the **widow indeed** is not. She is not alone.

If any widow ([chera](#)) has children or grandchildren, they (the children) must first learn ([manthano present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) to practice piety ([eusebeo](#) - present tense - practice godliness) in regard to their own family - The children or grandchildren are still bringing in an income and are commanded to learn it is their duty to practice the

godliness they profess. Godliness is best in walking, not talking! The practice of godliness does not come naturally (for we are all naturally selfish) but is a supernaturally enabled attribute that must continually be learned (thus the command in the present tense = an ongoing responsibility)! The verb [eusebeo](#) (present tense - continual practice) means to put one's professed religion into practice at home by fulfilling one's duties toward one's own household members. In so doing one shows special respect for their mothers or grandmothers, who often lack resources for daily upkeep.

**Practice piety** ([eusebeo](#)) is related to a key word in this epistle -[eusebeia](#) used 8 times and each time rendered godliness - 1Ti 2:2; 1Ti 3:16; 1Ti 4:7; 1Ti 4:8; 1Ti 6:3; 1Ti 6:5; 1Ti 6:6; 1Ti 6:11. As Swindoll says "The purpose of pastoral ministry and the work of the church is to help its members lead godly lives (1Ti 1:5), and this includes taking care of their own." (See [Insights on 1 Timothy](#))

**Lowell Johnson** - "Piety" or godliness begins in one's own family. Children must "requite" (KJV) or "repay" their parents. They owe a debt to those who brought them into the world, clothed them, fed them, housed them, supported them, and loved and nurtured them. Caring for a mother in time of her need is but a small return for all she has done. Suppose the relative is unwilling to help support his loved one? Note 1 Timothy 5:8. Sin is worse in a believer than in an unbeliever. ([How To Treat Folks in the Congregation](#))

**White** - "The Christian who falls below the best heathen standard of family affection is the more blameworthy, since he has, what the heathen has not, the supreme example of love in Jesus Christ. We may add that Jesus Himself gave an example of providing for one's own, when He provided a home for His mother with the beloved disciple."

**J Vernon McGee** - The investigation should determine whether the widow in question has children. Why aren't they supporting her? Does she have grandchildren? They have a responsibility toward her. This was God's method, and I think it still is God's method.

**And to make some return to their parents**- NET = "repay their parents what is owed them." **Make...return** is [apodidomi](#) which literally means to give back and in this context to give back to the one who sacrificed and gave so much for them. "The children owe their parents a great debt which they can never fully repay for all the love, patience, and self-sacrificing care bestowed upon them during their infancy and childhood." (Hiebert)

**Swindoll** - Paul also appealed to them on the basis of gratitude. Children and grandchildren owe their very existence to their parents' willingness to sacrifice comfort in order to provide for them and protect them. Their mothers, especially, bore them in their bodies and then delivered them through incredible discomfort and pain at childbirth. If the desire to be righteous were not enough, gratitude alone should prompt children to care for their widowed mothers. (See [Insights on 1 & 2 Timothy](#))

**For this is acceptable** (pleasing) **in the sight of God** - ESV = "this is pleasing in the sight of God." Why should we care for our parents? In short, this is the will of God which is good, acceptable and perfect (Ro 12:2+). This is the type of welfare that God intended.

**Phillips** - Certainly, it is God's will that believers support their aged, widowed mothers. Our piety is phony if it does not include taking care of such an obvious and elementary duty. The scribes and Pharisees displayed their hypocrisy and earned the Lord's scathing denunciation by the way they circumvented their duty to their parents. Rabbinical tradition allowed them to pretend that they could not afford to support their parents because they had dedicated so much of their income to God (Matt. 15:4-9). Jesus denounced both their hypocrisy and their tradition. (See also [What does Corban mean in Mark 7:11?](#)) (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**William Barclay** It was Greek law from the time of Solon that sons and daughters were, not only morally, but also legally bound to support their parents. Anyone who refused that duty lost his civil rights. Aeschines, the Athenian orator, says in one of his speeches: "And whom did our law-giver (Solon) condemn to silence in the Assembly of the people? And where does he make this clear? 'Let there be,' he says, 'a scrutiny of public speakers, in case there be any speaker in the Assembly of the people who is a striker of his father or mother, or who neglects to maintain them or to give them a home.'" Demosthenes says: "I regard the man who neglects his parents as unbelieving in and hateful to the gods, as well as to men." Philo, writing of the commandment to honour parents, says: "**When old storks become unable to fly, they remain in their nests and are fed by their children, who go to endless exertions to provide their food because of their piety.**" To Philo it was clear that even the animal creation acknowledged its obligations to aged parents, and how much more must men? Aristotle in the Nichomachean Ethics lays it down: "It would be thought in the matter of food we should help our parents before all others, since we owe our nourishment to them, and it is more honourable to help in this respect the authors of our being, even before ourselves." As Aristotle saw it, a man must himself starve before he would see his parents starve. Plato in The Laws has the same conviction of the debt that is owed parents: "Next comes the honour of loving parents, to whom, as is meet, we have to pay the first and greatest and oldest of debts, considering that all which a man has belongs to those who gave him birth and brought him up, and that he must do all that he can to minister to them; first, in his property; secondly, in his person; and thirdly, in his soul; paying the debts due to them for their care and travail which they bestowed upon him of old in the days of his infancy, and which he is now able to pay back to them, when they are old and in the extremity of their need."

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**Practice Piety** (2151)(**eusebeo** from **eusebes** = devout, godly, from = **eu** = well + **sebomai** = to revere) means to be reverent, pious. In Acts 17:23 Paul uses it of the ignorant idol worship ("what you worship in ignorance").

**Friberg** - (1) as conducting oneself with reverent regard for God worship (Acts 17:23); (2) as putting religion into practice at home fulfill one's duties toward, be devoted to (one's own household members) (1Ti 5:4) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Gilbrant** - Among **classical** and later Hellenistic writers *eusebeō* (from *eu*, "well," + *sebomai*, "show awe, reverence") especially meant to "show reverence" in a religious sense. However, in a broad sense one could show "respect" for all the various orders of life including domestic, national, and also international. This word expressed one of the core aspects of Greek religion, and to "show piety" was to align oneself with the orders (especially social) that were controlled by the gods (Foerster, "eusebeō," Kittel, 7:176ff.). **The verb does not occur in the Septuagint until very late** and only in apocryphal material (once in Susanna and four or five times in 4 Maccabees). Since these writings are very much the product of Hellenistic Judaism it is not surprising that the usage reflects the Greek understanding of *eusebeō*. Jews applied it to their own "reverence" of the Creator (4 Maccabees 11:5,23). The influence of Hellenism is illustrated clearly in 4 Maccabees 18:2 which speaks of "devout reason (as) . . . master of emotions" (RSV). In Susanna 64 it is applied to Daniel's being "respected" among the people (probably because of his great standing before God).

**The verb form occurs only twice in the New Testament**, each time in association with non-Jewish (i.e., Hellenistic) circumstances. Once it appears with a god as its object and once with humans. This dual reference is quite consistent with its nonbiblical usage, so a general sense of "revere" might be suggested as its meaning. Acts 17:23 says the Athenians "worshiped" an unknown god. The divine recipient of this reverence was proclaimed by Paul to be the Creator-God who established the very order to which the people of Athens gave so much reverent concern in the Areopagus (see verses 26-28). Paul declared that the one God raised from the dead, not dead idols raised by men, is this God's standard of judgment (verse 31). First Timothy 5:4 is grammatically difficult to understand because the subject of "learn" is unexpressed. Was it the widows who were to learn to "show piety" at home to children or grandchildren? Or was it the children and/ or grandchildren who were to "show piety" to the widows by supporting them so the church was not overly burdened. The latter obviously fits the context and makes the most sense practically. Moreover, it fits best with the idea of alignment with the established order. Responsibility to the familial order will fulfill the younger generation's duty to those who reared them, and it will establish a witness to the church's concern for that established order. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**1 Timothy 5:5 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.**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:5 ὁ ντῶς χ ρα κα μεμονωμ νη λπικεν π θε ν κα προσμ νει τα ς δε σεσιν κα τα ς προσευχα ς νυκτ ς κα μ ρας,

KJV 1 Timothy 5:5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.

NET 1 Timothy 5:5 But the widow who is truly in need, and completely on her own, has set her hope on God and continues in her pleas and prayers night and day.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:5 The real widow, left all alone, has put her hope in God and continues night and day in her petitions and prayers;

ESV 1 Timothy 5:5 She who is truly a widow, left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day,

NIV 1 Timothy 5:5 The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:5 Now a true widow, a woman who is truly alone in this world, has placed her hope in God. She prays night and day, asking God for his help.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:5 The real widow, left alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day;



NJB 1 Timothy 5:5 But a woman who is really widowed and left on her own has set her hope on God and perseveres night and day in petitions and prayer.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:5 The real widow, who is all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:5 And she who is really a widow and desolate, hath hoped upon God, and doth remain in the supplications and in the prayers night and day,

GWN 1 Timothy 5:5 A widow who has no family has placed her confidence in God by praying and asking for his help night and day.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:5 Now she who is truly a widow and without family puts her hope in God, giving herself to prayer day and night.

MIT 1 Timothy 5:5 Here is what makes a widow qualify (for church support): Such a widow is one who is all alone, whose hope rests on God; she perseveres with petitions and prayers night and day.

- **a widow:** 1Ti 5:3 Ro 1:5,12,20,21 1Co 7:32
- **who has been left alone:** Isa 3:26 49:21 54:1 La 1:13
- **has fixed her hope on God:** Ru 2:12 Ps 91:4 Isa 12:2 50:10 1Co 7:32 1Pe 3:5
- **continues in entreaties and prayers:** Lu 2:37 18:1,7 Ac 26:7 Eph 6:18

## DEFINITION OF A "WIDOW INDEED"

**Now she who is a widow** ([chera](#)) **indeed and who has been left alone** (KJV = Desolate) - **MIT** = "Here is what makes a widow qualify (for church support)." A **widow indeed** is a widow *in need* (no other source of support)! This widow "is truly alone in this world" (NLT), in a state of being without family and without means of financial support. **Left alone** is the verb *monoo* used only here and means without relatives, left on her own and the perfect tense signifies this is her abiding (permanent) condition.

**John Phillips** - Paul returns to the case of the totally bereaved widow. He mentions her desolation, her dedication, her dependence on God, and her devotion to God. (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Has fixed her hope** ([elpizo](#)) **on God** - Clearly this describes a widow who is indisputably a genuine believer. Since she has no one else to support her, she cast herself upon God. Who better to rely on and place your confidence in than the All Sufficient God, [EL Shaddai - God Almighty!](#)

**Phillips** asks - Where can she go, but to the Lord? The word translated "desolate" is *monoomai*, which occurs only here in the New Testament and means "left alone." Jesus met a lone widow at the gate of Nain, and Luke recorded the incident. "Behold," he wrote, "there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow." She was accompanied by a large crowd, but that was no guarantee of generous support. People scatter quickly after a funeral, and even those who return to the house do not stay long. But Jesus did something about her desolate situation. First, He dried her tears, and then He gave her back her son (Luke 7:11-17+). And He has not ceased to care for widows. Today, He uses the church, His mystical body, to carry on His work of compassion and care. The desolate widow who reacts wisely "trusteth in God." The word translated "trusteth" here is in the perfect tense. It means "to hope." The implication is that the widow has made it a habit to rest her hope in God, so it is not about to be upset by her bereavement. Her hope has become unshakable trust, which expresses itself in a life on continuing supplication and prayer. She has always trusted God, and now she trusts Him even more. The desolate widow who reacts wisely "trusteth in God." The word translated "trusteth" here is in the perfect tense. It means "to hope." The implication is that the widow has made it a habit to rest her hope in God, so it is not about to be upset by her bereavement. Her hope has become unshakable trust, which expresses itself in a life on continuing supplication and prayer. She has always trusted God, and now she trusts Him even more. Jesus told a story about another widow in Luke 18:1-8+. "There was in a city a judge," He said, "which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me." The point of the parable was that "men ought always to pray, and not to faint." God is not like that unjust judge who, in spite of the many articles of the Mosaic Law and elsewhere that protected widows (Exod. 22:22+; Deut. 10:18+; Isa. 1:17, 23+; Mal. 3:5+), acted on her behalf only out of self-interest. God may indeed delay His response to our prayers, but such a delay has a divine and all-wise purpose. From heaven's viewpoint God responds "speedily." The widow who responds wisely will simply go on trusting God and continue to look to Him to answer in His own good time. (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Hiebert** - In her desolation she "hath her hope set on God," the God who in His Word has made many promises to just such sadly

bereft widows (See [Bible verses about widows](#)). The construction (epi with the accusative) indicates that her **hope** is directed toward God, while the perfect tense points to the abiding character of her Godward hope. (Borrow [First Timothy](#))

**MacArthur** adds "The perfect tense of the participle ("**left alone**") indicates a permanent state or condition of being forsaken and without resources. Obviously she is one who has no supporting family and the church has an obligation to such." The specific contents of her hope include God's promises to care for widows. She looks to God for her help and thus obeys the command of Jeremiah 49:11: "Let your widows trust in Me." She trusts that God will provide her needs as He did for the widow of Zarephath in 1 Kings 17:8-16 (See [the story of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath](#)). Only to such women does the church have a responsibility. Believers may choose to help non-Christian widows (cf. Gal. 6:10), but the church is obligated by heaven's command to help believing ones. (See [1 & 2 Timothy Commentary](#))

**And continues** ([prosmeno](#) - present tense - continually perseveres) **in entreaties** ([deesis](#) pleas, supplications, petitions) **and prayers** ([proseuche](#)) **night and day** (aka "without ceasing") - With her gaze set upward ("fixed her hope" = absolute assurance of future good from God - cf Vertical Vision), we should not be surprised to see her voice lifted in the same direction, ascending to the God Whose ear always bends to hear the pleas of the needy (Ps 69:33+, Ps 72:12-14+, Ps 102:17+, Isa 66:2). **Prayers** ([proseuche](#)) speaks of the widow's heart attitude of worship. The phrase **night and day** speaks of the widow's total dependence on God for everything. She is one who is obedient to Paul's exhortation in Ephesians 6:18+ "With all prayer and petition **pray at all times in the Spirit**, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints." One recalls Luke's description of [Anna the prophetess](#) as an example of one who **continues with in entreaties and prayers...**

And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four.  
**She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers**(Luke 2:36-37+)

**David Guzik** - Those who should be legitimately helped by the church should serve the church in some way. In this case, the widows would be given the job of praying for the church.

**Hiebert** - With her thoughts turned Godward, she ever "continueth in supplications and prayers." (On these words see 2:1.) In her supplications she continually makes known her needs to God, while in her prayers of worship and communion she approaches God when worry and care would assail her. And this she does "night and day." She allows no portion of her life to be unmarked by her prayers. Unlike verse 4, this verse is a descriptive statement and not a command. She does not have to be told to do these things, she does them without being told. (Borrow [First Timothy](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** - The church could not care for *all* the widows in the city, but it should care for believers who are a part of the fellowship. We should "do good unto all... especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10). A widow the church helps should not be a self-indulgent person, seeking pleasure, but a godly woman who hopes in God and has a ministry of intercession and prayer. See Luke 2:36-37 for an example of a godly widow. It has been my experience in three different pastorates that godly widows are "spiritual powerhouses" in the church. They are the backbone of the prayer meetings. They give themselves to visitation, and they swell the ranks of teachers in the Sunday School. It has also been my experience that, if a widow is not godly, she can be a great problem to the church. She will demand attention, complain about what the younger people do, and often "hang on the telephone" and gossip. (Of course, it is not really "gossip." She only wants her friends to be able to "pray more intelligently" about these matters!) Paul made it clear (1 Tim. 5:7) that church-helped widows must be "blameless"—irreproachable. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

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**Entreaties** (1162) [deesis](#) refers to urgent requests or supplications to meet a need and are exclusively addressed to God. **Deesis** prayers arise from one's sense of need (which reflects a humble heart) and in knowing what is lacking. This individual's plea is in turn made to God to supply for the need. **Deesis** in the New Testament always carries the idea of genuine entreaty and supplication before God. It implies a realization of need and a petition for its supply. In Classical Greek **deesis** (in contrast to the Biblical uses) was not restricted to sacred uses, but was employed of requests preferred to men.

**Prayers** (4335) [proseuche](#) from **pros** = toward or immediately before + **euchomai** = to pray or vow) is the more general word for prayer and is used only of prayer to God. The prefix **pros** would convey the sense of being immediately before Him and hence the ideas of adoration, devotion, and worship. The basic idea is to bring something, and in prayer this pertains to bringing up prayer requests. In early Greek culture an offering was brought with a prayer that it be accepted. Later the idea was changed slightly, so that the thing brought to God was a prayer. In later Greek, prayers appealed to God for His presence. *Proseuche* is used 37 times in the NT (see below). Note the concentration of prayer in the early church! (Acts) What has happened to us as a church in America? How might this relate to how infrequently we see the power of the Lord at work in our midst?

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**F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily - 1 Timothy 5:5 She that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God.**

Art thou desolate indeed, because the light of thine eyes has passed from view, leaving thee immeasurably lonely? Dear soul, do not look down into the grave which has received the precious mortal frame, but up into the face of God.

He lent thee thy beloved. From the tune of the first knitting of soul with soul he was but a loan for a specified time; and wouldst thou not rather have had him for so short a time than not at all? Wouldst thou not have said, had God asked thee, "I would rather have a year or a month of such love as his than none?" "Do not be angry because God has done as He always intended.

Besides, that beloved one is still thine. Thy love so entered into his heart that it could not be eradicated, though ages should pass. Do not suppose that death is so mighty a magician as to alter the very nature of those who pass for a moment beneath his wand.

And God will care for thee. Trust Him for society, that thou be not lonely; for the provision of what is necessary to thy support; and for the protecting love which thy shrinking nature calls for. Thy Maker will be thy husband

Wouldst thou be comforted, continue in prayers and supplications for others night and day. Cease to shut thyself up with thy sorrow, and go out to minister comfort to those who sorrow as without hope. A Hindoo story tells of a bereaved mother, who was advised to obtain a handful of corn from a house where there was no trouble, and was so occupied in seeking it, and in comforting the inmates of the various homes she visited, that her own grief was assuaged.

### 1 Timothy 5:6 But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives.

BGT 1 Timothy 5:6 ὁ σπαταλ σα ζ σα τ θνηκεν.

KJV 1 Timothy 5:6 But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.

NET 1 Timothy 5:6 But the one who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:6 however, she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:6 but she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:6 But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:6 But the widow who lives only for pleasure is spiritually dead even while she lives.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:6 but the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:6 The one who thinks only of pleasure is already dead while she is still alive:

NAB 1 Timothy 5:6 But the one who is self-indulgent is dead while she lives.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:6 and she who is given to luxury, living -- hath died;

GWN 1 Timothy 5:6 But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead although she is still alive.

- **she** (KJV): 1Sa 25:6 Job 21:11-15 Ps 73:5-7 Isa 22:13 Am 6:5,6 Lu 12:19 Lu 15:13 16:19 Jas 5:5 Rev 18:7
- **pleasure** (KJV): or, delicately, De 28:54,56 1Sa 15:32 Pr 29:21 Isa 47:1 Jer 6:2 La 4:5 Lu 7:25
- **dead** (KJV): Mt 8:22 Lu 15:24,32 2Co 5:14,15 Eph 2:1,5 5:14 Col 2:13 Rev 3:1

## WARNING TO WANTON WIDOWS

**But** (term of contrast) - The context is still widows. But here Paul calls out the contrasting picture (with prior passage) of "wanton widows."

**She who gives herself to wanton pleasure** ([spatalao](#) in present tense = her lifestyle; active voice = her personal choice) **is dead** ([thnesko](#)) **even while she lives** ([zao](#) - physically lives) - Alive but dead! This widow continually behaves either in an inhuman way (as in cruel and wanton behavior), or behaves in a lewd or bawdy (especially in a sexual context). **Dead** speaks of spiritually **dead** (cf Eph 2:1, Col 2:13) and the perfect tense signifies this is her abiding state (permanent condition).

**John Phillips** - The widow who seeks to drown her sorrow (or express her relief) at the death of her husband by plunging into all of the world's pleasures does irreparable damage to her soul. The expression "liveth in pleasure" here is used by James in denouncing the ungodly rich: "Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and beenwanton" (James 5:5). The word means "to live luxuriously." It could properly be applied to the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:13). The widow who turns to sinful pleasure, said Paul, is "dead while she

liveth." This expression can also be rendered "is killing her own soul." A recently widowed person is brought face-to-face with the dread reality of death, so for her to plunge headlong into a round of pleasure seeking is perhaps to court death. Her danger is illuminated in Mark 8:35+, where the Lord said, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it." If it is possible to lose one's life while trying to save it, how much more must it be possible to lose one's life while deliberately throwing it away! (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Lowell Johnson** - A widow who lives a worldly, immoral, ungodly life may be alive physically, but her lifestyle proves she is not saved and spiritually dead. ([How To Treat Folks in the Congregation](#))

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**Gives...to wanton pleasure** (4684) [spatalao](#) from **spatálē** = luxury in eating and drinking) means to live in excess comfort or indulgence. To live a luxurious life, to give oneself to pleasure. The word connotes abandonment to pleasure and comfort. It is used here and 1 Ti 5:6 = (following are to be excluded from those supported by the church) = "But she who gives herself to **wanton pleasure** is dead even while she lives." In the Septuagint (Lxx) it is found in Ezekiel 16:49 where Sodom's indulgence is compared to that of the idle rich. This is precisely the life-style of the **rich man** in the parable" in Luke 16:19-31+ ("Now there was a rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, joyously living in splendor every day."). It is as if the goods of the world, and the people on it, were made only for the gratification of their own lusts; and in their pursuit of their own pleasure, they ignore the needs of others and use them selfishly, even openly oppressing them.

**Is dead** (2348)([thnesko](#)) means literally to be dead physically (Mt 2:20) but figuratively (and more "deadly") to be spiritually separated from God.

**Gilbrant** - This verb appears in **classical** Greek from the time of Homer (ca. Eighth Century B.C.), meaning "die" in either a literal or figurative sense. Josephus used *thnēskō* in a literal sense in his account of the last stand of the Jews in the fortress of Masada against the siege of the Roman army (Wars of the Jews 7.8.7). Several examples of its figurative use (e.g. of spiritual death) can be found in the works of Aelius Aristides and Philo (cf. Bauer). In the **Septuagint** *thnēskō* is most often used in the literal sense: of Jacob's death (Genesis 50:15); of the death of the Egyptian firstborn sons (Exodus 12:30); of idolatrous Israelites (Numbers 25:9); of animals (Job 39:30); etc. However, there are a few instances of death in connection with spiritual judgment (cf. Pr 13:14; Isa14:19; Jer 16:7; 22:10). **In the New Testament** *thnēskō* is used only a few times (the word *apothnēskō* [594] is much more common). As in the Septuagint, *thnēskō* most often appears in the literal sense: of Jesus' death (Mark 15:44); of the death of the synagogue ruler's daughter (Luke 8:49); of Paul's "supposed" death (Acts 14:19); etc. The only figurative use is at 1 Timothy 5:6 where Paul instructed Timothy on the proper care of widows. In contrast to the widow who devotes herself to prayer (1 Timothy 5:5), the other type of widow who devotes herself to her own pleasure is already "dead" in God's sight (verse 6). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Thnesko - 9v - dead(7), died(2).** - Matt. 2:20; Mk. 15:44; Lk. 7:12; Lk. 8:49; Jn. 11:44; Jn. 19:33; Acts 14:19; Acts 25:19; 1 Tim. 5:6

**Thnesko in the Septuagint** - Gen. 50:15; Exod. 4:19; Exod. 12:30; Exod. 14:30; Exod. 21:35; Lev. 11:31; Lev. 11:32; Num. 16:48; Num. 16:49; Num. 19:11; Num. 19:13; Num. 19:18; Num. 25:9; Num. 33:4; Deut. 25:5; Deut. 26:14; Jdg. 3:25; Jdg. 16:30; Ruth 1:8; Ruth 2:20; Ruth 4:5; Ruth 4:10; 1 Sam. 4:17; 1 Sam. 4:19; 1 Sam. 17:51; 1 Sam. 24:14; 1 Sam. 31:5; 1 Sam. 31:7; 2 Sam. 1:5; 2 Sam. 1:19; 2 Sam. 2:7; 2 Sam. 4:1; 2 Sam. 4:10; 2 Sam. 9:8; 2 Sam. 12:18; 2 Sam. 12:19; 2 Sam. 12:23; 2 Sam. 14:2; 2 Sam. 16:9; 1 Ki. 3:20; 1 Ki. 3:21; 1 Ki. 3:22; 1 Ki. 3:23; 1 Ki. 11:21; 1 Ki. 12:24; 1 Ki. 16:4; 1 Ki. 21:14; 1 Ki. 21:15; 1 Ki. 21:16; 1 Ki. 21:24; 1 Ki. 22:37; 2 Ki. 4:32; 2 Ki. 8:5; 2 Ki. 8:13; 2 Chr. 22:10; Job 39:30; Prov. 13:14; Eccl. 4:2; Isa. 14:19; Jer. 16:7; Jer. 22:10

**1 Timothy 5:7 Prescribe these things as well, so that they may be above reproach.**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:7 κα τα τα παρ γγελλε, να νεπ λημπτοι σιν.

KJV 1 Timothy 5:7 And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.

NET 1 Timothy 5:7 Reinforce these commands, so that they will be beyond reproach.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:7 Command this also, so they won't be blamed.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:7 Command these things as well, so that they may be without reproach.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:7 Give the people these instructions, too, so that no one may be open to blame.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:7 Give these instructions to the church so that no one will be open to criticism.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:7 Give these commands as well, so that they may be above reproach.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:7 instruct them in this, too, so that their lives may be blameless.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:7 Command this, so that they may be irreproachable.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:7 and these things charge, that they may be blameless;

GWN 1 Timothy 5:7 Insist on these things so that widows will have good reputations.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:7 Give orders to this effect, so that no evil may be said of anyone.

- 1Ti 1:3 4:11 6:17 2Ti 4:1 Titus 1:13 2:15

## TIMOTHY COMMANDED TO INSTRUCT THE CHURCH

**Prescribe** (command, insist on - [paraggello](#) in [present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) **these things as well** - What **things**? Clearly the **things** Paul has just stated regarding widows (1Ti 5:3-6). In light of the dangers Paul has just described he issues this command. The word translated **prescribe** ([paraggello](#)) also occurs in Acts 1:4+, where the Lord "commanded [same word]" His disciples "that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father."

Timothy was to clearly relay these instructions but were they to the church or to the widows. Commentaries differ as shown by several quoted below...

**A. Duane Litfin** - The reference is somewhat ambiguous, but probably refers to the widows in the church. If the wrong women are included on the list their sensual lifestyles (cf. 1Ti 5:6) will bring reproach on the entire group. But it may also refer to the remaining families of the widows. (See [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**John MacArthur** These things gathers up everything the apostle has said since verse 3. The goal of Paul's teaching is that all involved, widows, families, and the church, be above reproach so that no one can find fault with their conduct in this matter. The church's reputation, and that of her Lord, are at stake. By supporting those widows who are deserving, and refusing to support those who are not, the church, as well as its pastors (cf. 3:2), will be above criticism and God will be honored.

**Gilbrant** - But the "they" is somewhat obscure. Are "they" the widows who lived in pleasure (verse 6) or the relatives of destitute widows (verse 8)? Some think verse 7 refers back to the widows living in pleasure. If Timothy commanded them to stop "living wontonly," then they would be blameless.. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Constable** - Timothy was to teach these things so family members in the church would shoulder their rightful responsibility.

**Donald Guthrie** - The instructions which Timothy is to give must refer to the responsibility of children to support their forbears (verse 4), and the responsibility of widows to fulfil the requirements mentioned in 1Ti 5:5. The verb used is strong, involving 'command'. The command was necessary to ensure that no-one may be open to blame (*anepilēptos*, 'irreproachable', cf. 1Ti 3:2). (Borrow [The Pastoral Epistles : An Introduction and Commentary](#))

**Swindoll** - Paul urged Timothy to "prescribe" (also translated "instruct," "command," or "charge" in 1Ti 1:3, 18; 4:11; 6:13, 17) that families care for their widowed mothers. The contrast between "they" in 5:7 and "anyone [who] does not provide" in 5:8 is further indication that "they" refers to the families of widows, not the widows themselves, and that faithfully caring for one's own renders the family members above reproach.

**So that** (term of purpose) **they may be above reproach** ([anepileptos](#)) - **NLT** = "so that no one will be open to criticism." **NJB** = "so that their lives may be blameless." Not giving an adversary anything to seize as the basis of an accusation. As noted above, there is a difference of opinion as to whom Timothy is to direct this command. Some favor the widows and other favor all the church (and leadership). Either way the pagans are watching! They are always watching believers, just waiting to pounce on some inconsistency between our profession and our practice. They are looking for hypocrisy so that it can justify their arguments of why go to church? What difference does it make? What believe the Gospel? Is there any difference between those who profess to believe the Gospel and non-believers? (See excerpt from [Barna Report below](#))

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**Prescribe** (direct, instruct, order) ([3853](#)) [paraggello](#) from **para** = beside, alongside, near by, at the side of + **aggelos** = messenger, **angelo/aggello** = to announce) means to hand on or pass on an announcement from one to another who is at one's side, such as to what must be done, usually with the idea of a command or charge. **Paraggello** often was used in the context of a



military command and demanded that the subordinate obey the order from the superior and required unhesitating and unqualified obedience. (cp Lk 5:14, 8:29, Lk 9:21KJV, Acts 1:4, 4:18; 5:28KJV; Acts 15:5KJV; 1Th 4:11). It is like a mandate (an authoritative command) or a call to obedience from one in authority. In other contexts the main idea was that the announcement was in the form of an **instruction** (cp Lk 8:56, 1Cor 7:10, 11:17). **Instruction** can simply represent the impartation of knowledge as to how something should be done, but when this English word translates *paraggello*, it indicates directions calling for compliance.

**Paul's uses of *paraggello*** - note predominance in **1 Timothy** - 1 Co. 7:10; 1 Co. 11:17; 1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:4; 2 Thess. 3:6; 2 Thess. 3:10; 2 Thess. 3:12; 1 Tim. 1:3; 1 Tim. 4:11; 1 Tim. 5:7; 1 Tim. 6:13; 1 Tim. 6:17

**Above reproach** (without reproach, unrebukeable) (423) **anepileptos/anepileptos** from **a** = without + **epilambáno** = to seize, to lay firm hold) is an adjective which literally describes that which cannot be seized. "inviolable," "unassailable," "beyond reproach" It is one who cannot be laid hold upon, so to speak, which metaphorically describes one who is inculpable, cannot be criticized (above criticism), inviolable (i.e., not tarnished, eg, as to one's honor, character, etc), unassailable (i.e., not liable to personal attack or question of character), irreprehensible (i.e., not to be blamed or censured; free from fault). The **anepileptos** individual is one who has nothing in their words, actions or deeds upon which an adversary could seize to make a charge. This person demonstrates conduct which is irreproachable, above criticism, without fault. He has a higher morality on which no blame can be found to base an accusation. Do not attempt to obey this lofty charge in your own strength! Cast off any sense of self reliance and rely wholly on the Spirit of Christ to give you the **desire** and the **power** to live **without... reproach** (cp Php 2:13NLT+)

**Anepileptos - 3x in the NT all in this epistle** - 1 Tim. 3:2; 1 Tim. 5:7; 1 Tim. 6:14

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**Excerpt from [Faith Has a Limited Effect On Most People's Behavior](#)** - Research Releases in Faith & Christianity•May 24, 2004

### **Non-Evangelical Born Again Christians Struggle for Distinction**

The second-largest faith segment in the nation – non-evangelical born again Christians – was more similar to notional Christians (i.e., people who consider themselves Christian but have not accepted Jesus Christ as their savior) and to adherents of other faiths (such as Islam, Buddhism and Scientology) than to evangelical Christians. (Non-evangelical born again adults have accepted Christ as their savior but do not necessarily accept the Bible as completely accurate in its teachings, accept a personal responsibility to share their faith with others, cite their faith as very important in their life, believe that Jesus Christ was holy, believe that God is the Creator who continues to rule the universe today, or believe that Satan is not symbolic but truly exists.) This segment constitutes about one-third of the national adult population.

Of the 19 lifestyle items tested in the survey, non-evangelical born again adults were indistinguishable from people of other faiths in relation to 10 of those factors, and identical to notional Christians regarding 12. They were less similar to evangelicals than to adults who do not possess a similar trust in Jesus Christ as their savior.

### **Notional Christians Lean Toward Non-Christian Behavior**

Notional Christians – adults who say they are Christian but have never made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ – represent almost half of all people attending Christian churches in the U.S. In total, they are about one-third of the adult population.

These individuals were more likely to behave in ways that characterized non-Christians than to reflect the behavior of born again adults. In other words, their faith does not seem to be a defining factor in many of their lifestyle choices. For instance, this group is more similar to born again Christians on matters such as recycling and the likelihood of discussing political matters. However, they are more similar to non-Christians on matters such as the likelihood of discussing faith matters, volunteering, turning off offensive television programs, discussing moral issues, gambling, using tobacco, having sex outside of marriage, getting drunk, and passing on encouragement to others.

**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.**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:8 ε ὁ τις τ ν ὄων κα μ λιστα ο κε ων ο προνοε , τ ν π στιν ρνηται κα στιν π στου χε ρων.

KJV 1 Timothy 5:8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

NET 1 Timothy 5:8 But if someone does not provide for his own, especially his own family, he has denied the

faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, that is his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:8 But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:8 If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:8 But those who won't care for their relatives, especially those in their own household, have denied the true faith. Such people are worse than unbelievers.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:8 And whoever does not provide for relatives, and especially for family members, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:8 Anyone who does not look after his own relations, especially if they are living with him, has rejected the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:8 And whoever does not provide for relatives and especially family members has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:8 and if any one for his own -- and especially for those of the household -- doth not provide, the faith he hath denied, and than an unbeliever he is worse.

GWN 1 Timothy 5:8 If anyone doesn't take care of his own relatives, especially his immediate family, he has denied the Christian faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:8 If anyone has no care for his family and those in his house, he is false to the faith, and is worse than one who has no faith.

- **and especially:** Ge 30:30 Isa 58:7 Mt 7:11 Lu 11:11-13 2Co 12:14 Ga 6:10
- **household:** 1Ti 5:4
- **he has denied:** 2Ti 3:5 Titus 1:16 Rev 2:13 3:8
- **is worse than an unbeliever:** Mt 18:17 Lu 12:47-48 Jn 15:22 2Co 2:15,16 6:15

#### Related Passages:

Luke 12:47-48+ (“And that slave who knew his master’s will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes, 48 but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.

2 Timothy 3:5+ holding (present tense - talk about self-deception!) to a form of godliness (PROFESSORS), although they have denied its power (NOT POSSESSORS!); **Avoid** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) such men as these.

Titus 1:16+ They profess (present tense - talk about self-deception!) to know God, but (DRAMATIC TERM OF CONTRAST!) by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for **ANY** good deed.

### WHAT COULD BE WORSE THAN AN UNBELIEVER?

**But** (term of contrast - strong contrast) **if anyone** (no exceptions) **does not provide** ([pronoee](#)) **for his own** - Provide is [pronoee](#) which means communicates the idea of anticipating, and so to think beforehand and indicates that care for elderly widows required some forethought and even financial planning. It is a first class condition which assumes some were not providing for their own! Becoming a follower of Christ significantly increases responsibility in the social area. Paul directs this admonition to the care of widows (cf. 1Ti 5:3, 4), although he states it in terms of overall family responsibility. Who is **his own**? In context this would apply to one's family of course and by extension in the context of this section, to the widows in the family (the husband and wife could both have needy widows).

**THOUGHT** - Dearly beloved, have you given careful thought to how you will provide for your mother if your



father passes away and she is left with minimal resources? That's the idea inherent in the verb "provide". We need to think about this before that day arrives.

Here is an interesting etymology of the [English word provide](#) - *providen*, "make provision for the future; arrange, plan; take care, relieve of needs, supply the needs of," from Latin *providere* "look ahead, prepare, supply, act with foresight," from *pro* "ahead" + *videre* "to see". Interesting!

**And especially for those of his household, he has denied ([arneomai](#)) the faith ([pistis](#)) and is worse ([cheiron](#)) than an unbeliever.** A Christian must labor in order to provide for those of his family. To fail in this obligation is to deny **the faith** and to be **worse** than one with no faith at all. To the sin of slothfulness is added hypocrisy because the man is claiming to be a follower of Christ. The pagans who did not profess Christ took better care of their family members than some who professed Christ! What a sad testimony for the pagans who cannot see the power of the Gospel in these individuals' lives! Is that possibly because they do not possess the Gospel? Just asking, not judging! However, in context **denied the faith** DOES NOT mean they are unbelievers or that they have lost their faith ([which I do not believe is possible](#) assuming one is truly saved). Why do I say they are believers? Because Paul directly compares them to an **unbeliever** and so logically it follows that he considers them to be genuine believers. But by their actions they are in effect denying the gospel, [the faith](#) system (as in Gal 1:23; Jude 1:3, etc). To reiterate the phrase [the faith](#) is objective means more than individual trust or faith in Christ which is subjective. In other words our belief (faith) must be in the proper object (the faith ~ the Gospel).

**MacArthur** adds **denied the faith** "means that such a person has denied the principle of compassionate love that is at the heart of the Christian **faith** (cf. John 13:35; Rom. 5:5; 1 Thess. 4:9). There must be no dichotomy between faith and conduct." (See [1 Timothy Commentary](#))

**THOUGHT-** Lips and life must match! What we say we believe must be in synch with what we do. And remember the world is watching and will be quick to call us out as hypocrites if we go to church on Sunday like pious folks and then live the other 6 days as pagan folks!

[The Believer's Study Bible](#) - Becoming a follower of Christ significantly increases responsibility in the social area also. Paul directs this admonition to the care of widows (cf. vv. 3, 4), although he states it in terms of overall family responsibility. A Christian must labor in order to provide for those of his family. To fail in this obligation is to deny the faith and to be worse than one with no faith at all. To the sin of slothfulness is added hypocrisy because the man is claiming to be a follower of Christ.

**John Phillips** - The professing Christian who does not show this kind of love can be compared to the servant in the Lord's story recorded in Matthew 18:23-35. The servant owed the king ten thousand talents; and although he pleaded for more time and made vague promises to put things right, he obviously had no way of meeting this enormous indebtedness. So the king canceled his debt. However, as soon as this unscrupulous man was set free, he sought out a fellow servant who owed him a hundred pence. He abused his fellow servant, demanded immediate payment, and flung the unfortunate debtor into prison. When other servants brought the matter to the king's attention, he summoned the man back to court. "O thou wicked servant," the king said, "I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?" Then the king thrust the wicked servant into prison until he could pay his enormous debt in full. The same principle applies to the treatment of widows. The professing believer has drawn on the bank of heaven for forgiveness of all his debt of sin. God has shown him enormous love, kindness, and grace and now expects him to show similar kindness and compassion to other people. He owes a debt of love, especially to members of his family. (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** - Suppose a relative is unwilling to help support his loved one? **He... is worse than an unbeliever!**" was Paul's judgment (1 Tim. 5:8, niv; also see 1Ti 5:16). A missionary friend of mine, now with the Lord, came home from the field to care for her sick and elderly parents. She was severely criticized by some of her associates ("We should love God more than father and mother!"), but she remained faithful to the end. Then she returned to the field for years of fruitful service, knowing she had obeyed God. After all, we love God by loving His people; and He has a special concern for the elderly, the widows, and the orphans. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Lowell Johnson** - Two important truths:

1. Caring for one's dependent parents is a serious, scriptural responsibility. Scripture commands parents to provide for their children. But there comes a time when the tables are turned. Children must care for their parents when they are no longer able to care for themselves.
2. The church is never expected to support everyone in need. The ministry of compassion and care must be accompanied by discernment and wisdom. What kind of stewards of the Lord's resources would we be if we indiscriminately handed out money to every need that came up without first evaluating its legitimacy? ([How To Treat Folks in the Congregation](#))

**Life Application Study Bible** ([borrow](#)) has a pithy application - Healthy homes remain the best possible training environment for children. When it comes to caring for relatives and honoring parents, children take most of their cues by watching how Mom and Dad honor the grandparents. If our children see the way we, as parents, care for our parents, they will understand the importance of such honor for us in the future. Healthy, practical honor becomes a priceless gift that one generation gives to another. Disrespect and lack of care provide harmful examples that will eventually turn on us. The warning in the verse is ominous indeed.

**J Vernon McGee** - My friend, I don't know how I could make this any stronger than it's made right here: the widow is to be taken care of by her own flesh and blood. It does not matter what type of testimony a man may give at a businessmen's meeting, or what kind of a testimony a woman may give to the missionary society, if they are not taking care of their own, they have no testimony for God. They are worse than infidels. Scripture is very clear here -- you might miss some things in Scripture, but you cannot miss this.

Remember that we are called to imitate Jesus (1Co 11:1+) and He gave us the greatest example of care and compassion for widows when He was on the Cross, the Gospel of John recording...

When Jesus then saw His mother (MARY), and the disciple whom He loved (JOHN) standing nearby, He said to His mother (WHO WAS A WIDOW AT THAT TIME), "Woman, **behold**, your son!" Then He said to the disciple, "**Behold**, your mother!" From that hour the disciple took her into his own household. (Jn 19:26-27)

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**Provide for** ([4306](#)) **pronoeo** from **pró** = before + **noieo** = think, comprehend, observe, notice) means literally to think before, to observe in advance, to notice beforehand, to plan before, to plan carefully, to perceive in advance, to foresee and so to have regard for. Most of uses in secular Greek convey the idea of to care, to see to it that, make provision for, attend to. The idea is to think about something ahead of time, giving it careful thought and consideration, with the implication that one can then respond appropriately. **Used 3x in the NT** - Rom. 12:17; 2 Co. 8:21; 1 Tim. 5:8

**Denied** ([720](#)) **arneomai** from "a" = negation + **rheo** = say) literally means "to say no", to **say** one does **not** know about or is in any way related to some person or some thing. Webster says that to **deny** implies a firm refusal to accept as true, to grant or concede or to acknowledge the existence or claims of. Arneomai means to refuse to consent to something or reject something offered.

**The faith** ([4102](#)) (**pistis**) is a specific phrase (definite article "the" plus "faith") found some 38x in the NASB, some instances referring to saving faith in Christ exercised by an individual and necessary for salvation.

**The faith** -Acts 3:16; 6:7; 13:8; 14:22; 16:5; Ro 4:11f, 16; 14:22; 1Co 16:13; 2Co 13:5; Gal 1:23; 3:23; 6:10; Eph 1:15; 4:13; Phil 1:25, 27; Col 1:23; 1Ti 1:2, 14; 3:9, 13; 4:1, 6; 5:8; 6:10, 21; 2Ti 1:13; 2:18; 3:8; 4:7; Titus 1:1, 13; 3:15; Philemon 1:5; Jude 1:3; Rev 13:10 Approximately **one-half** of the 38 occurrences of the specific phrase **the faith** refer not to the **ACT** of believing but rather to **WHAT** is believed, the latter being the usage that the present context would seem to favor (cp retain the standard of sound words, [2Ti 1:13](#), guard...the treasure [2Ti 1:14](#), handling accurately the Word of truth [2Ti 2:15](#)). It follows that the specific meaning of this phrase is dependent on the **context** (the text that goes with the text in question).

**Worse** ([5501](#)) **cheiron** irregular comparative of kakós =bad) is an adjective used to compare degrees of evil, such as worsening spiritual or physical condition. It means inferior to another in quality or condition or desirability. Less satisfactory than something else. Cheiron means worse, inferior in rank, dignity, goodness, excellence, or condition (Matt. 9:16; 12:45; 27:64; Mark 2:21; 5:26; Luke 11:26; 1 Tim. 5:8; 2 Tim. 3:13; 2 Pet. 2:20). More grievous, more severe as spoken of punishment and so in Hebrews 10:29 cheiron illustrates the severity of punishment for those who continue to sin deliberately after having accepted Christ.

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**Henry Blackaby** - 1 Timothy 5:8 Young people are used to having their parents take care of them. When there is a need, the child calls on the parent. Parents are always there for the child. Yet it's important that each family member be sensitive to the needs of the rest of the family. This is especially true for Christians, who have the love of Christ to share. Of all people, we should know how to care for our families.

Take a few minutes to think about your own family. Do you have grandparents? How could you minister to them to show how much you love them? What about your father? He may seem strong and in control, but could it be that he's carrying a heavy load? Is he under stress? Has he suffered a loss? Do you find yourself only seeking him out when you have a need? When was the last time you prayed for him, encouraged him, or thanked him?

Think about your mother. Is there something you could say or do that would show your appreciation for all she does for you? Have you told her you love her? Do you pray for her? What about your brothers and sisters? Do you find yourself competing with them instead of showing genuine concern for them? Are you aware of when they are going through difficulties? Could they find encouragement in a kind word from you? Sometimes, the people we overlook the most are those closest to us. Today, be especially

sensitive to the needs of your family members, including your extended family (aunts, uncles, cousins). Ask God to open your eyes to the concerns of those who mean so much to you. (Borrow [The experience : a devotional and journal : day by day with God](#))

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**QUESTION - [How is somebody who does not provide for his family worse than an unbeliever \(1 Timothy 5:8\)?](#)**

**ANSWER** - In 1 Timothy 5:1–16, the apostle Paul gives pastoral instructions to Timothy on how to nurture and support different groups of people in the church. As a general rule, Christians are to treat members of the [body of Christ](#) as we would the members of our own family (verses 1–3). But widows are to be given special consideration. As part of Paul’s instructions regarding [widows](#), he tells Timothy, “But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Timothy 5:8ESV).

God calls believers to be blameless (Ephesians 1:4), to shine “like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people” (Philippians 2:15, NLT). One way we do that is by caring for our family members, especially those who are the neediest and most vulnerable. Paul instructed Timothy and the church to look out for defenseless widows: “Take care of any widow who has no one else to care for her” (1 Timothy 5:3, NLT). The apostle stressed the responsibility of believers to provide for their own: “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (Galatians 6:10).

If a widow had relatives who were followers of Jesus Christ and members of the church, then responsibility for their care shifted from the church to the family. Paul expected Timothy, as a church leader, to instruct families to support and care for their aging parents. The person who neglects such an important obligation, who “does not provide for his family,” is “worse than an unbeliever” because he has proven his lack of love and insincerity of faith. He is like those in the church who “claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good” (Titus 1:16). Paul’s assertion in 1 Timothy 5 implies that even unbelievers—those who lack faith in Jesus Christ and live without God’s Spirit—have enough good sense and compassion to care for and support their own household.

Throughout God’s Word, the Lord honors and defends [widows and orphans](#). He is “a father to the fatherless, a defender of widows” (Psalm 68:5; see also Psalm 146:9; Proverbs 15:25). Since ancient times, Scripture has demanded justice, love, and support for widows and orphans (Deuteronomy 10:18; 27:19; Psalm 140:12). God expects His people to provide help and protection to the needy (Exodus 22:22; Deuteronomy 24:17). Through the prophet, the Lord cried out, “Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow” (Isaiah 1:17).

Jesus Himself showed compassion and deep concern for widows (Luke 7:11–12; 18:1–8; Mark 12:38–40, 41–44). Even as He hung on the cross, our Lord entrusted His widowed mother to John’s care (John 19:26–27). The early believers continued in Scripture’s teaching and Christ’s example, appointing seven leaders “full of faith” to oversee the care of widows in the Jerusalem church (Acts 6:1–7). James eloquently defined “pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father” as “caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you” (James 1:27, NLT).

In Jewish society, fathers and sons had a moral and legal obligation to provide for widowed daughters or mothers out of their dowry. According to dowry laws, a widow was to be cared for by the individual in charge of her dowry. Thus, a widow with a family should not need to rely on the church for support. For this reason, Paul told Timothy, “Support widows who are genuinely in need” (1 Timothy 5:3, CSB; see also 1 Timothy 5:5).

In 1 Timothy 5:4, Paul suggests two solid incentives for Christians to care for their widowed family members. First, this is how we repay our parents and grandparents for tending to us when we were young. And, second, “this is something that pleases God” (NLT). In Paul’s estimation, a Christian who neglects this basic familial expression of compassion and love sinks below the level of the godless, becoming “worse than an unbeliever.”

In contemporary times, it’s not uncommon for the elderly and the widowed to be left alone in care facilities, neglected by their families. Yet, in no uncertain terms, Paul expressed the fundamental Christian duty for us to honor our parents (Ephesians 6:1–3) and provide for our aging relatives: “But those who won’t care for their relatives, especially those in their own household, have denied the true faith. Such people are worse than unbelievers” (1 Timothy 5:8, NLT). [GotQuestions.org](#)

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**Walter Kaiser - [Hard Sayings of the Bible - go to page 630](#) - 5:8 Worse Than an Unbeliever?**

The point of 1 Timothy 5:8 is rather clear. Failure to care for the needs of particular individuals is tantamount to rejection of one’s faith. And a person of faith who acts in such a way as to deny that faith in practice is worse than those who never profess faith in the first place.

What creates difficulties for us is the rigorous tone of this instruction and the finality that seems to be attached to one’s failure in following the instruction. A related difficulty—in light of Paul’s insistence that salvation is by faith and not by works—is the close

connection in this text between a very particular action and one's faith, and therefore one's salvation.

A careful look at Paul's argument in its larger context and within his thinking about faith and its fruits should alleviate the difficulties.

Our verse is part of a longer passage (1 Tim 5:3–16) in which Paul is concerned about the place and care of widows in the church. In the ancient world, partially due to patriarchal family and social structures, widows were often among the most weak and vulnerable members of society. It is clear from the Old Testament that God has a special concern for the least, the little ones, the oppressed, the powerless. And that concern includes widows (Deut 10:18; 24:17; Ps 68:5; Is 1:17). From Luke's account of the ministry of Jesus and the early church (Lk 7:11–15; 18:2–8; 21:1–4; Acts 6:1; 9:39), we see that concern for widows naturally continued in the "new Israel," that the Christian community saw care for widows as a special responsibility, and that groups of widows in the churches were particularly involved in good deeds of charity for others in need.

The larger passage, of which this text is a part, reveals this abiding concern for widows. It also shows that particular circumstances called for greater clarity regarding the church's responsibility in this area. Paul distinguishes between "widows who are really in need" (1 Tim 5:3) and those who have family able to care for them (1 Tim 5:4). Given the fact that the early churches, on the whole, were constituted of people who were from the lower socioeconomic strata (see 1 Cor 1:26–28), their economic resources cannot have been extensive. Thus the need arose to channel limited resources to meet the most urgent situations of deprivation. It may even be that the church's compassion for widows was expressed so consistently that charity became something to be expected, even when there was no real need.

In any case, Paul's instruction is that the primary responsibility for the care of widows rests on members of the immediate family (children or grandchildren, 1 Tim 5:4). Only when that assistance is not available, when the widow is "left all alone" (1 Tim 5:5), does the larger community become responsible.

Paul grounds that instruction in two ways. Such action is, first of all, "pleasing to God" (1 Tim 5:4). The imperative to care for parents was derived in Judaism from the fifth commandment ("Honor your father and your mother," Ex 20:12), and obedience to the commandment was understood to bring with it God's blessing. Second, Paul grounds his instruction in a truth stated over and over in the Word of God; namely, that one's faith, one's beliefs, must find expression in concrete action and relationships. Thus, following a harsh rebuke against the emptiness and shallowness of Israel's worship (Is 1:10–16), Isaiah calls on the people to "seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case for the widow" (Is 1:17). A right relationship with God is expressed in the doing of justice, the loving of kindness (Mic 6:6) and the demonstration of steadfast love (Hos 6:6). The truest expression of the worship of God is when God's people are involved in letting "justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!" (Amos 5:24).

This central Old Testament conviction is also at the heart of the message of Jesus and his followers. We shall be known by the fruit we bear (Mt 7:16, 20) and thus bring glory to God (Jn 15:8). The world will know that we are Jesus' disciples if we genuinely love one another (Jn 13:35). If God's forgiving, reconciling work does not find expression in our relationships, then our worship of God is empty (Mt 5:23–24). The fruit of the Spirit in us, says Paul, expresses itself in kindness and the practice of goodness (Gal 5:22). New life in Christ (Col 3:1–3) is to express itself in a life clothed with compassion and kindness (Col 3:12). Faith that is not evidenced in deeds is judged to be dead, inauthentic faith (Jas 2:14–17). Religion that is "pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress" (Jas 1:27).

Within this larger New Testament perspective, Paul's directive for the care of widowed mothers or grandmothers by children or grandchildren must be understood. They should "learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family" (1 Tim 5:4). The reality of our relationship with God most naturally flows over into our human relationships. And the members of our immediate families are the first ones to feel the impact of our relationship with God. The expression "Charity begins at home" is rooted in the conviction that if love of neighbor does not express itself concretely in our closest relationships, then our claim to love God ("our religion") is a lie (1 Jn 4:19–21).

This is why Paul judges a person who does not provide for family members to have "denied the faith" and to be "worse than an unbeliever" (1 Tim 5:8). Though this judgment seems harsh in relation to this particular failure in practical Christian behavior, Paul's concern throughout the letter that Christian life be above reproach from outsiders (1 Tim 2:2; 3:1–7; 5:14; 6:1) helps us to understand his strong word. The phrase "to be worse than an unbeliever" implies that even unbelievers are expected to care for those of their own households. Believers who neglect this responsibility are thus acting "worse than" unbelievers. Whenever that happens (see also 1 Cor 5:1–2), the church is not being God's alternative community in a broken, fragmented world. And such a life in the world represents a denial of the faith.

See also comment on JAMES 2:24; 2 PETER 2:20.

**PROBLEM:** Jesus exhorted His disciples, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth” (Matt. 6:19). Luke added, “Give to everyone who asks of you” (Luke 6:30). By contrast, Paul affirmed that “If anyone does not provide for his own ... he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Tim. 5:8). And Proverbs 13:22 claims that “a good man leaves an inheritance to his children’s children.” But how can we give all our treasure to God and others and still have an inheritance left for our family.

**SOLUTION:** The Bible does not command us to give away all our money to God and others. The OT laid down the tithe as the minimum all should give (cf. Mal. 3:8), and proportionally blessed those who brought more offerings (cf. 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8:14–15). In addition to this, we should help those in need, especially our own family and other believers (1 Tim. 5:8).

Jesus in no way intended that we should give away all that we possess. His advice to the rich young ruler to do so was a special case, since money had become an idol to this man (see Luke 18:22). Jesus encouraged prudence and economy and forbade making “treasures” our chief good. He encouraged us not to be unduly “anxious” about our earthly provisions (Matt. 6:25) nor to selfishly hoard treasures for ourselves on earth (Matt. 6:19–20). But in no way did He say we should not invest our money or plan for the future. Indeed, He gave parables about investing our treasures (Matt. 25:14ff) and about counting the cost before building a tower (Luke 14:28).

Neither is there any indication that the early believers ever took Jesus’ statement (to give to those who ask) to the extreme of giving away everything they possessed. In spite of some misunderstood verses to the contrary (see comments on Acts 2:44–45), the early church did not practice any abiding form of communism or socialism. Most of them apparently owned their own homes and/or other property. Otherwise, how could they have fulfilled the command to provide for their own and to leave an inheritance to their families. The prudent believer gives of his or her possessions first to God (see Matt. 6:19, 33), then for family and other believers (1 Tim. 5:8), and then, as much as is possible, to help the poor (Gal. 2:10).

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## The Country Of Old Age

If anyone does not provide for his own, . . . [he] is worse than an unbeliever. — 1 Timothy 5:8

Today’s Scripture: Mark 7:1-13

In the book *Another Country*, author Mary Pipher met with people in their seventies, eighties, and nineties who were confronting many different life situations.

“I wanted . . . to understand the country of old age,” Pipher writes. “We are not organized in a way that makes aging easy.” The root problem, she observed, is that young and old have become segregated, to the detriment of both groups.

This social trend is not necessarily intentional. But many people do ignore and shirk their responsibilities for the elderly. In Jesus’ day, the Pharisees found creative ways to avoid their family duties. In Mark 7:9-13, Jesus rebuked their common practice of dedicating their material possessions to God (declaring them as Corban) rather than using their assets to provide for their parents. Their tradition had violated the commandment to honor their father and their mother.

Our children, work, and church activities can pull us in many directions. But that doesn’t excuse us from honoring our aging parents by making provision for their needs, as much as we are able (1 Tim. 5:8). When the time comes for us to enter the country of old age, let’s hope we’ve set the right example for our own children to follow. By: Dennis Fisher ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Providing for our parents’ needs  
With loving words and selfless deeds  
Is what the Lord expects of those  
Who try to follow where He leads.  
—Sper

Honoring our parents is learned by example.

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## Drones

There are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. —2  
Thessalonians 3:11

Today’s Scripture: 1 Timothy 5:8-16

As I sat looking at my beehives, I was especially interested in the activities of a considerable number of bees that seemed to be



busybodies. They were always buzzing, going in and out of the hive, but doing no apparent work. These nonproductive ones are called drones. They are male bees—much larger than a worker or even the queen. Their only function is to fertilize a queen and then die.

While waiting for a new queen to emerge, the drones spend their time visiting one hive after another. But they do no work; they make no honey; they build no comb; they can't even sting. And they're noisy! You should hear them buzz, but it's all bluff.

For a while drones are privileged characters, but when fall comes and the honey flow slackens, the worker bees will kill every drone! Not a one lives through the winter. The time of reckoning comes, and they are denied the reward of the workers.

In the apostle Paul's letter to Timothy, he warned about people who are active in the wrong kinds of activities—going from house to house as busybodies, stirring up trouble instead of serving others (1 Timothy 5:13).

Don't be a drone if you want to share in the heavenly treasures reserved for the faithful. By: Mart DeHaan [Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

In service true of any kind,  
Lord, happy I shall be,  
If by my help some soul may find  
The path that leads to Thee.  
—Anon.

God's house should be a hive for workers—not a nest for drones.

**1 Timothy 5:9 A widow is to be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man,**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:9 Χ ρ α καταλεγ σθω μ λ αττων τ ν ξ κοντα γεγονυ α, ν ς νδρ ς γυν ,

KJV 1 Timothy 5:9 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man,

NET 1 Timothy 5:9 No widow should be put on the list unless she is at least sixty years old, was the wife of one husband,

CSB 1 Timothy 5:9 No widow should be placed on the official support list unless she is at least 60 years old, has been the wife of one husband,

ESV 1 Timothy 5:9 Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband,

NIV 1 Timothy 5:9 No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband,

NLT 1 Timothy 5:9 A widow who is put on the list for support must be a woman who is at least sixty years old and was faithful to her husband.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:9 Let a widow be put on the list if she is not less than sixty years old and has been married only once;

NJB 1 Timothy 5:9 Enrolment as a widow is permissible only for a woman at least sixty years old who has had only one husband.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:9 Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years old, married only once,

YLT 1 Timothy 5:9 A widow -- let her not be enrolled under sixty years of age, having been a wife of one husband,

GWN 1 Timothy 5:9 Any widow who had only one husband and is at least 60 years old should be put on your list of widows.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:9 Let no woman be numbered among the widows who is under sixty years old, and only if she has been the wife of one man,



- **only if she is not less than sixty years old** 1Ti 5:11,14 Lu 2:36,37
- **having:** 1Ti 3:2,12 1Co 7:10,11,39,40

#### Related Passages:

1 Timothy 3:2, 12+ An overseer, then, must be above reproach, **the husband of one wife**, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach....12 Deacons must be **husbands of only one wife**, and good managers of their children and their own households.

## PLACING WIDOWS ON THE CHURCH SUPPORT LIST

**A widow** ([chera](#)) **is to be put on the list** ([katalego](#)) - This is a command in the [present imperative](#) which means to lay down or choose out and with the negative particle (in Greek text - *katalegestho me*) usually implies stop an act in process, suggesting they were putting some widows on the list for aid who did not meet the qualifications. Thus Paul gives a detailed list of 8 qualifications. This statement refers to those who were widows indeed (genuine widows), those who had no other means of support, remembering that relatives were to be the first source of support in the ancient world (and I would suggest that still holds, for today even in the face of "Social Security" and "Medicare" often those programs do not provide enough support for even "baseline" maintenance.) Paul now proceeds to give a list of 8 requirements for widows to be placed on **the list** to receive financial and material support from the church body.

**(1) Only if she is not less than sixty years old** - The age of sixty was significant in the Mosaic Law regarding vows (Lev. 27:1-4, 7). In addition in the ancient world 60 was the accepted "retirement" age from work (believers never truly retire from the Lord's work). Also after 60 years her sensual passions are not as great and she will not be able to bear children. "The age restriction suggests a special ministry group of widows, since presumably the church would give aid to any destitute widow regardless of age (see 1Ti 5:11)." ([The Believer's Study Bible](#)) To the Jews old age began with the 60th year. Orientals regarded it as the time for retiring for quiet contemplation.

**(2) Having been the wife of one man** (cf similar rule for overseers and deacons - 1Ti 3:2, 12+) - (1) was maturity and (2) is monogamy! Second marriage excluded a widow from this list. I am not sure why, but God has His reasons. One implication is that she was not divorced.

[William Barclay](#) - They must have been the wife of one husband. In an age when the marriage bond was taken lightly and almost universally dishonoured, they must be examples of purity and fidelity. ([1 Timothy 5 Commentary](#))

**John MacArthur on the wife of one man** - Greek text literally reads "a one-man woman," a construction parallel to that of 1Ti 3:2,12+. That does not exclude women who have been married more than once. Paul himself commands younger widows to remarry (1Ti 5:14; cf. 1Co 7:39), so that cannot be his intent here. A "one-man woman" is a woman who was totally devoted to her husband. It speaks of purity in action and attitude, as in the case of the overseer in 1Ti 3:2, who is to be a "one-woman man"; it does not refer to marital status. Such a woman lived in complete fidelity to her husband in a chaste, pure, unspotted marriage relationship. A widow who did not measure up to this standard would not be a proper role model for the younger women to emulate. ([The Church and Widows](#))

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**Put on the list** ([2639](#)) ([katalego](#) from *kata* - to, with + *lego* = choose, conclude as a result of exercising discernment, intellectual power) means to lay down, choose out, select, enroll, to write down in a list. It is a technical term for being placed on a recognized list or catalogue. Only here in the NT ([Hapax legomenon](#)) In classical Greek, the word was used in reference to enrolling or enlisting soldiers. The English word **catalog** is derived from *katalegomai*. **Friberg** - "denoting selection and acceptance as a member of a group; of soldiers enlist, enroll; of elderly widows who need and qualify for support select, enroll, put on the list (1Ti 5.9) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Gilbrant** - Classical Greek - This compound, from *kata*, "down," and *legō*, "lay out (words), say, tell," carries a variety of meanings in its classical usage. It can mean "to tell at length, recount, repeat, recite, tell in full tale, reckon," or "to enumerate, draw up a list," thereby carrying the further meaning of "to enroll" or "enlist." This idea of enlistment is especially evident in the sense of enlisting or enrolling soldiers (cf. Bauer). Fairly common in classical usage, this term rarely occurs in the Septuagint. In the New Testament literature *katalegō* appears only in 1 Timothy 5:9. Here it carries the idea of enrolling or selecting, as used in classical Greek. In this passage specifically Paul gave instructions to Timothy concerning the care of widows. No widow was to be *katalegō*, put on "the list," or "enrolled" as a widow to be cared for unless she met the qualifications outlined by Paul. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

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**1 Timothy 5:10 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.**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:10 ν ργοις καλο ς μαρτυρουμ νη, ε τεκνοτρ φησεν, ε ξενοδ χησεν, ε γων π δας νιψεν, ε θλιβομ νοις π ρκεσεν, ε παντ ργ γαθ πηκολο θησεν.

KJV 1 Timothy 5:10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

NET 1 Timothy 5:10 and has a reputation for good works: as one who has raised children, practiced hospitality, washed the feet of the saints, helped those in distress— as one who has exhibited all kinds of good works.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:10 and is well known for good works-- that is, if she has brought up children, shown hospitality, washed the saints' feet, helped the afflicted, and devoted herself to every good work.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:10 and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:10 and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the saints, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:10 She must be well respected by everyone because of the good she has done. Has she brought up her children well? Has she been kind to strangers and served other believers humbly? Has she helped those who are in trouble? Has she always been ready to do good?

NRS 1 Timothy 5:10 she must be well attested for her good works, as one who has brought up children, shown hospitality, washed the saints' feet, helped the afflicted, and devoted herself to doing good in every way.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:10 She must be a woman known for her good works -- whether she has brought up her children, been hospitable to strangers and washed the feet of God's holy people, helped people in hardship or been active in all kinds of good work.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:10 with a reputation for good works, namely, that she has raised children, practiced hospitality, washed the feet of the holy ones, helped those in distress, involved herself in every good work.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:10 in good works being testified to: if she brought up children, if she entertained strangers, if saints' feet she washed, if those in tribulation she relieved, if every good work she followed after;

GWN 1 Timothy 5:10 People should tell about the good things she has done: raising children, being hospitable, taking care of believers' needs, helping the suffering, or always doing good things.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:10 And if witness is given of her good works; if she has had the care of children, if she has been kind to travellers, washing the feet of the saints, helping those who are in trouble, giving herself to good works.

MIT 1 Timothy 5:10 attested by good works. This means she has raised children, welcomed strangers with hospitality, washed the feet of the holy ones, assisted those in distress, and followed through with every good work.

- **having a reputation:** 1Ti 3:7 Ac 6:3 10:22 22:12 3Jn 1:12
- **for good works:** 1Ti 5:25 2:10 6:18 Mt 5:16 Ac 9:36 Eph 2:10 2Ti 3:17 Titus 2:7 3:8 Titus 3:14 Heb 10:24 13:21 1Pe 2:12
- **and if she has brought up children:** 2Ti 1:5 3:15
- **if she has shown hospitality to strangers:** Ac 16:14,15 Ro 12:13 Heb 13:2 1Pe 4:9
- **if she has washed the saints' feet:** Ge 18:4 19:2 24:32 Lu 7:38,44 Jn 13:5-15

#### Related Passages:

Luke 7:38; 44+ and standing behind Him at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing them with the perfume.... 44 Turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no

water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.

## GOOD WORKS THAT QUALIFY WIDOWS

**(3) having a reputation** ([martureo](#) - present tense - her lifestyle bearing witness) **for good works** - In some churches the pastor calls out "Can I have a witness?" Paul says these widow who are worthy of being placed on the list for aid are women who have had give a good "witness" not necessarily by their good words but with their good works. Their good works were in a sense a walking, living demonstration of the transforming power of the Gospel, a "good advertisement" (so to speak) for Christianity. Their conduct gave true witness to the godly character. **Good Works** are not just any works but are works with an "o" knocked out (so to speak)! That is, they are "God works" the Spirit initiating and energizing the works of these widows which were pleasing to their Father in Heaven (cf Php 2:13NLT+). These are works these widows worked out in fear and trembling (Php 2:12+), as they continued to abide in the Vine (Jn 15:5). And the result was that they obeyed Jesus' command in the Sermon on the Mount to "**Let your light shine** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) before men in such a way that they may see your good works (VISIBLE), and glorify (GIVE A PROPER OPINION OF) your (INVISIBLE) Father Who is in heaven." (Mt 5:16+).

So clearly the widows who the church is to help are godly women who in fact are spiritually equipped to fill a vital role in ministering to younger women in the church. In Titus 2:3-5+ we read

Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, **teaching what is good**, so that (term of purpose) **they may encourage the young women** to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.

[Lindsey](#) alludes to the role of these godly older women in quoting from the *Apostolic Constitutions*, which tell us what the life and organization of the Church were like in the third century specifying *"Three widows shall be appointed, two to persevere in prayer for those who are in temptation, and for the reception of revelations, when such are necessary, but one to assist women who are visited with sickness; she must be ready for service, discreet, telling the elders what is necessary, not avaricious, not given to much love of wine, so that she may be sober and able to perform the night services, and other loving duties."* ([THE MINISTRY IN THE SECOND CENTURY](#) -1903)

### Related Resources:

- [What does it mean that good works are the result of salvation? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does it mean that we were created for good works \(Ephesians 2:10\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the relationship of faith, works, and security in salvation? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**(4) and IF she has brought up children** ([teknotropheo](#)) - Paul has just stated "good works" and now he proceeds to list 5 "good works" all of which begin with "IF" marking them as [first class conditional statements](#), i.e., each assumed to be true. This "good work" is not meant to imply that a childless woman cannot be considered, but that if she has had children, they must be godly. In the ancient world this was a honorable job for the mothers and in the case of widows demonstrates their faithfulness to God to "Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it.." (Pr 22:6) The children would have been her own children (who were walking "poster children" of the truth that these women were living out the Gospel in the power of the Spirit) or as alluded to below may also have including children who were orphaned, a not uncommon sad occurrence in the ancient Roman world. And of course only a widow who had the experience of nurturing children would be qualified to advise the younger women in the church.

[William Barclay](#) has a note on what this may have meant in the ancient world - This may well mean more than one thing. It may mean that widows must have given proof of their Christian piety by bringing up their own families in the Christian way. But it can mean more than that. In an age when the marriage bond was very lax, and men and women changed their partners with bewildering rapidity, children were regarded as a misfortune. When a child was born, it was brought and laid before the father's feet. If the father stooped and lifted the child, that meant that he acknowledged it and was prepared to accept responsibility for its upbringing. If the father turned and walked away, the child was quite literally thrown out, like an unwanted piece of rubbish. It often happened that such unwanted children were collected by unscrupulous people and, if they were girls, brought up to stock the public brothels. If they were boys, they were trained to be slaves or gladiators for the public games. It would be a Christian duty to rescue such children from death and worse than death, and to bring them up in a Christian home. So, this may mean that widows must be women who had been prepared to give a home to abandoned children. ([1 Timothy 5 Commentary](#))

### Related Resource:

- [What does the Bible say about raising children? | GotQuestions.org](#)

(5) IF ([first class condition](#)) **she has shown hospitality** ([see note](#)) **to strangers** ([xenodocheo](#)) - The ancient world had no motels but only dirty inns, so travelers often had to rely on the hospitality of the locals for housing. These widows had obeyed the command "**Do not neglect** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it." In obeying this command they demonstrated that they were Spirit empowered and in some cases may well have entertained good spirits (angels)!

**William Barclay** - Inns in the ancient world were notoriously dirty, expensive and immoral. Those who opened their homes to travellers, or to strangers in an unfamiliar place, or to young people whose work and study took them far from home, were doing a most valuable service to the community. The open door of the Christian home is always a precious thing. ([1 Timothy 5 Commentary](#))

(6) IF ([first class condition](#)) **she has washed** ([nipto](#)) **the saints' (hagios) feet** (see [foot washing](#)) - This could be taken literally and figuratively. Some churches make foot washing a ritual, but Paul did not have a ritual in mind (although it has been [turned into a rite for some churches on Maundy Thursday](#)! The danger of any "rite" is that it is an external act without an internal attitude of humility and a broken spirit! [Beware of "rites!"](#)). He was simply dealing with the realities of his day. The washing of the feet was a service to visitors which occupied a great place in Eastern hospitality and was often assigned to slaves. Roads were dusty, and feet clad in sandals became very dirty, so this was a necessary but menial task. Indeed it demonstrated a widow's humble heart! And in so doing they were imitating their Lord Jesus Christ Who declared to His disciples (who were not willing to humble themselves to perform the menial task) in the [upper room discourse](#) "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you." (Jn 13:14-15-see comments). The mistress of the house would act as a servant to the bond-servants of God! The figurative sense of washing another's feet would be the widow's willingness to accept the humblest, most menial of tasks as for the Lord Jesus (cf Col 3:23+).

**Phillips** - On an earlier occasion, when Jesus had been invited to the home of a Pharisee, the disdainful man had not offered this common courtesy to his guest. However, the Pharisee's lack of cordiality was more than compensated for by the arrival of a sinful woman who bathed His feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. The Lord indicted the Pharisee when He said to him, "Thou gavest me no water for my feet" (Luke 7:44+). Paul, then, was simply telling Timothy that a worthy widow would be one who did not shrink from performing even the most menial of tasks in the line of duty and devotion. (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Gilbrant** - The feet were washed as part of Jewish custom for refreshing and cleansing after travel (John 13:5,6,8,10,12,14); the washing was usually done by a household servant. Jesus used foot washing as a striking example of the humble service Christians should render to one another ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

(7) IF ([first class condition](#)) **she has assisted** ([eparkeo](#)) **those in distress** ([thlibo](#) - present tense) - **Assisted** conveys the idea of giving succor (relief, help) to people hard-pressed by circumstances. They must have helped those in trouble. In her younger days when she had resources and energy, she **assisted those in distress** or who were put under pressure. This ministry could have taken many forms as there are many forms of distress in people's lives. In the Roman Empire the **Imperial Cult** ([also here](#)) began to rise to prominence in first century and as one example, citizens were required to affirm loyalty to caesar as god and declare "Caesar is lord." Christians of course would not do this and they were persecuted and often **in distress** ([thlibo](#)) ([See Persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire](#) - see [picture of Christian martyrs in the Roman Colosseum at their "bestly" games](#)). They widows had boldly come to the aid of their persecuted brethren, even at risk of bring trouble upon themselves!

(8) **and IF** ([first class condition](#)) **she has devoted herself** ([epakoloutheo](#) - literally followed after) **to every good work** - This qualification is almost like a "catch all" showing this woman as one who thought of others before herself, regardless of the circumstances (cf [Dorcas](#) in Acts 9:36+). What a vibrant witness she is/was for the life transforming Gospel (cf Pr 31:10-31)! The same word [epakoloutheo](#) is used in 1Ti 5:24 in reference to sins that follow after those who are guilty of them but in the present context [epakoloutheo](#) suggests persevering in **every good work**. Anyone can do an occasional good act, but the worthy widow conscientiously does all of the good she can all the time she can.

**THOUGHT** - Is not Paul's list of qualifications of widows to some degree applicable to all followers of Christ?  
That is a rhetorical question of course!

**Warren Wiersbe** - Every pastor gives thanks for godly women who minister to the material and physical needs in the church. These widows were cared for by the church, but they, in turn, helped to care for the church. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**John Phillips** - Many of the widows in the ancient pagan world had experienced adverse circumstances themselves. A widow who had overcome such obstacles would have thus given evidence of her trust in the Lord, strength of character, and hard work, and could now busily engage herself in helping others overcome their difficulties. We meet just such a widow in the story of Elijah. In spite of her obvious destitution, this courageous soul was willing to give what she had to the visiting prophet. How she was rewarded

is one of the delightful stories of the Old Testament (1 Kings 17:8-24).

God is no man's debtor. The widow who overcomes her difficulties is like the faithful deacon who earns "a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 3:13), and thus she qualified to become a deaconess on the church payroll and to minister to others in need. ([Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**J Vernon McGee** - I wish that the church could get back to these very basic and simple principles and get away from the sentimental and emotional appeals that we hear instead. We respond to sentimental pleas from unworthy causes which are appealing to our soft hearts and neglect those in our very midst who have real need. We overlook the wonderful widow in our own church who is lonely and seldom visited. Her children have moved away or have died, and she may have physical need. Too often the church ignores such need. But if a church took care of its widows, its testimony would not go unnoticed by the world. I believe that these widows who are helped by the church ought to be deaconesses in the church -- they should render some service to the church. For example, several years ago I called a widow in my church and asked her to visit a lady whose husband's funeral service I had just conducted. The death had left the lady without family or friends, and I asked the widow to visit her because she would understand the woman's need -- she had been through it herself. They became warm friends and grew in their relationship to God because of it. A widow can and should serve in some way in the church.

**Life Application Study Bible (borrow)** - Three out of four wives today eventually are widowed, so many of the older women in our churches have lost their husbands. Does your church provide an avenue of service for these women? Could you help match their gifts and abilities with your church's needs? Often their maturity and wisdom can be of great service in the church.

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**John MacArthur** - The qualities Paul gives illustrate God's design for women. They are a woman's highest priorities. By following them, she can make a profound impact on the world. That truth is illustrated in a story told by the Scottish preacher Ian MacClaren of a woman in his church.

As they were talking, she began to wipe her eyes with the corner of her apron, so Dr. MacClaren said, "What's disturbing you?"

"Oh," she said, "Sometimes I feel I have done so little and when I think about it it makes my heart heavy, because really I've done so little for Jesus."

"When I was a wee girl the Lord spoke to my heart and I surrendered to Him. And I wanted to live for Him, oh so much. But I feel I haven't done anything."

"What have you done with your life?" he asked.

"Oh nothing," she said, "just nothing. I've washed dishes, cooked three meals a day, taken care of my children, mopped the floor, mended the clothes, you know, everything a mother does, that's all I've done."

MacClaren sat back in his chair and asked, "Where are your boys?"

"Oh, she spoke, "You know I named them all for the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. You know them all and you know where Mark is. You ordained him. He went to China. He's learned the language and now he is able to minister to the people in the name of the Lord."

"Where's Luke?" MacClaren said.

"You know well enough where he is because you sent him out and I had a letter from him the other day. He is in Africa and says a revival has broken out at his mission station."

"And Matthew?" he queried.

"He's with his brother in China and they are working together. And John, who's nineteen, came to me last night to say God has laid Africa on his heart. He said, 'I'm going to Africa, but don't worry about it, Mother, because the Lord has shown me that I am to stay with you until you go home to glory, and then I'll go. Until then I have to take care of you.'"

MacClaren looked at that elderly saint and said, "Your life has been wasted, you say?"

"Yes, it has been wasted."

"You have been cooking and mopping and washing—but I would like to see the reward when you are called home!"

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**Brought up children** ([5044](#))([teknotropheo](#) from [teknon](#) - child + [trepho](#) = to nourish, bring up) means to bring up children and fulfill one of the privileged roles God gives to mothers! [Hapax legomenon](#) - only 1Ti 5:10.



**Gilbrant** - This is a compound verb from *teknon*, "child," and *tropheō*, "to serve as a wet nurse." It is not used in the Septuagint and is very rare in classical Greek. It is used once in the New Testament, in 1 Timothy 5:10, when referring to the widow eligible to be put on the roll. Here the term does not denote childbirth so much as the virtuous bringing up of children. These could be the widow's own children or those entrusted to her charge (Nicholl, *The Expositor's New Testament*, 4:131). The meaning of *tektotropheō* includes an expressed virtue that goes beyond one's own home. This would be especially true of church widows who later had charge of orphans under the church's care (Luck, *International Critical Commentary*, 1 Timothy, p.60). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Shown hospitality to strangers** (3580) (*xenodocheo* from *xenos* = stranger + *dechomai* = put the welcome mat out) meaning to entertain strangers, of one who practices hospitality entertain strangers, show hospitality to a guest. This is a [Hapax legomenon](#) - only 1Ti 5:10.

**John Phillips** - The word translated "lodging strangers" occurs only here in the New Testament, but the cognate word *xenos* ("strangers") occurs four times in a row in the Lord's parable of the sheep and the goats (Matt. 25:35, 38, 43, 44). In the story, the Lord described Himself as "a stranger" in the very world His hands had made, and the way people treated strangers was taken to be an indication of how they treat Him. The parable's interpretation refers to the period of the Great Tribulation and the subsequent judgment of the nations at the Lord's return in the valley of Jehoshaphat (Matt. 24:15-22; Joel 3:2). The parable's application can be relevant to the case of the worthy widow whose kindness to visitors is noted by the elders of her church. (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Washed** (3538) (*nipō*) means to wash a part of one's body - face (Mt 6:17), eyes (Jn 9:7, 11, 15). E.g., washing of hands (Mt 15:2, Mk 7:3) and feet (1Ti 5:10) was common with the Jews. Note that *nipō* stands in contrast to two other related words - (1) **Louo** -- which means to bathe, used of washing the whole body and not just part of it (as is the case with *nipō*) (Acts 9:37, Heb 10:22, 2Pe 2:22). Like *nipō* *louo* refers to washing of living persons. (2) **Pluno** - refers to washing of inanimate things such as garments (Rev 7:14, Rev 22:14, Ge 49:11, Ex 19:10). Zodhiates says that "The lesson in John 13:9, 10 symbolizes justification as the bathing of the whole body (*louō*), while sanctification is the constant need of *níptō*, washing individual parts of the body." (Borrow [The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament](#))

**Gilbrant - Classical Greek** *Níptō* is a variation of the verb *nizō* ("wash"). In classical Greek *nizō* commonly is used of washing parts of the body, such as hands and feet. It occasionally describes purging or cleansing (cf. Liddell-Scott). In the **Septuagint** *níptō* is used frequently for washing hands, feet, or face, and occasionally for rinsing. It is particularly used of the need for the high priest Aaron "to wash" in the water of the laver in the tabernacle (Exodus 30:18-21; cf. 40:31). It describes "rinsing" something with water, but even this can have religious significance (Leviticus 15:11,12). Washing one's hands can also be a symbolic gesture of innocence (Deuteronomy 21:6; cf. Psalms 26:6 [LXX 25:6]; 58:10 [57:10]; 73:13 [72:13]; Matthew 27:24). **In the New Testament** *níptō* is used of washing parts of the body such as face, hands, feet, and eyes. A blind man washed his eyes after Jesus put clay on them for healing (John 9:7,11,15). The face was washed as part of the daily hygienic practice (Matthew 6:17). The hands were washed before eating as part of the ritual cleansing of Jewish tradition (Matthew 15:2; Mark 7:3). The feet were washed as part of Jewish custom for refreshing and cleansing after travel (John 13:5,6,8,10,12,14); the washing was usually done by a household servant. Jesus used foot washing as a striking example of the humble service Christians should render to one another (John 13:14). (Much has been written about the significance of "foot washing"; cf. Opperwall, "Foot Washing," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 2:333.) Because people wore open sandals on dusty roads, foot washing was a common courtesy provided for travelers by their host (cf. Genesis 18:4; 19:2; Judges 19:21). It was considered a menial task, even for a servant (cf. Mark 1:7). Jesus commended the woman who washed His feet with her tears and anointed them with nard; the host failed to be as gracious (Luke 7:36-50). Besides Jesus, there is only one other specific reference to foot washing made in the New Testament. In 1 Timothy 5:10 Paul said that a widow must "have washed the saints' feet." This implies that accommodating travelers (i.e., for the sake of spreading the gospel) was one of the tasks of widows who were to be supported by the church. This simple practice of hospitality and humility eventually became a rite of the Early Church (ibid.). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Hauck - Nipō** means "to wash" both generally and cultically. Running water, especially from springs, is preferred for washing. Partial washing of people is at issue. Ritual purity in the approach to deity imposes the need for cultic washing. This is important in the OT (cf. Ex. 30:18-19; Dt. 21:6). Judaism extends the OT rules, e.g., by requiring washing of the hands before meals. In the NT *níptō* means partial washing but is of no great significance. It denotes ordinary washing in Jn. 9:7, 11, 15 and Jewish ritual washing in Matt. 15:2. Jesus defends the disciples when they are attacked for not washing before eating, and he exposes the hypocrisy of those who deliberately refrain from washing when fasting (Matt. 6:17). In the foot-washing *níptō* is partial washing (the feet) as distinct from *louō* (Jn. 13:5-6, 8 etc.). By his action here Jesus sets an example of menial service. But the action also has symbolical significance. Christ's death gives full cleansing (cf. baptism), so that there is no need of partial washing (if we omit "except for his feet"), or need only of cleansing from daily sin (if we include it). (Borrow [Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New](#)



[Testament : abridged in one volume](#))

**Nipto - 17x/13v - wash(11), washed(6).** Matt. 6:17; Matt. 15:2; Mk. 7:3; Jn. 9:7; Jn. 9:11; Jn. 9:15; Jn. 13:5; Jn. 13:6; Jn. 13:8; Jn. 13:10; Jn. 13:12; Jn. 13:14; 1 Tim. 5:10

**Nipto in the Septuagint** - Gen. 18:4; Gen. 19:2; Gen. 24:32; Gen. 43:24; Gen. 43:31; Exod. 30:18; Exod. 30:19; Exod. 30:20; Exod. 30:21; Exod. 40:30; Lev. 15:11; Lev. 15:12; Deut. 21:6; Jdg. 19:21; 1 Sam. 25:41; 2 Sam. 11:8; 2 Chr. 4:6; Job 20:23; Ps. 26:6; Ps. 58:10; Ps. 73:13; Song 5:3

**Assisted** (1884) (**eparkeo** from **epi** = to, unto + **arkeo** = suffice, satisfy) means to provide aid, to help, to assist, to relieve. Only in 1Ti 5:10, 16. Zodhiates says it means "To hold up or in, to hold back from going further, restrain, ward off. In the NT by implication, to aid or relieve, with the dat. (1Ti 5:10, 16). (Borrow [The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament](#))

**Gilbrant** - Classical Greek This is a compound verb from **epi** and **arkeo**. According to Thayer the verb **arkeo** means "to possess unflinching strength" or "to be strong sufficiently to ward off and withstand any danger" (Greek-English Lexicon). **Eparkeō** is common in classical Greek and expresses the similar meaning of being strong enough to deal adequately with danger or injury (Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament, 4:262). There are examples of ancient writers using **eparkeō** with the simple meaning "to aid" (Homer; Josephus Antiquities 8.4.3 and various papyri; cf. Bauer). The only two occurrences in the Septuagint are in the First Book of Maccabees. In 1 Maccabees 8:26 **eparkeō** is used to mean "help" in a technical sense of military assistance, while in 11:35 it refers to money "remitted" to the Jews from collected tithes and tolls. **New Testament Usage** - The idea of "help" or "aid" is the meaning of **eparkeō** in the New Testament. The only two examples occur in 1 Timothy 5. In verse 10 Paul instructed Timothy in the treatment of widows. For a widow to receive assistance from the church she must have "relieved (**eparkeō**) the afflicted." In verse 16 the verb occurs twice. If a Christian woman had an aged widow in her home, she was to "relieve" (**eparkeō**) her needs so the burden would not fall on the church. If the church were not burdened, it would be able to "relieve" (**eparkeō**) the widows who were destitute. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Distress** (suffered affliction) (2346) **thlibo** from **tribos** = wear away, rub, break in pieces; NIDNTT says **thlibo** is from the root **thlao** = squash, crush) (See study of related word **thlipsis**) literally means to press, squeeze, crush, squash, hem in and then to be narrow. **Thlibo** used literally pictures putting pressure upon or pressing in upon or pressing hard upon a person as when when Jesus was forced to get in the boat to keep from **crowding** Him (Mark 3:9). While some uses of **thlibo** refers to physical affliction, other uses are figurative and refer to emotional or spiritual affliction (e.g., "conflicts without, fears within" in 2Cor 7:5) And so in Paul's letters **thlibo** usually refers to the hardships he and his fellow workers experienced during their missionary journeys (2Cor 1:6; 4:8; 7:5; 1Th 3:4; 2Th 1:1-7). Such pressure can arise from circumstances or from the antagonism of people and the pain can be external (physical) or internal (mental).

**Marvin Vincent** explains that the root **thlibo** means "to press or squeeze. **Tribulation** is perhaps as accurate a rendering as is possible, being derived from **tribulum**, the threshing-roller of the Romans. In both the idea of pressure is dominant, though **thlipsis** does not convey the idea of separation (as of corn from husk) which is implied in **tribulatio**."

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From [Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament](#) - The Custom of Hospitality.

**1. Greeks and Romans.** While aliens may have no rights, hospitality provides some compensation. Based on a sense of mutual obligation, this has divine sanction. Aliens are guests of deity, and sanctuaries are the primary places of hospitality. (a) There is, of course, private hospitality among the Greeks and Romans. Motives for this are the divine requirement, sympathy, and hope of return. (b) Hospitality may also take a more public or official form. (c) With increasing commerce, the need arises for inns or hospices, some of which are associated with temples, synagogues, or places of pilgrimage.

**2. Israelites and Jews.** The biblical stories extol hospitality (cf. Job 31:32). This is a duty as a work of mercy. In later Judaism the tradition continues, but with some emphasis on the meritoriousness of the work and some restriction to members of the people.

**3. Christians.**

**a. The NT.**

**(a) Terms.** *philoxenía* is the term for hospitality, the *philó Xenos* is the host, and the guestroom is the *xenía* (Phlm. 22).

**(b) The Story and Message of Jesus.** Hospitality is important in the Gospels. Jesus depends on it (Mark 1:29ff.; 2:15ff., etc.). He regards it as important in the parables (Luke 10:34-35; 11:5ff., etc.). God's hospitality is an essential part of his message (cf. the divine generosity in Luke 14:16ff.; 12:37; 13:29, etc.).

**(c) Exhortation.** *agápē* implies *philoxenía*. The latter expresses *agápē* in Rom. 12:9ff. It is linked to *philadelphía* in Heb. 13:1-2. It

is to be shown by all (Matt. 25:35ff.), but especially bishops etc. (1 Tim. 3:2). It is also to be shown to all (Rom. 12:13-14), although in fact it will be shown most to fellow believers (Gal. 6:10; 1 Pet. 4:9).

**(d) Motives.** While agápē is the ultimate motive, there is also a charismatic motive — hospitality is a charism; an eschatological motive — Christians are strangers and pilgrims going through affliction; a metaphysical motive — the hope of entertaining angels unawares (Heb. 13:2); and above all a missionary motive — aiding itinerant evangelists (cf. Matt. 10:11ff.; Acts 10:6, 18, 32; Phlm. 22; 3 Jn. 8), which in the case of genuine messengers plays a big part in the spread of the gospel and may lead to the baptism of whole families (cf. Acts 16:15, 33; Rom. 16:4-5).

**b. The Early Church.** Hospitality becomes a prominent feature in the early church (cf. 1 Clem. 1.2), although Origen complains of the gap between preaching and practice (Homily 5.1 on Genesis). Hermas Mandates 8.10 includes hospitality in the list of Christian virtues. With missionary increase, organization is needed, and in the fourth century Antioch cares daily for 3,000 widows, sick, and strangers. Bishops and widows are especially expected to be hospitable both privately and officially. Bigger churches and sanctuaries later set up hospices, and where care focuses on the sick these develop into hospitals.

**4. Christ the Host.** While Christ comes to earth as a guest, he is also depicted as the heavenly Host. In the OT God is often presented as the Host (cf. Pss. 15:1; 23:5), and as in the judgment, so in the related eschatological banquet, Jesus is the Host alongside God or in his place (cf. Matt. 22:2ff.). At this feast, which is for sinners, Christ offers lavish entertainment (Matt. 6:41ff.), he himself serves his guests (Luke 12:37), washes their feet (Jn. 13:1ff.), and crowns his service by offering himself as their eternal nourishment (Mark 14:22ff.). (Borrow [Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament : abridged in one volume](#))

#### Related Resources:

- [Multiple articles on Hospitality](#)
- [What does the Bible say about hospitality? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What are some Bible verses about hospitality? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does it mean that we should entertain strangers because we might entertain angels \(Hebrews 13:2\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### QUESTION - [What does the Bible say about foot-washing?](#)

**ANSWER** - In Bible times, the dusty and dirty conditions of the region and the wearing of sandals necessitated foot-washing. Although the disciples most likely would have been happy to wash Jesus' feet, they could not conceive of washing each other's feet. This was because in the society of the time, foot-washing was reserved for the lowliest of menial servants. Peers did not wash one another's feet, except very rarely and as a mark of great love. Luke points out (22:24) that the disciples were arguing about who was the greatest among them, an attitude that precludes a willingness to stoop to wash feet. When Jesus moved to wash their feet (see also John 13:1-16), they were shocked. His actions serve also as symbolic of spiritual cleansing (vs. 6-9) and a model of Christian humility (vs. 12-17). By washing His disciples' feet, Jesus taught the lesson of selfless service that was supremely exemplified by His death on the cross.

The foot-washing was an example, a pattern. Many groups throughout church history have practiced literal foot-washing as a church ordinance. However, present culture in many lands does not call for washing dust from the feet of one's guests. Although the Lord's Supper was practiced, the early church apparently did not practice foot-washing as an ordinance in church gatherings.

This passage emphasizes inner humility, not a physical rite. A Christian widow's practice of "washing the feet of the saints" (1 Timothy 5:10) speaks not of her involvement in a church ordinance but of her humble, slave-like service to other believers. To refuse to follow the example of Jesus is to exalt oneself above Him and to live in pride. "No servant is greater than his master" (John 13:16). [GotQuestions.org](#)

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**WASHING OF FEET - INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA** (Note - This is only the first part of this lengthy article - for the full article [click here](#)).

The Old Testament references (Gen 18:4; 19:2; 24:32; 43:24; Jdg 19:21; 1 Sam 25:41; 2 Sam 11:8; Song 5:3; Ps 58:10) show that the washing of the feet was the first act on entering the tent or house after a journey. The Orientals wore only sandals, and this washing was refreshing as well as cleanly. In the case of ordinary people, the host furnished the water, and the guests washed their own feet, but in the richer houses, the washing was done by a slave. It was looked upon as the lowliest of all services (1 Sam 25:41). Jesus pointedly contrasts Simon's neglect of even giving Him water for His feet with the woman's washing His feet with tears and wiping them with her hair (Lk 7:44). On the last evening of His life, Jesus washed the disciples' feet (Jn 13:1-16). Their pride, heightened by the anticipations of place in the Messianic kingdom whose crisis they immediately expected, prevented their doing this service for each other. Possibly the same pride had expressed itself on this same evening in a controversy about places at

table. Jesus, conscious of His divine dignity and against Peter's protest, performed for them this lowliest service. His act of humility actually cleansed their hearts of selfish ambition, killed their pride, and taught them the lesson of love. See also The Expository Times, XI, 536 f.

Was it meant to be a perpetual ordinance? Jn 13:15, with its "as" and the present tense of the verb "do," gives it a priori probability. It has been so understood by the Mennonites and the Dunkards. Bernard of Clairvaux advocated making it a sacrament. The Pope, the Czar, and the Patriarch of Constantinople wash the feet of 12 poor men on Maundy Thursday; so did the English kings till James II, and it is still practiced in the royal palaces of Madrid, Munich and Vienna. But the objections to such an interpretation are overwhelming: (1) It is never referred to in the Synoptic Gospels, the Acts or the Epistle; 1 Tim 5:10 refers only to lowly service to the saints. (2) It was first in the 4th century (compare Ambrose and Augustine) that it became the custom to wash the feet of the baptized on Maundy Thursday. (3) Ritualizing such an act of love absolutely destroys its meaning. (4) No large body of Christians has ever received it as a sacrament or an ordinance. F. L. Anderson (for the full article [click here](#)).

## 1 Timothy 5:11 But **refuse** to put younger widows on the list, for when they feel sensual desires in disregard of Christ, they want to get married,

BGT 1 Timothy 5:11 νεωτερας δε χρας παραιτο · των γ ρ καταστρηνη σωσιν το Χριστο , γαμε ν θ λουσιν

KJV 1 Timothy 5:11 But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;

NET 1 Timothy 5:11 But do not accept younger widows on the list, because their passions may lead them away from Christ and they will desire to marry,

CSB 1 Timothy 5:11 But refuse to enroll younger widows, for when they are drawn away from Christ by desire, they want to marry

ESV 1 Timothy 5:11 But refuse to enroll younger widows, for when their passions draw them away from Christ, they desire to marry

NIV 1 Timothy 5:11 As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:11 The younger widows should not be on the list, because their physical desires will overpower their devotion to Christ and they will want to remarry.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:11 But refuse to put younger widows on the list; for when their sensual desires alienate them from Christ, they want to marry,

NJB 1 Timothy 5:11 Do not accept young widows because if their natural desires distract them from Christ, they want to marry again,

NAB 1 Timothy 5:11 But exclude younger widows, for when their sensuality estranges them from Christ, they want to marry

YLT 1 Timothy 5:11 and younger widows be refusing, for when they may revel against the Christ, they wish to marry,

GWN 1 Timothy 5:11 Don't include younger widows on your list. Whenever their natural desires become stronger than their devotion to Christ, they'll want to marry.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:11 But to the younger widows say No: for when their love is turned away from Christ, they have a desire to be married;

MIT 1 Timothy 5:11 Exclude from registration younger widows, for eventually their desire for pleasures of married life will alienate them from the commitment to Christ expected of certified widows,

- **younger:** 1Ti 5:9,14
- **when they feel sensual desires:** De 32:15 Isa 3:16 Ho 13:6 Jas 5:5 2Pe 2:18
- **they will:** 1Ti 5:14 4:3 1Co 7:39,40

**REFUSING TO ENROLL  
YOUNGER WIDOWS**

**But** (term of contrast) - Paul now changed direction from the old widows who were widows indeed to the younger widows and his concerns regarding their handling by the church.

**Refuse** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#) - same verb 1Ti 4:7+) **to put younger widows on the list** - **MIT** = "Exclude from registration" **NIV** = "As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list." "Beg off from." This group of young widows is to continually be declined the church's financial help. Note Paul is not saying reject the younger widows from church membership!

Note that v11 should be read in context of v12 which ends with her setting aside her previous pledge. Paul will explain why the younger widows might be tempted to set aside their former pledge or vow they had made to the church.

**For** ([gar](#)) - Term of explanation. What Paul is explaining is straightforward in this passage.

Note that Paul is not condemning remarriage of younger widows as we see in 1Ti 5:14 (cf 1Co 7:39b).

**John Phillips** - Paul was well acquainted with life. Doubtless, he had known many widows, young and old. He had observed that, as soon as their grief subsided, the young widows often turned their attention toward finding another husband. There was, of course, nothing wrong with a widow remarrying. In the Old Testament, remarriage was the usual way of taking care of a childless widow. But the desire of young widows to remarry mitigated against their being put on the church payroll because commitment to the Lord's work was a requirement. (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**When they feel sensual desires in disregard** ([katastreniaō](#)) **of Christ they want** ([thelo](#) - present tense - continually desire) **to get married** ([gameō](#) - present tense) - **MIT** = "for eventually their desire for pleasures of married life will alienate them from the commitment to Christ expected of certified widows." **GWN** = "Whenever their natural desires become stronger than their devotion to Christ, they'll want to marry." **NJB** = "if their natural desires distract them from Christ." **NET** = "their passions may lead them away from Christ." **Feel sensual desires** means these young widows might begin to feel the impulse of sexual desires and in context begin to feel sensuous impulses that ultimately alienate them from Christ. How might they be alienated? The most reasonable answer is that their sensual desires tempt them or impel them to marry an unbeliever. The verb want expresses the young widow's desire influenced by her emotions. In this context she desires to remarry, based on her sexual impulses rather than from submission to the Lord.

In extra-biblical literature, [katastreniaō](#) was used to describe an ox trying to escape from its yoke. This makes for an apt metaphor of a young widow who like a young ox would see to free herself from the yoke, in context her previous pledge (v12).

**John Phillips** - Trench rendered the word as "petulance"-petulance arising from fullness, like the wicked behavior of Jeshurun who "waxed fat, and kicked" (Deut. 32:15). Paul was using strong language indeed. The apostle could envision a young widow grieving over her loss and anxious about her future. Who would support her? She considers making a vow to live solely for Christ. Although she is sure that her faith and love will never wane, she might well be in danger of making promises to the Lord that she will not be able to keep. She makes her vow. Then an attractive man comes along. She becomes interested in him and begins to rebel against the restraints imposed upon her by her vow. More and more she resents the life of sacrifice and supplication that she has assumed. One likelihood is that she will remarry. Another is that she might plunge into the round of the worldly pleasure she renounced when her heart was still sore. The young woman exposes herself to "damnation" (Better condemnation) by casting off her first faith. Paul's advice was that the church keep such a widow off the payroll. (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Adam Clarke** on **feel sensual desires** (KJV = wax wanton) - The word is supposed to be derived from to remove and the rein; and is a metaphor taken from a pampered horse, from whose mouth the rein has been removed, so that there is nothing to check or confine him. The metaphor is plain enough, and the application easy."

**William MacDonald** - This is a difficult verse, but the meaning seems to be as follows: In general, it would be a mistake to make **younger widows** a charge of the local church. Being young, they would probably **desire to marry** again. This would not be wrong in itself, but the desire might become so strong at times that one of these young widows might even marry an unbeliever. The apostle speaks of this as to **grow wanton against Christ**. When it comes to a choice between marrying a pagan or remaining unmarried out of love to Christ and obedience to His word, the young widow is apt to **marry**. This would, of course, bring reproach on the local church which supported her. (Borrow [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

[The Believer's Study Bible](#) - Paul is concerned primarily with the spiritual welfare of the younger widows. Having lost her husband, the young widow loses her divinely assigned protection. She may be drawn into the glamorous life of the world (v. 6); or, if she decides to remarry, she may disregard Christ and her faith and enter into a pagan marriage (v. 12) with no purpose of ministry (v. 13). This is what the apostle intends in the expression "wax wanton against Christ." Paul does not object to marriage for the younger widows (v. 14), but he does remind the women of the importance of **marrying in Christ** and **not merely satisfying unrestrained**

**Feel sensual desires in disregard** (2691) (katastreniao from **kata** = against, but also serves to intensify following verb + **streniao** = to live a profligate, luxurious life in Rev 18:3,7,9+ = describes describe the luxurious, wanton lifestyle of the Antichrist's Babylon) a **Hapax legomenon** (only 1Ti 5:11 and Ignatius) which means to become wanton against. Behind the word is the idea of running riot. It means to revel or riot against someone, show insolence, meaning these young women in 1Ti 5:11 lived a life of luxury and gaiety to the neglect of Christ and the detriment of His cause. It means they felt the impulse of sexual desire and in context felt sensuous impulses that alienated from Christ. In extra-biblical literature, it is used to describe an ox trying to escape from its yoke.

TDNT adds "This compound of **strēniāō**, "to burn," "to be covetous" (cf. Rev. 18:7, 9), noun **strēnos** ("arrogance"; cf. 2Ki. 19:28; Rev. 18:3), occurs in the NT only in 1Ti 5:11, where the idea is that younger widows may "grow wanton" against Christ and are not, therefore, to be put on the official list. The concept is figurative, as we see from 1Ti 5:14. No moral condemnation of remarriage is involved, nor is asceticism commended. The point is simply that a conflict may arise between ministry for Christ and the desire to remarry. (Borrow [Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament : abridged in one volume](#))

**Married** (1060) **gameo** means to take another person as spouse, marry; enter matrimony of both men and women. **Friberg** - marry (Mt 5.32); (1) absolutely enter into marriage, marry ( Mt 19.10); (2) of both sexes marry (1Ti 4.3); (3) of a woman marry (Mk 10.12); (4) passive get married, be married ( Mk 10.12; 1Co 7.39) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

### 1 Timothy 5:12 thus incurring condemnation, because they have set aside their previous pledge.

BGT 1 Timothy 5:12 χουσαι κρ μα τι τ ν πρ την π σιν θ τησαν·

KJV 1 Timothy 5:12 Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.

NET 1 Timothy 5:12 and so incur judgment for breaking their former pledge.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:12 and will therefore receive condemnation because they have renounced their original pledge.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:12 and so incur condemnation for having abandoned their former faith.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:12 Thus they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:12 Then they would be guilty of breaking their previous pledge.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:12 and so they incur condemnation for having violated their first pledge.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:12 and then people condemn them for being unfaithful to their original promise.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:12 and will incur condemnation for breaking their first pledge.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:12 having judgment, because the first faith they did cast away,

GWN 1 Timothy 5:12 They condemn themselves by rejecting the Christian faith, the faith they first accepted.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:12 And they are judged because they have been false to their first faith;

MIT 1 Timothy 5:12 incurring condemnation by annulling their first faith as widows.

- **thus incurring condemnation:** 1Co 11:34 Jas 3:1 1Pe 4:17 \*Gr:
- their: Ga 1:6 Rev 2:4,5

**Thus incurring** (present tense - continually) **condemnation** ([krima](#)) - Is Paul discouraging re-marriage for younger women? Not at all, as Paul clearly states in 1Ti 5:14.

**William MacDonald - Condemnation** ("damnation," KJV) here does not mean eternal perdition, but simply that she has this judgment or **condemnation** for having **cast off** her **first faith**. At one time she professed the greatest loyalty and devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ, but now when the opportunity comes along to marry one who does not love Christ, she forgets her initial vows or pledges to Christ and goes off with the unbeliever, unfaithful to the Heavenly Bridegroom. Paul is not criticizing young widows for marrying. As a matter of fact he urges them to marry (v. 14). What he finds fault with is their spiritual decline, their throwing divine principles to the wind in order to get a man. (Borrow [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))



**Because** (term of explanation) - What is Paul explaining?

**They have set aside** ([atheteo](#) - annulled, regarded as void) **their previous** ([protos](#)) **pledge** ([pistis](#))(KJV = "first faith") - The word for **set aside** means "to render null and void, to reject, to break faith, to disappoint." In this context the idea of **pledge** ([pistis](#)) is a decision to be faithful and loyal to the Christian religion by making a promise, pledge, commitment. What was the previous pledge of these young widows? I am not sure, but below are some comments from several sources. The meaning seems to be that the widows who forsook their sacred obligation in order to marry would be deserving of censure (condemnation). Why? For such action would amount to casting aside their "first faith" (KJV), i.e., their pledge of service or loyalty.

**Warren Wiersbe** - Paul seems to imply (1Ti 5:12) that each of the widows enrolled pledged herself to remain a widow and serve the Lord in the church. This pledge must not be interpreted as a "vow of celibacy," nor should we look on this group of ministering widows as a "special monastic order." There seemed to be an agreement between the widows and the church that they would remain widows and serve the Lord.

**A. Duane Litfin** on **set aside...pledge** - The pledge Paul referred to was probably a more or less formal commitment, taken on joining the list of widows, wherein the woman vowed to serve Christ entirely without thought of remarriage. In this way she could devote herself without distraction to the Lord (cf. 1 Cor. 7:34-35). Remarriage would involve breaking this vow and a **broken vow would incur judgment** (cf. Nu 30:2; Dt. 23:21; Ecc. 5:4-5). (See [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**John Phillips** - Evidently, Paul felt strongly about making vows to God. After all, complete surrender to Christ and total commitment to His cause, which tolerates no rivals and no refusals, is a serious matter. Such a commitment involves not only the emotions but also the intellect and the will, along with a watchful conscience. Paul envisioned that all sorts of complications could arise if the church tried to capitalize on the emotional susceptibility and financial needs of young widows. (**ED**: And he proceeds to describe them in the next verse)...This verse in no way implies that the young widow who breaks her vows will lose her salvation. What is implied is that if she renounces her promises to the Lord to remarry, she will carry over into her new marriage a haunting sense of guilt and self-reproach, and she will expose herself to the condemnatory comments of critics. This can all be avoided. Church elders should follow Paul's instructions and not make financial commitments to young widows and not solicit lifelong commitments from them. (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**John MacArthur** - Paul's concern is that a young widow, out of sorrow for the loss of her husband and gratitude to the church for its support, will make a vow she cannot keep. She will devote herself to remain single and to serve the Lord. According to Numbers 30:9, she will be obligated to keep that vow. Unlike the older women, however, she might eventually begin to **feel sensual desires**. She would then find it difficult to keep the vow she made during the emotional trauma of the loss of her husband. (See [1 Timothy Commentary](#))

**The MacArthur Study Bible** ([borrow](#)) - This refers to a specific covenant young widows made when asking to be included on the widows' list. Likely, they promised to devote the rest of their lives in service to the church and the Lord. Though well-meaning at the time of their need and bereavement, they were surely to desire marriage again (see 1Ti 5:11), and thus renege on their original pledge.

**Lowell Johnson** - Paul also told Timothy that the church should not support young widows. Why? In Verse 12 Paul says not to put young widows on the church's list for support. The phrase "cast off their first faith" means a "pledge." It refers to a special covenant young widows made when asking to be put on the widow's list. Likely, they promised to devote the rest of their lives in service to the church and the Lord. Though well-meaning at the time of their need and bereavement, they were surely to desire marriage again and thus renege on their original pledge. ([How To Treat Folks in the Congregation](#))

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**Condemnation** (Judgment) ([2917](#)) **krima** from [krino](#) = to judge, the suffix **-ma** indicating the result of the judging, ie, that is, the result of making a decision) describes a judicial sentence from a magistrate (his pronouncement). It describes one deciding a question of legal right or wrong, and thus determining the innocence or guilt of the accused and assigning appropriate punishment. The closely related word [krisis](#) refers to the **process** or **act** of judging (instead of the **result** of the judging). **Vine** adds that "**Krima** is usually the decision which results from an investigation, just as **krisis** is the process of investigation; sometimes the two are interchanged, as in 1Pe 4:17, **krima**, where the process of judgment rather than the resulting decision seems to be intended. Hence **krima** is used of the estimate one man forms of another, Mt 7:2+, and of the decision of human tribunals, Lk 23:40, of the decisions of God, in general, Ro 11:33, and in particular concerning the devil, 1 Timothy 3:6, and man, Mark 12:40 and Gal 5:10."

**Krima** - 28x/28v - **condemnation(8), judgment(15), judgments(1), lawsuits(1), sentence(1), sentence of condemnation(1), way(1)**. Matt. 7:2; Matt. 23:14; Mk. 12:40; Lk. 20:47; Lk. 23:40; Lk. 24:20; Jn. 9:39; Acts 24:25; Rom. 2:2; Rom. 2:3; Rom. 3:8; Rom. 5:16; Rom. 11:33; Rom. 13:2; 1 Co. 6:7; 1 Co. 11:29; 1 Co. 11:34; Gal. 5:10; 1 Tim. 3:6; 1 Tim. 5:12; Heb. 6:2; Jas. 3:1; 1 Pet. 4:17; 2 Pet. 2:3; Jude 1:4; Rev. 17:1; Rev. 18:20;



**Set aside** (rejected)(114) **atheteo** from **áthetos** = not placed from **a** = without + **thetós** = placed) means to do away with what has been laid down, to set aside and thus to regard as nothing, to declare invalid, to not recognize, to annul (make ineffective, inoperative or nonexistent), to spurn or to despise. In the papyri **atheteo** was used of loans which were repaid and cancelled and for the rejection of certain officials who were described as inefficient and incapable of doing their duty. **Atheteo** was also used of grain rejected by the inspector as unfit for food. **Thayer** writes that **atheteo** means "to act toward anything as though it were annulled; hence, to deprive a law of force by opinions or acts opposed to it, to transgress... to thwart the efficacy of anything, nullify, make void, frustrate...to render prudent plans of no effect (1Cor 1:19)...to reject, refuse, slight (eg, "the grace of God" Gal 2:21) In Classic Greek **atheteo** is used to describe setting aside of a treaty or promise.

**Atheteo** - 12v - nullify(1), refuse(1), reject(1), rejected(1), rejects(6), rejecting(1), set aside(3), sets...aside(1), setting aside(1). Mk. 6:26; Mk. 7:9; Lk. 7:30; Lk. 10:16; Jn. 12:48; 1 Co. 1:19; Gal. 2:21; Gal. 3:15; 1 Thess. 4:8; 1 Tim. 5:12; Heb. 10:28; Jude 1:8

**Previous** (4413)(**protos**) means (1) first in time or place 1a) in any succession of things or persons 2) first in rank 2a) influence, honour 2b) chief 2c) principal 3) first, at the first

**Pledge** (4102) **pistis** is synonymous with trust or belief and is the conviction of the truth of anything, but in Scripture usually speaks of belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and joined with it. Note that this discussion of **pistis** is only an overview and not a detailed treatise of this vitally important subject.

**1 Timothy 5:13 At the same time they also learn to be idle, as they go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention.**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:13 μα δ κα ργα μανθ νουσιν περιερχ μεναι τ ς ο κ ας, ο μ von δ ργα λλ κα φλ αροι κα περ εργοι, λαλο σαι τ μ δ onτα.

KJV 1 Timothy 5:13 And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.

NET 1 Timothy 5:13 And besides that, going around from house to house they learn to be lazy, and they are not only lazy, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things they should not.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:13 At the same time, they also learn to be idle, going from house to house; they are not only idle, but are also gossips and busybodies, saying things they shouldn't say.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:13 Besides that, they learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:13 Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they ought not to.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:13 And if they are on the list, they will learn to be lazy and will spend their time gossiping from house to house, meddling in other people's business and talking about things they shouldn't.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:13 Besides that, they learn to be idle, gadding about from house to house; and they are not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not say.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:13 Besides, they learn how to be idle and go round from house to house; and then, not merely idle, they learn to be gossips and meddlers in other people's affairs and to say what should remain unsaid.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:13 And furthermore, they learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers but gossips and busybodies as well, talking about things that ought not to be mentioned.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:13 and at the same time also, they learn to be idle, going about the houses; and not only idle, but also tattlers and busybodies, speaking the things they ought not;

GWN 1 Timothy 5:13 At the same time, they learn to go around from house to house since they have nothing else to do. Not only this, but they also gossip and get involved in other people's business, saying things they shouldn't say.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:13 And they get into the way of doing no work, going about from house to house; and not

only doing no work, but talking foolishly, being over-interested in the business of others, saying things which they have no right to say.

MIT 1 Timothy 5:13 Simultaneously, while they are not working, they will learn to run around the neighborhood, not just as idle women, but also as gossips and busybodies, saying things they should not.

- **idle:** Pr 31:27 2Th 3:6-11
- **gossips:** Lev 19:16 Pr 20:19 Lu 10:7 Ac 20:20
- **busybodies:** 2Th 3:11 1Pe 4:15
- **talking about things:** Ac 20:30 Titus 1:11 Jas 3:10

#### Related Passages:

Proverbs 11:13 He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets, But he who is trustworthy conceals a matter.

Proverbs 26:20 For lack of wood the fire goes out, And where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down.

Proverbs 16:28 A perverse man spreads strife, And a slanderer separates intimate friends.

Proverbs 20:19 He who goes about as a slanderer reveals secrets, Therefore do not associate with a gossip.

## IDLENESS IS LEARNED & DAMAGING

Keep in mind Paul is giving reasons the younger widows should not be supported financially by the church.

**At the same time they also learn** ([manthano](#) in present tense) **to be idle** ([argos](#)), **as they go around from house to house** - **Learn** is manthano with a substitutive denoting a profession or occupation was an idiomatic construction signifying qualification as such and such (e.g., a doctor, wrestler, etc.). Their being **idle** was not accidental but learned! **Idle** ([argos](#)) is the negative form of the word translated "work!"

**Phillips** - Once the necessity for work is removed, all kinds of mischief can follow. God never intended people to be idle. Even when perfect conditions prevailed in Eden, God gave Adam work to do (Gen. 2:15). After the Fall, God increased that to hard work (Ge 3:17-19). Paul was a firm believer in hard work. As he had already reminded the Ephesian elders, he was always ready to go back to tent making to support himself and his immediate colleagues in evangelism (Acts 20:34). He could see no point in relieving young, able-bodied widows of the necessity of working to support themselves. The saying "The devil always finds work for idle hands to do" contains much truth....Another danger was that idle young widows would go "wandering about from house to house." With no financial worries, they might fall into bad habits, the mildest of which would be dropping in on their neighbors and friends to waste time. It is used in Acts 19:13 to describe certain "vagabond" Jews who tried to imitate Paul's miracles by casting out demons-with disastrous results to themselves. In Acts 28:13, the word is translated "fetched a compass," but it can also be rendered "having tacked about." The context is Luke's description of a journey on a sailing ship. As we read the passage, we can picture the ship's turning this way and that to take advantage of the wind. The older widows who were supported by the church were expected to do house-to-house visitation to minister to people materially and spiritually. The younger widows, however, might meet all kinds of temptation in their going in and out of the various houses. (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**A T Robertson** on **from house to house** - Literally "the houses," "wandering around the houses." Vivid picture of idle tattlers and gossipers.

**Barclay** - It is laid down that women who serve the Church must not be gadabouts, always popping into and out of the houses of neighbours ([1 Timothy 5 Commentary](#))

**And not merely idle** ([argos](#)), **but** (term of contrast) **also gossips** ([phluaros](#) - silly talkers) **and busybodies** ([periergos](#)), **talking** (present tense - continually) **about things not proper** ([dei](#) - necessary) **to mention** - Paul mentions two rotten fruits associated with idleness. They were gossips, loose talkers; i.e., babbling out whatever might come into their mind. **Gossips** is from a root word which means to throw up bubbles, like blowing soap bubbles (cf gossip)! **Busybodies** are those who scurried about fussing over and meddling in other peoples' affairs being overwrought with unnecessary care. They are busy about trifles to the neglect of important matters. **Busybodies** describes a meddling habit, sticking their nose in other people's business, a perverted activity that will not content itself with minding its own business, but must busy itself with the business of others.

[J Vernon McGee](#) - In other words, they carry garbage from one place to another, and the garbage is gossip.

**John Phillips** - Tattlers are garrulous people; they are gossipy and have excessively busy tongues....Paul was afraid of the damage they (busybodies) could do as they went in and out of houses. Gathering bits and pieces of gossip and retailing their news and views, they could undermine the fellowship and destroy the local church. "No," cried Paul in effect, "ten thousand times no! Never let a widow be so well supported by the church that she has nothing better to do with her time than that." (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Lowell Johnson** - If the church supported younger widows, because of their lack of maturity, they would learn to be idle (lazy and counterproductive), gossips and busybodies. ([How To Treat Folks in the Congregation](#))

**MacArthur** - It takes serious-minded, mature, godly women to minister in homes to women and families. The secrets and problems of those families would be safe with them. For those reasons, as well as the danger that they will abandon their commitments to Christ, Paul forbids younger women to be put on the list. (See [1 Timothy Commentary](#))

**Donald Guthrie** - The additional words *saying things they ought not to* may indicate a publicizing of private matter, a betrayal of confidence. It is not particularly evident, at first sight, why the younger widows would be more susceptible to this danger than the older, but the apostle clearly thinks that women of maturer years would be the less liable to gossip. **Donald Guthrie** - The instructions which Timothy is to give must refer to the responsibility of children to support their forbears (verse 4), and the responsibility of widows to fulfil the requirements mentioned in 1Ti 5:5. The verb used is strong, involving 'command'. The command was necessary to ensure that no-one may be open to blame (anepilēptos, 'irreproachable', cf. 1Ti 3:2). (Borrow [The Pastoral Epistles : An Introduction and Commentary](#))

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**Learn** (3129) **manthano** related to the noun **mathetes** = disciple, literally a learner! The shut mind is the end of discipleship!) has the basic meaning of directing one's mind to something and producing an external effect. **Manthano** refers to teaching, learning, instructing, and discipling. **Manthano** to genuinely understand and accept a teaching, to accept it as true and to apply it in one's life. It was sometimes used of acquiring a life-long habit. **Zuck** writes that according to **manthano** "learning is a matter of a pupil acquiring knowledge of content through a teacher to the extent that such knowledge is experienced in the life." (Bibliotheca Sacra). **manthano** conveys "the idea of accepting something as true and applying it to one's life."

**Idle** (barren) (692) **argos** from **a** = without + **érgon** = work) literally means without work, without labor, doing nothing, as one not working the ground and so living without labor. As employed in the New Testament, **argos** always describes something inoperative or unserviceable. **Argos** describes that which is not working, ineffective, barren, yielding no return or worthless, not accomplishing anything. **Argos** was used to describe money that was yielding no interest or of a field lying fallow. **Argos** conveys several ideas depending on the context - (1) unemployed - without anything to do (Mt 20:3,6, 1Ti 5:13); (2) being unwilling to work, wanting nothing to do, shunning the labor which one ought to perform - idle, neglectful or lazy (as used in Titus 1:12) and (3) unproductive - useless, unprofitable or worthless (Jas 2:20, 2Pe 1:8-note; Mt 12:36).

**Gossips** (5397) (**phluaros** from **phluo** = to babble, to boil, bubble, as with heat) is used only here ([hapax legomenon](#)) and means babbling, tattler, an idle or trifling talker, one who boils over with impertinent talk, as indulging in empty and foolish talk babbling, talking on and on, gossiping. The adjective **phluaros**, which can mean a person "given to gossip" or the "gossip" itself (when used substantively), occurs once in the New Testament. Paul used the word in its plural form, **phluaroi**, to describe the indiscreet conversation and conduct of young widows who seek position in the social and religious ministry of the church but then lose their Christian motivation. The result is they degenerate to gossipy busybodies in the community (1 Timothy 5:13).

**Busybodies** (4021) **periergos** from **peri** = beyond + **ergon** = work, deed) literally "a work about." Overcareful, taking needless trouble, busybodies Used of people who scurry about fussing over, and meddling in, other peoples' affairs being overwrought with unnecessary care." **Periergos**, rendered "curious arts" in Luke's account of the burning of the books of magic in Ephesus (Acts 19:19), suggests going beyond that which is legitimate. The kindred verb **periergazomai** means "to be busy about useless matters" and suggests the idea of wasting labor. It occurs in 2 Thessalonians 3:11, where Paul denounced slackers: "We hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies." **Friberg** says literally "overcareful, overdoing." **Vincent** says "overwrought, elaborate." In classic Greek had a negative meaning of "taking needless trouble" (description of those considered meddlesome and used with this sense in 1 Ti 5:13 to describe women who were "busybodies") In the only other New Testament use in Acts 19:19, **periergos** refers to practicing magic, the idea being that people who do that are also guilty of prying into things that do not concern them.

**1 Timothy 5:14 Therefore, I want younger [widows] to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach;**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:14 Βολομαι ο νεωτρας γαμεν, τεκνογονεν, ο κοδεσποτεν, μηδεμ αν φορμν διδναι τ ντικειμν λιοδoras χριν·

KJV 1 Timothy 5:14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

NET 1 Timothy 5:14 So I want younger women to marry, raise children, and manage a household, in order to give the adversary no opportunity to vilify us.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:14 Therefore, I want younger women to marry, have children, manage their households, and give the adversary no opportunity to accuse us.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:14 So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:14 So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:14 So I advise these younger widows to marry again, have children, and take care of their own homes. Then the enemy will not be able to say anything against them.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:14 So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, and manage their households, so as to give the adversary no occasion to revile us.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:14 I think it is best for young widows to marry again and have children and a household to look after, and not give the enemy any chance to raise a scandal about them;

NAB 1 Timothy 5:14 So I would like younger widows to marry, have children, and manage a home, so as to give the adversary no pretext for maligning us.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:14 I wish, therefore, younger ones to marry, to bear children, to be mistress of the house, to give no occasion to the opposer to reviling;

GWN 1 Timothy 5:14 So I want younger widows to marry, have children, manage their homes, and not give the enemy any chance to ridicule them.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:14 So it is my desire that the younger widows may be married and have children, controlling their families, and giving the Evil One no chance to say anything against them,

MIT 1 Timothy 5:14 Therefore, I want the younger widows to marry, to bear children, to be homemakers, providing no opportunity whatever to the adversary to make a point of accusation.

- **I want:** 1Ti 2:8
- **the younger:** 1Ti 5:11 4:3 1Co 7:8,9 Heb 13:4
- **guide:** Ge 18:6,9 Pr 14:1 31:27-29 Titus 2:5 \*Gr:
- **give:** 1Ti 6:1 2Sa 12:14 Da 6:4 Ro 14:13 2Co 11:12 Titus 2:5,8 1Pe 4:14,15
- **reproach,** Lu 23:35-41

#### Related Passages:

Romans 7:3 So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man.

1 Corinthians 7:15 Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us to peace.

1 Corinthians 7:39 A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

## PAUL'S ADVICE TO YOUNG WIDOWS

**Therefore** - Term of conclusion. What is Paul concluding regarding the younger widows (that would keep them from the sins of 1Ti 5:12)?

**I want** ([boulomai](#) - present tense) **younger widows to (1) get married** ([gameo](#)), **(2) bear children** (present tense - continually), **(3) keep house** ((oikodespoteo - present tense - continually) - Paul says **I want** which speaks of his desire not from emotion but from reason. A young widow has already tasted married life and might not be constituted for celibacy, so it would be best for her to find a new husband. Of course it is implicit that she marry "in the Lord." **Keep house** (oikodespoteo) is more literally to rule over the house and thus manage the house as master. **Bear children** implies their training as well.

**Warren Wiersbe** on **bear children** - "Be fruitful and multiply" was God's mandate to our first parents (Gen. 1:28), so the normal result of marriage is a family. Those today who refuse to have children because of the "awfulness of the times" should check out how difficult the times were in Paul's day! If *Christians* do not have children and raise them to live for God, who will? **Keep house**) Of course, marriage is a partnership; but each partner has a special sphere of responsibility. Few men can do in a home what a woman can do. Whenever my wife was ill, or caring for our babies, and I had to manage some of the affairs of the home, I discovered quickly that I was out of my sphere of ministry!

**John Phillips** - Paul went on to suggest that she become a new parent, that she "bear children." That is the natural, logical result of marriage. There is a great need for Christian mothers. And who can tell what kind of future church leaders might be born to remarried widows? For example, Obed was the son of a second marriage (Ruth's marriage to Boaz), and he turned out to be the grandfather of David! The home is the woman's domain. To rule a home well is a full-time job, especially when children are involved. The godly wife and mother, reigning as a queen over her own little world, holds the destiny of nations in her hands. How true is the claim that the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world! Blessed be Jochebed, who rocked the cradle of the infant Moses! Blessed be Jesse's wife, who rocked the cradle of David! Blessed be Mary, who rocked the cradle of Jesus! (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**And (4) give the enemy** ([antikeimai](#) - present tense - continually) **no occasion** ([aphorme](#)) **for reproach** ([loidoria](#) - vilify = NET; slander = ESV) - . An **occasion** ([aphorme](#) - opportunity) gives us the picture of a "beach head" from which to launch an attack or carry out military operations (in this context **reproach**)! Young widows who failed to heed Paul's instructions ran the real risk of establishing a base of operations for spiritual warfare, giving Satan's demonic forces a launching pad from which to mount an offensive against the faith. The **reproach** will be on the Gospel and the cause of Christ, the opponent's argument being that the Gospel makes no difference in the lives of these younger widows.

**Hiebert** on **the enemy** (adversary) - The "adversary" may here mean any human opponent of the Gospel who would be anxious to use any scandal as a means of discrediting the Gospel. But with the article the reference may well be to the personal Devil using the human adversary as his agent. (Borrow [First Timothy](#))

**Phillips** adds that "The enemies of the gospel were already reviling Christians. Nero had accused them of starting the fire that burned Rome. They were also being accused of practicing the most terrible abominations. Paul feared that young widows, freed from the obligation to earn a living, might unwittingly by thoughtless behavior do what David had done: he gave "occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme" (2Sa 12:14+). (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Wiersbe** - The word occasion is a military term that means "a base of operations." A Christian wife who is not doing her job at home gives Satan a beachhead for his operations, and the results are tragic. While there are times when a Christian wife and mother may have to work outside the home, it must not destroy her ministry in the home. The wife who works simply to get luxuries may discover too late that she has lost some necessities. It may be all right to have what money can buy if you do not lose what money cannot buy. How Christian wives and mothers manage their homes can be a testimony to those outside the church. Just as a pastor is to have a good reputation with outsiders (1 Tim. 3:7), and the servants are not to bring reproach on God's Word (1 Tim. 6:1), so the wives are to have a good witness. Women may not be able to be elders of the church, but they can minister for the Lord right in their own homes. (See Titus 2:4-5 for an additional emphasis on this vital ministry.)

**Cleon Rogers** - Jewish formal law and accepted Jewish custom undoubtedly agreed that a widow's remarriage was both permissible and desirable and she was only required to wait long enough for it to be ascertained that she was not already pregnant at the time of the second marriage. There were in Judaism, however, some groups which considered a widow's abstinence from remarriage to be a pious and proper act. (Borrow [The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament](#) - always worth checking for little gems)

**Bob Utley** proposes that "These widows who had become sexually active have opened a door for both satanic attack and criticism from the whole community (believing and unbelieving)). The term "occasion" is a military term for a "beachhead" or "base of operations" (cf. Ro 7:8,11+ [ED = "sin, taking opportunity" = establishing a beachhead!]). The physical body is not evil, but it is the battleground of temptation. Human sexuality is not the problem. It is fallen humans taking God-given good things beyond God-given bounds.

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**Enemy** (opponent adversary) (480) **antikeimai** from **antí** = against, opposite + **keimai** = to be placed, to lie or be laid down) means literally to line up against or to lie opposite to, both ideas giving us a vivid picture of the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit in Gal 5:17. The idea is be hostile to, be in opposition to. **Antikeimai** means to be set over against, to be opposed or be in opposition and as noted below is often used as a "verbal noun" variously translated as opponent, enemy or adversary. Note that in the LXX (Zechariah 3:1), this verb is used to describe the opposition of the Adversary, Satan, and in the NT, is used to describe the opposition of Satan's man of lawlessness, the Antichrist (2 Thes 2:4)

**Reproach** (3059) (**loidoria** from **loidoreo** = means to subject one to verbal abuse, and thus to reproach, vilify, speak in a highly insulting manner, insult strongly) refers to speech that is highly insulting and thus is verbal abuse intended to injure someone's reputation - reviling, railing slander, insult. Used only in 1Ti 5:14 and 1Pe 3:9. In classic Greek this word group is not used in a religious sense. It was rather in the political and social life of the Greeks that importance came to be attached to slander, insult and disparagement of an opponent, e.g. as a weapon of the orator in a political dispute, or of the Homeric heroes. Philo has it for mockery or invective. If for the Greek it was one of the arts of life to know how to insult others or bear insults against oneself, for the believer the suffering of slander and insults is evidence of the cross the Christian disciple is called to bear (1Pe 2:23)

**Keep house** (3616) (**oikodespoteo** from **oikos** = house + **despotes** = lord, master) means to manage one's household, be master or mistress of a household. Note that the wife is here put as ruler of the household, proper recognition of her influence, "new and improved position" (Liddon) .

**TDNT - oikodespótēs, oikodespotéō.** These are not classical words, **but occur in astrology and everyday life.** (BDAG- esp. astrological technical term to 'rule' of the planet that influences human life) In the NT **oikodespótēs** occurs 12 times (especially in Matthew, e.g., Mt 10:25; 13:27, 52, etc.; cf. Luke 13:25; Mark 14:14). The meaning is "master of the house" (sometimes with the emphatic addition *ánthrōpos*, Matt. 13:27 etc.). The parables illustrate God's action by that of the householder. The only instance of the verb is in 1 Tim. 5:14: younger widows are to marry and "rule their households," an example of the family virtues that are stressed in the Pastorals.

**Occasion** (874) **aphorme** from **apó** = from + **horme** = has various senses denoting the start of a rapid movement, a rushing on, a setting into rapid motion) means to make a start from a place. It describes a starting point, an occasion, an opportunity or a circumstance from which another action becomes possible. **Aphorme** is a place from which a movement or an attack can be made. **Aphorme** describes a starting point or base of operations for an expedition. It was frequently used to denote a "base of operations" in war.

**Vincent** has an example of the use of **aphorme** in secular Greek writing "The Lacedaemonians agreed that Peloponnesus would be *aphormen hikanen* or a good base of operations (Thucydides, i., 90). Thus (aphorme means), the origin, cause, occasion, or pretext of a thing; the means with which one begins. Generally, resources, as means of war, capital in business. Here the law is represented as furnishing sin with the material or ground of assault, "the fulcrum for the energy of the evil principle." Sin took the law as a base of operations.

**Aphorme** - 7x/6v - occasion(2), opportunity(5). Ro 7:8; Ro 7:11; 2Co 5:12; 2Co 11:12; Gal. 5:13; 1 Tim. 5:14

### 1 Timothy 5:15 for some have already turned aside to follow Satan.

BGT 1 Timothy 5:15 δὴ γὰρ τινες ἔστρηνσαν πρὸς τὸ σατανά .

KJV 1 Timothy 5:15 For some are already turned aside after Satan.

NET 1 Timothy 5:15 For some have already wandered away to follow Satan.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:15 For some have already turned away to follow Satan.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:15 For some have already strayed after Satan.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:15 Some have in fact already turned away to follow Satan.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:15 For I am afraid that some of them have already gone astray and now follow Satan.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:15 For some have already turned away to follow Satan.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:15 there are already some who have turned aside to follow Satan.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:15 For some have already turned away to follow Satan.



YLT 1 Timothy 5:15 for already certain did turn aside after the Adversary.

GWN 1 Timothy 5:15 Some of them have already turned away to follow Satan.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:15 For even now some are turned away to Satan.

MIT 1 Timothy 5:15 For already certain ones have veered out of line to follow the opponent.

RSV 1 Timothy 5:15 For some have already strayed after Satan.

NKJ 1 Timothy 5:15 For some have already turned aside after Satan.

- Php 3:18,19 2Ti 1:15 2:18 4:10 2Pe 2:2,20-22 3:16 1Jn 2:19 Jude 1:4,5 Rev 12:9

## FOLLOWERS OF SATAN

**For** - Term of explanation. This explains why Paul gave the previous instructions to marry and why they are all the more imperative. "It is necessary that I emphasize this, namely, that the adversary must not receive any occasion for slandering, for I know of concrete cases where this has already taken place." (Hendriksen)

**Some have already turned aside** ([ektrepo](#)) **to follow** ([opiso](#)) **Satan** ([satanas](#)) - **Some** is plural and refers to the young widows while **already** identifies this as a present problem. They had **already** broken their pledge! **Turned aside** is aorist tense (past completed action) [indicative mood](#) (mood of reality = this really happened). **Some** of the younger widows have gone astray, off the true path of piety to the bypath of following after Satan! The exact meaning what **turned aside** looked like is uncertain, but some think this refers to immoral practices by these young women, others think this means they were turned aside to false teachers, and others that they had married unbelievers. We cannot be dogmatic. But what we can say is that this makes Paul's instructions in 1Ti 5:14 that much more urgent and important, lest these young widows get seduced into sin. The irony is that **follow** ([opiso](#)) is the same word used by Jesus of disciples coming behind (after) him, Jesus declaring "take up your cross and follow Me." (Matthew 16:24)

**THOUGHT** - Beloved, there are two masters, diametrically opposed to one other -- the Lord Jesus Christ and Satan. Who will you follow today? Who will you stake your eternal destiny upon? Your answers will be the most important answer you will ever give in your short life on earth!

**John Trapp - Turned aside after Satan** - Revolted from Christian religion, going out of God's blessing into the world's warm sun. These could not choose unto themselves a worse condition.

Until we sin, Satan is a parasite;

but when once we are in the devil's hands he turns tyrant.

-- Thomas Manton

**John Phillips - Satan**, one of the names of the Devil, actually means "adversary." He is our great enemy and vigilantly opposes all that God is doing in the world. **Satan** was the unseen instigator of the heretical teachings that were making inroads into the church. He was the author of the terrifying Neronian persecution raging in Rome. He is the one who lays traps for the unwary. He has no respect for the grief and vulnerability of young widows; on the contrary, he tries to exploit them and, as Paul declared, had been only too successful with some...Paul's heart went out to the widows, especially the young ones. He longed to protect them from the adversary who would beguile them into paths of folly. His words of warning and advice were prompted solely by a desire to help young, vulnerable widows become strong, saintly believers. (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

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**Turned aside** (1624) [ektrepo](#) from **ek** = out + **trope** = a turning) means literally to turn out (of the course) and so to turn aside (so as to avoid being involved). To turn away from, to swerve, to shun, to avoid meeting or associating with one. To turn a person off the road. It can literally mean to twist out (Hebrews 12:13<sup>±</sup>). The two primary meanings are "to turn aside," i.e., out of the right way or to something else (1 Timothy 1:6; 5:15; 2 Timothy 4:4), and "to turn away from" in the sense of avoiding (1 Timothy 6:20). The word occurs in one difficult passage, Hebrews 12:13, where it may mean either "be put out of joint, dislocated," "turn aside from the way," or "be avoided." In secular Greek medical literature described a dislocated joint, one that is sprained or wrenched! This meaning gives one a picture of the minds and hearts of those who reject God's Truth as ending up spiritually "dislocated", knocked out of joint, a far worse state than a physical dislocation! Used 5x - 1 Tim. 1:6; 1 Tim. 5:15; 1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 4:4; Heb. 12:1

**Turned aside - 3/5 uses in 1 Timothy -**

1 Timothy 1:6 "For some men, straying from these things, have **turned aside** to fruitless discussion."

("Some having swerved have turned aside [ektrepomai] unto vain jangling")

1 Timothy 6:20 O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, **avoiding** (ektrepo - present middle participle) worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called "knowledge "

**Follow** (after) (3694) **opiso** from **opis** = a looking back) can refer to a position behind another (Lk 7:38), as a marker of one who is followed as a leader (Mt 16:24, in a negative sense 1 Ti 5:15, Rev 13:3). It can describe time - "**after** me One is coming" (Mk 1:7), "He who comes **after** me" (Jn 1:15, 27, 30). It means to fall back (Jn 18:6); look backward (Luke 9:62); turn back (Mt. 24:18; Mk 13:16; Lk 17:31; Jn 6:66; Jn 20:14; Ge 19:17, 26; 2 Sa 1:22; 1 Ki 18:37) It is used metaphorically in Php 3:13 "forgetting what lies **behind**" Paul alluding to his former human accomplishments.

**Satan** (4567) **satanas** transliterated from Hebrew **Satan** - see 07854 and Aramaic sātānâ) literally means **Adversary**, the evil antagonist who offers opposition, hostility, resentment, etc. An enemy who that contends with, opposes, resists. An **adversary** is one who hates or opposes another person and tries to harm them or stop them from doing something because of hatred and malice. **Satan** is the **inveterate, implacable**, relentless, ruthless, remorseless, merciless, heartless, pitiless, cruel, hard, harsh, hardened, incorrigible, dedicated enemy of God and man. **Satan is not a myth or a fable, but a created, fallen angel who is a real, supernatural evil being** (Mt 16:23; 1 Th 2:18±). **Satan** is not divine but is subject to the divine Creator Jesus (John 1:3, Col 1:16±). He was the tempter of Jesus and sifter of men like Peter (Mt 4.1, Lk 4:2±, Mk 1:13±, Lk 22:31±).

#### Related Resource:

- [Satan — Article Index | GotQuestions.org](#) (many articles)

**1 Timothy 5:16 If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, she must assist them and the church must not be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed.**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:16 ε τις πιστ χει χ ρας, παρκε τω α τα ς κα μ βαρε σθω κκλησ α, να τα ς ντω ς χ ραι ς παρκ σ .

KJV 1 Timothy 5:16 If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

NET 1 Timothy 5:16 If a believing woman has widows in her family, let her help them. The church should not be burdened, so that it may help the widows who are truly in need.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:16 If any believing woman has widows in her family, she should help them, and the church should not be burdened, so that it can help those who are genuinely widows.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:16 If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them. Let the church not be burdened, so that it may care for those who are truly widows.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:16 If any woman who is a believer has widows in her family, she should help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:16 If a woman who is a believer has relatives who are widows, she must take care of them and not put the responsibility on the church. Then the church can care for the widows who are truly alone.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:16 If any believing woman has relatives who are really widows, let her assist them; let the church not be burdened, so that it can assist those who are real widows.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:16 If a woman believer has widowed relatives, she should support them and not make the Church bear the expense but enable it to support those who are really widowed.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:16 If any woman believer has widowed relatives, she must assist them; the church is not to be burdened, so that it will be able to help those who are truly widows.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:16 If any believing man or believing woman have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the assembly be burdened, that those really widows it may relieve.

GWN 1 Timothy 5:16 If any woman is a believer and has relatives who are widows, she should help them. In this way the church is not burdened and can help widows who have no families.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:16 If any woman of the faith has relations who are widows, let her give them help, so that the care of them does not come on the church, and so it may give help to those who are truly widowed.

- **let them:** 1Ti 5:4,8
- **widows indeed:** 1Ti 5:3,5

This command relates to the previous instruction in 1Ti 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."

**If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows** ([chera](#)) - The idea is that this woman has widows in her family. Widows are a family responsibility. The **IF** is a first class condition which assumes some of the women do have family members who are widows.

**Technical Note** - Most witnesses (D Ψ sy) have πιστς (pistos ē) before πιστή (pistē), with the resultant meaning "if a believing man or woman." But such looks to be a motivated reading, perhaps to bring some parity to the responsibilities of men and women listed here, and as a way of harmonizing with v. 4. Further, most of the earliest and best witnesses (א A C F G P 048 33 81 1175 1739 1881 co) lack the πιστς, strengthening the preference for the shorter reading ("if a woman").

**She must assist** ([eparkeo](#)) **them** This instruction is straightforward that widow's relatives are commanded ([present imperative](#)) to care for and assist the bereaved widows.

**J B Phillips** paraphrases it "As a general rule it should be taken for granted that any Christians who have widows in the family circle should do everything possible for them and not allow them to become the church's responsibility. The church will then be free to look after those widows who are alone in the world"

**Hiebert** - He is thinking of those cases where only the wife was a Christian, or, as in the case of Lydia, where a widow herself had a family and managed a household. Such a believing woman with the means at her command is to supply the needs of any widows within her own relationship. This will leave the church finances free to be used to support those who have no other means of support. The first obligation of this believing woman is to those within her own circle. Personal charity cannot effectively be replaced by organizational charity. (Borrow [First Timothy](#))

**John Phillips** on **must assist them** - That might not be the way it is, but that is the way it ought to be. In our day, disaster has overtaken family life. As Vance Havner said, the automobile took the family out of the home; and television brought the world into the home. As a result of the advent of automobile and television, old-fashioned family life has vanished, taking with it the ideal of being responsible for one's dependents. The stories of a number of widows are told in Scripture, and collectively they make an interesting study. At the judgment seat of Christ, the church and believers will be judged for their treatment of widows, so let us take heed to our roles and responsibilities. (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**And the church** ([ekklēsia/ecclesia](#)) **must not be burdened** ([bareo](#) - [present imperative with a negative](#)), **so that** (term of purpose/result) **it may assist** ([eparkeo](#)) **those who are widows** ([chera](#)) **indeed** (those who are qualified and enrolled widows - 1Ti 5:9) - Paul commands them to stop burdening the church (or don't start). The word [bareo](#) is used of financial burdens and refers here to financial support Church funds must be reserved for helping those who have no other means of support.

**Bruce Barton** offers a helpful excursus on Paul and women - This epistle has been attacked frequently as uncharitable toward women. Paul's limitation on the teaching ministry of women recorded in 1Ti 2:11–15 has often been taken to summarize all that Paul thought and wrote about women in the church. But given the compromised condition of the church in Ephesus, with Timothy and Paul struggling to stem the tide of false teaching, the specific roles, responsibilities, and value given to women are rather remarkable. Male believers were to exemplify the best treatment of women, especially widows. Women themselves were challenged to live full lives, raising children, managing households, caring for others, and being deeply involved in serving ministries. Those who chafe under Paul's seeming failure to give women "up front exposure" ought to remember that Jesus defined that kind of leadership as the most insignificant by kingdom standards. Hunger for visibility betrays an all too human tendency for personal glory. Women, though often not by choice, have historically taken the different, and better way: "Jesus said to them, 'The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves'" (Luke 22:25–27 NIV). (Borrow [1 Timothy](#), [2 Timothy](#), [Titus](#))

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**Believer** (faithful) ([4103](#)) [pistos](#) from [peitho](#) = to persuade - induce one by words to believe, have confidence) is something or someone who is worthy of faith or keeps promises and is applied to God, humans, His Word, etc Pistos means dependable (worthy of reliance or trust), trustworthy, steadfast, unswerving. **Vincent** summarizes of the meaning of **pistos** (1), of one who shows Himself faithful in the discharge of a duty or the administration of a trust (Mt 24:45). Hence, trustworthy (2Ti 2:2). Of things that can be relied upon (2Ti 2:11). (2), Confiding; trusting; a believer (Gal 3:9; Acts 16:1; 2Cor 6:15; 1Ti 5:16)" (Word Studies in the New

Testament) In Gal 3:9 refers to "Abraham, the **believer**" the faithful one.

**Burdened** (overcome, weighed down) ([916](#)) [bareo](#) from **baros** = weight, heaviness, figuratively a burden as in Gal 6:2) means to lay on a heavy load; to encumber with weight, to weigh down, to burden. Figuratively, to oppress with any thing grievous; as, to burden a nation with taxes and 1Ti 5:16 of oppressive financial obligation.

**1 Timothy 5:17 The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:17 Ο καλ ς προεστ τες πρεσβ τεροι διπλ ς τιμ ς ξιο σθωσαν, μ λιστα ο κοπι ντες ν λ γ κα διδασκαλ .

KJV 1 Timothy 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

NET 1 Timothy 5:17 Elders who provide effective leadership must be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard in speaking and teaching.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:17 The elders who are good leaders should be considered worthy of an ample [honorarium](#), especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:17 Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:17 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:17 Elders who do their work well should be respected and paid well, especially those who work hard at both preaching and teaching.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:17 Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching;

NJB 1 Timothy 5:17 Elders who do their work well while they are in charge earn double reward, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:17 Presbyters who preside well deserve double honor, especially those who toil in preaching and teaching.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:17 The well-leading elders of double honour let them be counted worthy, especially those labouring in word and teaching,

GWN 1 Timothy 5:17 Give double honor to spiritual leaders who handle their duties well. This is especially true if they work hard at teaching the word of God.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:17 Let rulers whose rule is good be honoured twice over, specially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

MIT 1 Timothy 5:17 Elders who take care of their responsibilities well deserve double honor, especially those who work in the word and teaching.

- **the elders:** 1Ti 5:1
- **rule:** 1Ti 3:5 Mt 24:25 Lu 12:42 Ro 12:8 1Th 5:12-13 Heb 13:7,17,24
- **be:** 1Ti 5:3 Ac 28:10 Ro 15:27 1Co 9:5-14 Ga 6:6 Php 2:29
- **double:** 2Ki 2:9 Isa 40:2 Jer 16:18 17:18 Zec 9:12
- **work:** 1Ti 4:10 Mt 9:37,38 Lu 10:1,2,7 Jn 4:38 Ac 20:35 Ro 16:12 1Co 3:9 15:10 16:16 2Co 6:1 Php 2:16 4:3 2Ti 2:6
- **preaching:** 1Ti 4:6,16 2Ti 4:2

**Related Passages:**

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, 13 and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.

Hebrews 13:7; 17 Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.....17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

Acts 20:17-18 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the **elders** of the church. 18 And when they had come to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time,

Titus 1:5-7 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, 6 namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. 7 For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain,

## THE DUTY TO ELDERS

Now Paul turns back to elders in 1 Timothy 5:17-25. Paul will give 8 commands in this short section.

**White** paraphrases Paul's idea: "What I have been saying about the support of widows reminds me of another question of Church finance: they payment of presbyters. Equity and scriptural principles suggest that they should be remunerated in proportion to their usefulness."

**The elders** ([presbuteros](#)) who rule ([proistemi](#)) well ([kalos](#) - "with excellence") **are to be considered worthy** ([axioo](#) in [present imperative](#)) of double honor ([time](#)) - **Rule** is probably better rendered "take the lead," for he is not be be a controller but an example. Sadly, some pastors take control rather than leading by example, but they will give an account to the Chief Shepherd. In this context the Greek [presbuteros](#) refers not to the older believers but to those who are in leadership roles and corresponds to overseers in 1Ti 3:1. **Rule** ([proistemi](#)) means general superintendence and describes the duties allotted to all elders. Note that Paul is not teaching as some suppose, that there were two kinds of elders, ruling elders and teaching elders. The qualifications required in the men to be appointed to the office show that both functions were to be united in one person (1Ti 3:2, 4, 5+). One other thought is that honor does not refer solely to an [honorarium](#), but the failure to give proper pay would imply a lack of honor. **Double honor** could be seen as respect from the sheep on one hand and financial compensation (but not double pay) on the other hand, for he is worthy of both.

**Lenski** has an interesting observation - The subject of widows begins with honoring (1Ti 5:3); so does the subject of elders. (Borrow [The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon](#))

**MacArthur** points out that "**Preaching** calls for a heart response to God, while **teaching** is a necessary bulwark against heresy." (See [1 Timothy Commentary](#))

**Demarest** has an interesting comment - It is an honor to be called by the church to "labor in the word and doctrine." It is thus a double honor to get paid for the first honor. (Borrow [The Communicator's Commentary. 1, 2 Thessalonians, 1, 2 Timothy, Titus](#) - now known as the "Preacher's Commentary")

**Adam Clarke** - Almost every critic of note allows that [time](#) here signifies reward, stipend, wages. Let him have a double or a larger salary who rules well.

**Donald Guthrie** - The adjective descriptive of this honour, double, would appear to have the sense of ample or generous provision, but this would depend on their efficiency, as the adverb well indicates. **Donald Guthrie** - The instructions which Timothy is to give must refer to the responsibility of children to support their forbears (verse 4), and the responsibility of widows to fulfil the requirements mentioned in 1Ti 5:5. The verb used is strong, involving 'command'. The command was necessary to ensure that no-one may be open to blame (anepilēptos, 'irreproachable', cf. 1Ti 3:2). (Borrow [The Pastoral Epistles : An Introduction and Commentary](#))

**John MacArthur** has an interesting comment - That the titles elder, pastor, and overseer all describe the same person is made clear by the use of all three words to describe the same men in Acts 20:17, 28. The term "pastor" emphasizes their shepherding or feeding function, "overseer" their authority and leading function, and "elder" their spiritual maturity. This passage assumes such elders are qualified (cf. 1Ti 3:2ff.)...Paul, as was his custom, does not refer to money directly (cf. 2 Cor. 8:6-7; 9:1, 12-13; Gal. 6:6; Phil 4:18). He prefers instead to deal with the heart attitude that will result in remuneration. Those who honor elders will not begrudge generosity in paying their support. All elders are entitled to financial support as well as respect....While all elders are to be thus honored, Paul singles out some as being worthy of double honor. He differentiates between the general category of elders and those



who serve with greater commitment, effort, and excellence. They are worthy of greater acknowledgment from the congregations they serve. Paul is not here saying they should receive exactly twice the pay a normal elder receives. Rather, they should receive ample, generous remuneration and respect beyond that of other elders whose labors are not as diligent.....Some may teach or preach infrequently, some constantly. Those whose ministry demands all their attention should be freed from any need to earn a living and be cared for and even rewarded for their singular devotion. (See [1 Timothy Commentary](#))

**John Phillips** - The local church is not a democracy where action is decided by a majority vote. A democracy might be man's view of the ideal form of government, but God's ideal is an absolute monarchy in which all power rests in the hands of Jesus. In the church, Christ is the Head, and the Holy Spirit is the Executor. The Holy Spirit raises up elders who are to make decisions as He leads and who are to be given honor if they do their tasks well. Thus, the church is to be ruled by men who have been gifted, proven, and appointed by the Holy Spirit. The Ephesian elders were well aware of this fact (Acts 20:17, 20). All elders are to be honored, and those who excel in teaching the Word of God and sound doctrine are to be doubly honored. The reason for the double honor is that God's Word is of supreme importance in the corporate life of a local church. God has magnified His Word even above His own illustrious name (Ps. 138:2). The world might not think so, but no nobler task exists on earth than to make known the Word of God. (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Especially those who work hard** ([kopiao](#) - present tense - continually) **at preaching** ([logos](#)) **and teaching** ([didaskalia](#)) - "Laboring in the word." So two qualifications for **double honor** are (1) rule well and (2) work hard at preaching and teaching. The implication is that some elders will not work as hard. Some were laboring or toiling in them to the point of weariness and fatigue and deserved double honor. **Teaching** is also translated doctrine. Beloved, doctrine is not dry but is absolutely essential for a good "spiritual" diet! Pray for those pastors who do not shy away from teaching sound doctrine for this is the only way to ensure "sound saints!" And because the NT was not yet written and compiled, teaching of sound doctrine was critical to the health of the church (IT STILL IS!)

**THOUGHT** - Dear preaching and teaching elder how long do you take to prepare for you messages? I surveyed a number of pastors I respected several years ago and cannot remember the exact number but it was in the range of 15 hours, some considerably longer. My mother used to say you get what you pay for. If you prepare little, it might not be surprising that the preaching accomplishing little. My son is a busy orthopedic surgeon and prepares 15 hours for his 50 minute Sunday School class and receives no pay for his efforts (at least no pay on earth!). As [MacArthur](#) says "A man's reward from God is proportional to the excellence of his ministry and the effort he puts into it. Excellence combined with diligence mark a man worthy of the highest honor."

**J. Oswald Sanders** comments, "Willingness to renounce personal preferences, to sacrifice legitimate and natural desires for the sake of His kingdom, will characterize those marked out by God for positions of influence in His work" (Borrow [Spiritual leadership](#))

**David Guzik** - Some think the church should not support staff, and that the paid ministry is an abomination – they say that the church instead should be using the money to support the needy. This is an attractive way of thinking; but it isn't Biblical. If the needy (that is, the truly needy) are worthy of honor, then those who rule and teach in the church are worthy of double honor.

**J Vernon McGee** - I have known very few preachers who I thought were money-lovers; most men are in the ministry for a different motive than that. You are not going to hurt the preacher if you give him a generous offering. Be generous also to a visiting Bible teacher if his ministry is a blessing to you. (**ED**: Obviously McGee did not know about the modern day health and wealth prosperity preachers like [Joel Osteen](#) whose reported net worth in 2023 is \$100 million!)

**Warren Wiersbe** says: If pastors are faithful in feeding and leading the people, then the church ought to be faithful and pay them adequately. "Double honor" (1 Tim. 5:17) can be translated "generous pay." (The word honor is used as in "[honorarium](#).") It is God's plan that the needs of His servants be met by their local churches; and He will bless churches that are faithful to His servants. If a church is not faithful, and its pastor's needs are not met, it is a poor testimony; and God has ways of dealing with the situation. He can provide through other means, but then the church misses the blessing; or He may move His servant elsewhere. (Borrow [The Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Bruce Barton** - TARGETS OF CARE OR CRITICISM? Faithful church leaders should be supported and appreciated. Too often they are targets for criticism because the congregation has unrealistic expectations. How do you treat your church leaders? Do you enjoy finding fault, or do you show your appreciation? Do they receive enough financial support to allow them to live without worry and to provide for the needs of their families? Unfortunately, we often take church leaders for granted by not providing adequately for their needs or by subjecting them to heavy criticism. Think of ways you can "honor" your preachers and teachers. (Borrow [1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus](#))

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**Rule** (lead) ([4291](#)) [proistemi](#) from **pro** = before, over + **histemi** = place, stand) literally means to put over or before and describes one who is "standing before or over." The figurative sense means to exercise a position of leadership (Ro 12:8, 1Ti 3:4-5). To place



in a position of authority or superintendence. To lead, to preside over to conduct, to direct, to govern, to superintend or to take over the direction of the people. According to the TDNT **proistemi** also conveys the ideas of to be a protector or guardian, to give aid, to assist, to care for or to be active in helping.

**Well** (2570) **kalos** describes that which is inherently excellent or intrinsically good, providing some special or superior benefit. **Kalos** is good with emphasis (as discussed below) on that which is beautiful, handsome, excellent, surpassing, precious, commendable, admirable. In **classical Greek kalos** was originally used to describe that which outwardly beautiful. Other secular uses of **kalos** referred to the usefulness of something such as a **fair** haven, a **fair** wind or that which was auspicious such as sacrifices. **Kalos** referred to that which was "morally beautiful" or noble and hence virtue was called "the good" (to kalon).

**Considered worthy** (think deserving)(515) **axioo** from **axios** = of weight) means basically to think meet or right and has several nuances - (1) make worthy (2 Th 1.11); (2) think of as worthy, consider worthy or deserving (and act accordingly) - BDAG - "to consider suitable for requital or for receipt of someth." (Lk. 7:7; 1 Ti 5:17; Heb. 3:3; 10:29); (3) think fitting to do something, prefer, regard as right to do (Acts 15.38); (4) want, request, desire (Acts 13.42; 28.22) To esteem, count or reckon worthy or deserving (Luke 7:7; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 3:3; 10:29; Sept.: Gen. 31:28); to think fit, suitable or proper (Acts 15:38 [cf. 28:22]); to count worthy or fit, to account or accept as worthy (2 Thess. 1:11); to desire, wish, hence demand (Sept.: Esth. 4:8; Dan. 1:8; 2:16, 23).

**Honor** (5092) **time** basically is the worth ascribed to a person or the value ascribed to a thing. Nuances include (1) The amount at which something is valued, the price, value Mt 27:6, 9; Ac 5:2f; 7:16; 19:19. times - for a price 1 Cor 6:20; 7:23. (2) manifestation of esteem, honor, reverence, respect Jn 4:44; Ac 28:10; Ro 2:7,10; 12:10; 13:7; 1 Ti 6:1; 2 Ti 2:20f; 1 Pe 3:7; Rev 4:9; 5:13; 21:26. A right that is specially conferred, a privilege 1Pe 2:7. Respectability 1 Th 4:4. Place of honor, office Heb 5:4. The honor conferred through compensation = **honorarium**, compensation may be the sense in 1 Ti 5:17, though honor and respect are also possible.— The expression *ouk en time tini* Col 2:23 is probably *they are of no value in*.

**Work hard** (2872) **kopiao** from **kopos** = labor, fatigue) This root word **kopos** (**word study**) is used in secular Greek of "a beating," "weariness" (as though one had been beaten) and "**exertion**," was the proper word for physical tiredness induced by work, exertion or heat. **Kopiao** means to to exhibit great effort and exertion, to the point of sweat and exhaustion. To physically become worn out, weary or faint. To engage in hard work with the implication of difficulty and trouble. Figuratively **kopiao** means to become emotionally fatigued and/or discouraged and thus to lose heart and/or give up. **Kopiao** speaks of intense, hard, wearisome toil even to the point of utter exhaustion if necessary. The work described by **kopiao** was left one so weary it was as if the person had taken a beating. **Kopiao** describes not so much the actual exertion as the weariness which follows the straining of all one's powers to the utmost. **Kopiao** was sometimes used to refer to athletic training. It is not surprising that **kopiao** was also a verb commonly used in descriptions of the down-trodden masses of the Roman world.

**Kopiao** emphasizes the intensity of labor required of Christian farmers who would be about the business of making disciples. Simply put...it's hard work!

**Preaching** (utterance) (3056) **logos** from **légō** = to speak with words; English = logic, logical) means something said and describes a communication whereby the mind finds expression in words. **Lógos** then is a general term for speaking, but always used for speaking with rational content. **Lógos** is a word uttered by the human voice which embodies an underlying concept or idea. When one has spoken the sum total of their thoughts concerning something, they have given to their hearer a total concept of that thing. Thus the word **lógos** conveys the idea of "a total concept" of anything. WHAT A GREAT DESCRIPTION OF POWERFUL, ANOINTED PREACHING!

**Teaching** (doctrine) (1319) (**didaskalia** from **didasko** from **dáo** = to know or teach) is either the act of teaching or the thing taught and in this use denotes doctrine or what is taught. **Doctrine** is from Latin *doctrina* in turn from *doceo* = to teach. The term **doctrine** in Scripture "is broader than a simple reference to information passed on from one person to another or from one generation to the next. Christianity is a religion founded on a message of good news rooted in the significance of the life of Jesus Christ. In Scripture, then, **doctrine** refers to the entire body of essential theological truths that define and describe that message (1Ti 1:10; 4:16; 6:3; Titus 1:9). The message includes historical facts, such as those regarding the events of the life of Jesus Christ (1Cor 11:23). But it is deeper than biographical facts alone. As J. Gresham Machen pointed out years ago, Jesus' death is an integral historical fact but it is not doctrine. Jesus' death for sins (1Cor 15:3) is doctrine. (Sound) **Doctrine**, then, is scriptural teaching on theological truths." (parenthesis added) ([The Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#) - excellent resource)

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**QUESTION - [What is the meaning of double honor in 1 Timothy 5:17?](#)**

**ANSWER** - In 1 Timothy 5:17–25, the apostle Paul gave special guidance regarding [church leadership](#). He recognized that these individuals were not perfect. But Paul was eager for the church to appreciate and acknowledge the value of pastors, teachers, elders, and other leaders who work hard and serve in a worthy manner: "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are

worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching” (1 Timothy 5:17).

Paul considered ministry leadership an honorable position to hold. Earlier, he told Timothy, “This is a trustworthy saying: ‘If someone aspires to be a church leader, he desires an honorable position’” (1 Timothy 3:1, NLT). The leader who performs the duties of his position responsibly and diligently, according to Scripture, is worthy of double honor.

“Double honor” refers not only to an [abundance of respect](#) and obedience from members of the church but also reasonable pay. The Greek word translated “double” in 1 Timothy 5:17 means “two-fold.” And the term for “honor” in the original language includes the notion of a price or compensation. In English, we also connect the word *honor* with the idea of recompense through the noun [honorarium](#), “a payment for unbilled professional services.” Paul felt that dutiful and diligent shepherds of God’s flock, the church, ought to be honored in two ways: in proper esteem and fair compensation.

Paul’s meaning becomes apparent in his following statement: “For the Scripture says, ‘You must not muzzle an ox to keep it from eating as it treads out the grain.’ And in another place, ‘Those who work deserve their pay!’” (1 Timothy 5:18, NLT). The apostle argued that, if God in His law had made provision for the hard-working ox (Deuteronomy 25:4), then members of Christ’s body ought to show proper concern for their spiritual leaders. Paul’s second statement, “The laborer deserves his wages” (ESV), closely resembles these words of Jesus: “For the worker deserves his wages” (Luke 10:7).

Elsewhere, Paul said, “Those who are taught the word of God should provide for their teachers, sharing all good things with them” (Galatians 6:6, NLT). The church has an obligation to protect dedicated leaders from being overworked and underpaid. Failure to adequately support them indicates a lack of honor.

Paul’s use of “double honor” is probably associated with the “double portion” reserved for the oldest son in a family (Deuteronomy 21:17). The dual benefit of being the firstborn was both respect and financial reward.

Paul worked as a tentmaker to support himself in ministry (Acts 18:3; 1 Corinthians 9:3–18; 1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:8) but considered his position the exception, not the rule. Scripture teaches that it is both suitable and essential for Christian ministers to receive financial support from the congregations they serve, just as a laborer rightly deserves a paycheck from his employer.

Paul singled out [preachers and teachers](#), indicating that their work is of utmost importance in the church. Those who fulfill these services in a commendable manner are especially deserving of double honor. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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## Getting Rid Of The Pastor

Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor. —1 Timothy 5:17

Today’s Scripture: 1 Timothy 5:17-25

A Christian leader told about some church members who came to him for advice. They wanted to know of a way to get rid of their pastor. Sensing that they were not being fair, he gave them these suggestions:

Look your pastor straight in the eye while he is preaching and say “Amen!” once in a while. He’ll preach himself to death.

Pat him on the back and tell him his good points. He’ll work himself to death.

Rededicate your life to Christ and ask your minister for a job to do. He’ll die of heart failure.

Get the church to pray for him. Soon he’ll become so effective that a larger church will take him off your hands.

If your pastor faithfully preaches God’s Word and tries to live an exemplary life, do all you can to support and encourage him. Of course, no pastor is perfect, and sometimes a loving rebuke may be needed (1 Timothy 5:20). But a pastor carries a big responsibility (Hebrews 13:17), and a faithful man of God is worthy of respect and generous financial support (1 Timothy 3:1; 5:17-18).

By the way, when did you last say to your pastor, “I’m grateful for you and all you’ve done for me”? By: Richard DeHaan [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

A pastor leads best when his people get behind him.

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## Roughing The Pastor

Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the Word and doctrine. —1 Timothy 5:17

Today's Scripture: 1 Timothy 5:17-25

I was at my grandson's eighth-grade football game when the referee indicated there was a penalty and stopped play. Apparently, after the ball was thrown, the boy who passed it was tackled, prompting a penalty flag. The announcer from the press box said: "There is a flag on the field. The penalty is roughing the pastor . . . I mean, roughing the passer." As soon as he said it, I thought to myself, God could give that penalty to some churches today!

It's not that pastors are perfect. If that is what we are looking for, then pastorless churches would be the norm. It's that God calls on us to honor those who lead us spiritually, particularly "those who labor in preaching and teaching" (1 Tim. 5:17 ESV). In my opinion, pastoring is one of the hardest occupations on the planet. We live in a sophisticated, fast-paced, and complex world, and our expectations for "high-performance" pastors often set the bar at unattainable heights.

So, let's switch the focus and become high-performance church members who honor our pastors with words of encouragement and prayer. A supportive note or a "thank you" in the foyer will go a long way to stimulate pastors to serve with joy and efficiency.

By: Joe Stowell ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, help us to appreciate  
The work that others do,  
The service given from their hearts,  
Their sacrifice for You.  
—Sper

Don't be rough on your pastor— pass along some encouragement today.

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### For Those Who Serve

Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the Word and doctrine! —1 Timothy 5:17

Today's Scripture: Romans 13:1-7

When my son Steve walks into a room, he often gets immediate respect. People want to shake his hand. They smile. They congratulate him. They thank him.

It happens at church. It happens in restaurants. It happens wherever he goes—as long as he is wearing his uniform of the United States Navy.

While in uniform, Steve gets instant respect because everyone knows that he is serving. He has given up many personal freedoms and desires so that he can serve his country.

People respect service. We honor police officers who serve. We pay homage to military personnel who serve. But do we give the same honor and respect to those who are in an even greater service—service to God? Do we show respect to our pastors, missionaries, Sunday school teachers?

Scripture tells us to give honor to whom honor is due (Rom. 13:7). Specifically, it tells us that double honor goes to those who direct the affairs of the church through teaching and preaching (1 Tim. 5:17).

Instead of criticizing your pastor, teacher, or spiritual leader, let others hear your words of gratitude and praise for their service. Hold them up in prayer. God's servants deserve our respect and honor. By: Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

### Putting It Into Practice

- Send a card or note of appreciation to your pastor.
- Thank your teacher for a lesson that helped you.
- Ask your leaders how you can pray for them.

We honor God when we honor our leaders.

**1 Timothy 5:18 For the Scripture says, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages."**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:18 λ γει γ ρ γ ρ α φ · β ο ν λ ο ν τ α ο φ ι μ σ ει ς, κ α · ξ ι ο ς ρ γ η ς τ ο μ ι σ θ ο α τ ο .

KJV 1 Timothy 5:18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.

NET 1 Timothy 5:18 For the scripture says, "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain," and, "The worker deserves his pay."

CSB 1 Timothy 5:18 For the Scripture says: Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain, and, the worker is worthy of his wages.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:18 For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages."

NIV 1 Timothy 5:18 For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages."

NLT 1 Timothy 5:18 For the Scripture says, "You must not muzzle an ox to keep it from eating as it treads out the grain." And in another place, "Those who work deserve their pay!"

NRS 1 Timothy 5:18 for the scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves to be paid."

NJB 1 Timothy 5:18 As scripture says: You must not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the corn; and again: The worker deserves his wages.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:18 For the scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is threshing," and, "A worker deserves his pay."

YLT 1 Timothy 5:18 for the Writing saith, 'An ox treading out thou shalt not muzzle,' and 'Worthy is the workman of his reward.'

GWN 1 Timothy 5:18 After all, Scripture says, "Never muzzle an ox when it is threshing grain," and "The worker deserves his pay."

BBE 1 Timothy 5:18 For the Writings say, It is not right to keep the ox from taking the grain when he is crushing it. And, The worker has a right to his reward.

MIT 1 Timothy 5:18 For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle an ox while it is threshing grain," and the worker deserves his compensation.

- **For the Scripture:** Ro 4:3 9:17 10:11 11:2 Ga 3:8 Jas 4:5
- **YOU:** De 25:4 1Co 9:9,10
- **The laborer:** Lev 19:13 De 24:14,15 Mt 10:10 Lu 10:7

#### Related Passages:

Luke 10:7+ "Stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep moving from house to house.

Deuteronomy 25:4+ "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing.

1 Corinthians 9:9-12+ For it is written in the Law of Moses, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING." God is not concerned about oxen, is He? 10 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 reap material things from you? 12 If others share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things so that we will cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ.



Unmuzzled Oxen Threshing Grain

## ELDERS ARE TO BE REWARDED

**For** ([gar](#)) is a term of explanation. What is Paul explaining?

**The Scripture** ([graphe](#)) **says** - Paul quotes from God's Word (both Old and New Testament) to support his point that the elder who rules, teaches and preaches well is worthy of compensation. **Scripture** is personified as speaking which is apropos for when **Scripture** speaks it is God speaking through His inspired Word.

**THOUGHT** - Do you read the Bible as if God is personally, powerfully speaking to you as father speaks to his child? You should because He is if you are His child! If you are having great difficulty understanding the Scriptures, you need to consider that you may not be a genuine believer (see 1Co 2:14+). Don't misunderstand, for no believer understands **all** of the Scriptures, but if you cannot understand **any** of the Scriptures then in love I suggest you consider pondering Paul's words in 2Cor 13:5+.

**"YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE ([phimoo](#)) THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING,"** and **"The laborer ([ergates](#)) is worthy ([axios](#)) of his wages ([misthos](#))."** - What's the OT quote saying? First of all it is spoken as if it is an imperative or command. Clearly the ox that threshed the grain providing physical food for the people should be allowed a few nibbles of the grain! The elders provided spiritual food to their flocks and thus they too should be provided for. Then Paul adds that the elder like the laborer is worthy of his **wages** for laboring at teaching and preaching. Note that **wages** ([misthos](#)) literally refers to pay which is due for labor performed or dues paid for work.

**Hendriksen** describes **threshing** - The first saying is quoted from Deut. 25:4. Paul makes a similar use of it in I Cor. 9:8-12. The picture is that of a threshing-floor: a circular piece of level ground, exposed to the wind. Sometimes it is a flat rock on top of a hill. The sheaves of grain have been unbound and lie on this floor, arranged in circles. Oxen are driven over them, so that by the trampling of their hoofs the ripe grain may be shaken out of the ears (Hos. 10:11; Mic. 4:13). Or, for the same purpose the oxen may be harnessed to a rough sledge on which the driver stands or sits, as he guides the oxen around and around. This sledge or drag is a kind of sled consisting of two heavy boards, fastened side by side, and curved upward in front. To the bottom of it sharp pieces of stone are attached, to loosen the kernels of grain. (Borrow [Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Barclay** describes the process by saying: When threshing was done in the East, the sheaves of corn were laid on the threshing-floor; then oxen in pairs were driven repeatedly across them; or the oxen were tethered to a post in the middle, like a pivot (SEE PICTURE ABOVE), and made to march round and round on the grain; or sometimes a threshing sledge was harnessed to them and the sledge was drawn to and fro across the corn; but in all cases the oxen were left unmuzzled; they were free to eat as much of the grain as they wished, as a reward for the work which they were doing. The actual law that the ox must not be muzzled is in Deuteronomy 25:4. ([1 Timothy 5 Commentary](#))

There is another important principle in this passage for Paul places the OT passage on a par with a NT passage. In other words he is saying in essence that the NT writings have the same authority as the OT writings.

**John MacArthur** expands on the principle mentioned above - It is very noteworthy that Paul refers to Luke's writing as **Scripture**. Here is a case of one New Testament writer affirming the inspiration of another (cf. 2Pe 3:15-16). The early church recognized the canonicity and authority of the New Testament Scriptures even before their writers had died. This verse and 1Co 11:24 are the only times Paul quotes from the gospels. Both quotes are from Luke, reflecting Paul's close association with him. With the second quote, Paul moves up a level from an animal to a servant. The Bible insists that servants are to be paid (Dt 24:14-15; cf. Jas 5:4). To refuse to support those who provide spiritual food is as unjust and heartless as muzzling an animal, or refusing to pay a hired man. (See [1 Timothy Commentary](#))

**Guthrie** says: Whatever the apostle is here citing, he intends Timothy to understand that a divine sanction underlies the principle of fair provision for those who serve the Church. Too often a niggardly attitude had been maintained towards faithful men who have laboured for Christ in the interest of others. (Borrow [The Pastoral Epistles : An Introduction and Commentary](#))

**Utley** on **double honor** - It can refer to salary (cf. Gal. 6:6) or to esteem (cf. 1 Thess. 5:12-13). The following context of 1Th 5:18 suggests salary.

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**Scripture** (1124) **graphe** from **grapho** = to write; English = graphite - the lead in a pencil!) means first a writing or thing written, a document. The majority of the NT uses refer to the Old Testament writings, in a general sense of the whole collection when the plural (= Scriptures - Matt. 21:42; 22:29; 26:54; Mk. 12:24; 14:49; Lk. 24:27, 32, 45; Jn. 5:39; Acts 17:2, 11; 18:24, 28; Rom. 15:4; 2Pe 3:16) is used and other times of a particular passage when the singular is used (= the Scripture - Mk. 12:10; 15:28; Lk. 4:21; Jn. 13:18; 19:24, 36f; Acts 1:16; 8:35; Ro 11:2; Jas. 2:8, 23) and is used in such a way that quoting Scripture is understood to be the same as quoting God!

**Muzzle** (5392) **phimoo** from **phimós** = **muzzle for a beast's mouth**) means to close the mouth with a muzzle, to muzzle, gag, restrain as an ox (1 Co 9:9; 1 Ti 5:18). Figuratively, **phimoo** means to stop one's mouth in order make speechless or reduce to silence (Mt 22:34; 1 Pe 2:15) It was used especially as in this passage of reducing an adversary to silence. Christ commanded the evil spirit not to speak (Mk 1:25; Lu 4:35) and the raging sea to be still (**Mk 4:3**). He muzzled the Sadducees (for muzzling [see English definition](#)) (Mt 22:34). **Phimoo** is a more vigorous word than just "Be Quiet" as NASB translates in Mk 1:25. The picture is "Be muzzled" like an ox. Gould renders it "Shut up." "Shut your mouth" would be too colloquial. **Phimoo** is used once in the Septuagint in Deuteronomy 25:4 "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing."

**Laborer** (Workman) (2040) **ergates** from **ergazomai** = meaning to engage in an activity involving considerable expenditure of effort. It is the root of English words like ergs, ergonomics, etc) literally describes a worker (workman) or laborer, someone who is engaged in labor (Mt 10:10, Mt 20:1-2, 8, etc). An **ergates** is one who effects something or brings about an effect through exertion of effort, whether mental or physical. In the spiritual realm, some of the workers are good (believers - Mt 9:37, 38, 1Ti 5:18, 2Ti 2:15) and some are evil (unbelievers = deceitful workers in 2Cor 11:13, evil workers - Php 3:2, workers of evil literally in Lk 13:27)

**Worthy** (adjective) (514) **áxios/axios** from **ágō** = to weigh) strictly speaking means bringing up the other beam of the scales. Having the weight of another thing of like value, worth as much. Counterbalancing - weighing as much (of like value, worth as much). Bringing into balance and hence equivalent or equal value/similar worth (Ro 8:18, see use in Lxx of Pr 3:15, 8:11). Other nuances of **axios** include describing that which is fitting or appropriate (1Cor 16:2), that which is deserving (Mt 10:10), that which "deserves" to be considered or accepted (1Ti 1:15), that which is worthy of praise (Rev 4:11), that which corresponds to or is congruent with something else (Mt 3:8, Luke 3:8, 23:41, 26:20). Worthy or deserving of evil (Rev 16:6).

**Wages** (reward) (3408) **misthos** literally refers to pay which is due for labor performed or dues paid for work. **Misthos** is used in two general senses in the NT, either to refer to wages or to reward, recognition or recompense. In this latter figurative usage, **misthos** refers to rewards which God bestows for the moral quality of an action, such rewards most often to be bestowed in eternity future. Jesus associates **rewards** with giving, fasting and praying teaching that are dependent upon one's motive (Mt 6:1; 6:2; 6:5; 6:16-see notes [Mt 6:1](#); [6:2](#); [6:5](#); [6:16](#)). Note especially future rewards for having suffered for the Name of Christ in this life (Mt 5:12-[note](#); Lk 6:23).

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**QUESTION - [What is the meaning of "the laborer is worthy of his hire" in 1 Timothy 5:18?](#)**

**ANSWER** - The Bible teaches the importance and appropriateness of churches providing financial support to Christian ministers who admirably serve their congregations. In 1 Timothy 5:18, the apostle Paul cites two passages to back up his claim that church bodies must honor and care for hard-working pastors to prevent them from becoming overworked and underpaid. The first is "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain" (NIV). The second is "The laborer is worthy of his hire" (ASV 1901).

In the first instance, Paul cites Deuteronomy 25:4. He reasons that, if God in His law expressed concern for hard-working animals to be fed and cared for, church members ought to show proper consideration for their pastors, teachers, and spiritual leaders, supplying them with a decent wage. It's good to feed the cow; it's better to feed your pastor. Paul's second reference, "The laborer is worthy of his hire" (ASV) or "The laborer deserves his wages" (ESV), is most likely a recitation of Christ's words: "For the laborer deserves his wages" (Luke 10:7, ESV). Jesus said this to His disciples when He sent them ahead of Him as "laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2, ESV), encouraging them to accept hospitality and food from people who would receive them (Luke 10:7-8). Significantly, 1 Timothy 5:18 calls the Gospel of Luke "Scripture."

In 1 Timothy 5:17, Paul explains further: "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching." A study of the term [double honor](#) reveals that it refers to both respect and



remuneration. The phrase emphasizes generosity. Paul expects the church to provide reasonable pay for a job well done, and failure to do so indicates a shortage of respect and honor for one's spiritual leaders.

In the Old Testament, the priests and Levites who ministered in worship were supported by the community of believers so that they "could devote themselves to the Law of the LORD" (2 Chronicles 31:4; cf. 1 Corinthians 9:13). Thus, it stands to reason in the New Testament church that those who devote their lives to the work of the gospel should likewise be supported by the congregations they serve.

To the church in Galatia, Paul wrote, "Those who are taught the word of God should provide for their teachers, sharing all good things with them" (Galatians 6:6, NLT). He informed the believers in Corinth, "In the same way, the Lord ordered that those who preach the Good News should be supported by those who benefit from it" (1 Corinthians 9:14, NLT).

It's true that Paul earned his own living, supporting his ministry work through [tentmaking](#) (Acts 18:3; 1 Corinthians 9:3–18; 1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:8). But Paul explained in detail that his case was an exception for a particular purpose (1 Corinthians 9:4–27).

It's interesting to note that neither of Paul's scriptural parallels is particularly complimentary. He first compares Christian ministers to oxen, beasts of burden. Second, he likens them to farmhands. Paul's illustrations are appropriately chosen, not to demean but to stress that the gospel ministry is hard work. Those who serve well deserve to be honored, [appreciated](#), and paid a fair wage.

Just as it is right for farmers to feed their livestock and employers to pay laborers worthy of their hire, it is proper and essential for the local church to provide adequate financial support to its dedicated Christian ministers. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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## DON'T GRIEVE THE PREACHER!

Obey them [who] . . . watch for your souls . . . , that they may do it with joy, and not with grief. Hebrews 13:17

In this sinful world no church or preacher is perfect; therefore, it is easy to find fault with the Lord's servants. But God is not pleased when we dishonor those who by His grace and calling are responsible for feeding the flock and watching for our spiritual welfare. We are to obey them in all things scriptural, show respect for their high office, and praise them for their self-sacrificing service.

Sometimes we don't appreciate the many demands placed upon men of God. An anonymous author makes these discerning observations: "The pastor teaches, although he must often solicit his own classes. He's a social worker, a counselor, a salesman, and a 'decorative piece' for most church functions. He visits the sick, marries people, officiates at funerals, consoles those in sorrow, and admonishes the wayward. He plans programs, appoints committees (when he can get folks to serve), and spends considerable time tactfully keeping members of the congregation from angry disagreement. In addition to all this, he must find opportunity to study and prepare sermons, and then preach on Sunday to those who don't have a more pressing engagement. Above all, on Monday he's expected to have grace to smile when some jovial chap slaps him on the back and exclaims, 'What a job--just one day a week!'"

hat a job--just one day a week!" With all the weight of eternal matters resting on the shoulders of Christian leaders, let's assist and encourage them so they may fulfill their heavenly calling with joy. If you want God's approval, don't grieve the preacher! --H.G.B.

So as we feed upon the Word,  
Let's pray for those who preach;  
And keep from criticizing all  
Whom God hath called to teach.  
--G.W.

:It's easy to find fault with those whose duties you need not face and whose problems you need not solve.

**1 Timothy 5:19 Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses.**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:19 κατ' πρεσβυτερου κατηγορουμι παραδ'χου, κτ ς ε μ π δ ο τρι ν μαρτ ρων.

KJV 1 Timothy 5:19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

NET 1 Timothy 5:19 Do not accept an accusation against an elder unless it can be confirmed by two or three witnesses.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:19 Don't accept an accusation against an elder unless it is supported by two or three witnesses.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:19 Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:19 Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:19 Do not listen to an accusation against an elder unless it is confirmed by two or three witnesses.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:19 Never accept any accusation against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:19 Never accept any accusation brought against an elder unless it is supported by two or three witnesses.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:19 Do not accept an accusation against a presbyter unless it is supported by two or three witnesses.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:19 Against an elder an accusation receive not, except upon two or three witnesses.

GWN 1 Timothy 5:19 Don't pay attention to an accusation against a spiritual leader unless it is supported by two or three witnesses.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:19 Do not take as true any statement made against one in authority, but only if two or three give witness to it.

MIT 1 Timothy 5:19 Do not accept an accusation against an elder unless there are two or three witnesses to substantiate it.

- **receive:** Jn 18:29 Ac 24:2-13 25:16 Titus 1:6
- **two:** De 17:6 Dt 19:15,18,19 Mt 18:16 Jn 8:17 2Co 13:1 Heb 10:28

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 17:6+ "On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.

Deuteronomy 19:15+ "**A single witness** shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of **two or three witnesses** a matter shall be confirmed.

## PROCEDURE FOR HANDING ELDER ACCUSATIONS

**John MacArthur** gives some helpful background to this verse - There are always people eager to falsely accuse a man of God. They may do so because they resent his calling, reject his teaching, resist biblical authority, resent virtue, or are jealous of the Lord's blessing on his life. Ultimately, however, they demonstrate by making such accusations that they have become messengers of Satan. Such false accusations are one of his most dangerous weapons. Joseph, Moses, David, Jeremiah, Nehemiah, and our Lord Jesus Christ all suffered from false accusations. So did Paul, and he particularly addressed that issue in his second letter to the Corinthians. As the [Puritan writer John Trapp put it](#), "Truth hath always a scratched a face". (See [1 Timothy Commentary](#))

**Do not receive** ([paradechomai](#) in [present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) **an accusation** ([kategoria](#)) **against an elder** ([presbuteros](#)) **except on the basis of two or three witnesses** ([martus](#)) - The command means either stop doing this (as if it has already been done) or do not begin to do this. Receive means in essence "to entertain" or "to consider in your mind." What Paul is commanding is you turn a deaf ear to accusation unless it is corroborated by two or more solid witnesses. This is the best way to protect your pastor!

"A lie can get halfway around the world before truth gets its shoes on."

**J Vernon McGee** - If this procedure were observed it would cut down a great deal on the gossip and misunderstanding and the strife that goes on in our churches today. Paul says that the pastor and every member of the church should refuse to let anyone whisper into his ear any gossip about the pastor or a church officer. People should be able to prove their accusations before witnesses. The important thing is that you should have the facts before you talk. And if you have the facts, rather than scatter the scandal abroad, you should seek to correct the problem by going to the proper authorities. Any accusation should be given before more than one witness.

**Hiebert** - When such accusations against an elder are brought to Timothy he must not entertain them and start judicial proceedings against the elder, unless two or three responsible witnesses attest the charge. "The influence of even the best minister might be destroyed, if idle gossip and social tattling were accounted a sufficient ground for serious charges and judicial proceedings" (Harvey). (Borrow [First Timothy](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** warns "Church discipline usually goes to one of two extremes. Either there is no discipline at all, and the church languishes because of disobedience and sin. Or the church officers become evangelical policemen who hold a kangaroo court and violate many of the Bible's spiritual principles." (Borrow [The Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Lowell Johnson** - To attack someone in spiritual leadership is a very serious matter. In 1 Samuel 24:5+ after cutting off part of Saul's robe, "it came about afterward that David's conscience bothered him because he had cut off the edge of Saul's robe." Psalm 105:15 warns, "Do not touch my anointed ones, and do my prophets no harm."

#### Related Resource:

- [Why are two or three witnesses needed in Deuteronomy 17:6 and 19:15? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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**Receive** (accept) ([3858](#)) [paradechomai](#) from **para** = from, beside, near + [dechomai](#) = accept deliberately and readily, receive kindly and so to take to oneself what is presented or brought by another) means literally to receive or accept near or beside and then to accept deliberately, willingly, favorably and readily. **Paradechomai** in some contexts conveys the sense of to delight in. To receive or embrace with favor. In other words this verb speaks of far more than an indifferent or apathetic reception, especially here in Hebrews 12:6. To accept or acknowledge as correct (Acts 16:21). To receive, welcome or accept a person in a friendly or hospitable manner (Acts 15:4). To come to believe something to be true and to respond accordingly. To receive or accept with delight. To admit with approval. As you can discern from the definitions, the meaning of verb **paradechomai** is not significantly different from [dechomai](#) except that the prefix preposition may intensify the meaning.

**Accusation** ([2724](#)) [kategoria](#) from verb **kategoroeo**, to accuse -- [click use](#) <> in turn from kata = against + agora = the assembly, a place of public speaking) refers to a speaking against a person before a public tribunal or bringing an accusation in court. **Kategoria** is used 3x in NT Jn. 18:29; 1Tim. 5:19; Titus 1:6 **Kategoria** was a legal technical term that refers to the content of the accusation or charge made against someone. However the use in this verse in Titus does not refer to judicial punishment, but public condemnation. In contrast in the first NT use, Pilate asked the Jews "What accusation (**kategoria**) do you bring against this Man (Jesus)?" (Jn 18:29)

**Witnesses** ([3144](#)) [martus/martys](#) basically describes one who remembers something and testifies concerning what they remember. Notice that **martus** has a two fold meaning of (1) describing one who has seen and/or experienced something or someone and (2) one who testifies to what he or she saw. The testimony could be in a legal setting (Mk 14:63; Acts 6:13; 7:58; Heb. 10:28) or in the general sense of recounting firsthand knowledge (Lk 11:48; 1Ti. 6:12; Heb 12:1; 1Pe 5:1). A **martus** is one who attests to a fact or event, one who gives evidence (testifies in a court to the truth of a fact or event), one who has seen or has personal knowledge of something or someone, especially as an "eye witness" (eg, the apostles in Acts having and relating their personal knowledge of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances). A witness is one who furnishes evidence or proof, confirming the truth by verbal testimony. A **witness** gives testimony in a court trial (Mt 26:65, Mk 14:63, false = Acts 6:13). Scripture repeatedly refers to the Old Testament "formula" of witnesses to some event using the phrase "two or three witnesses" (Mt 18:16, 2Co 13:1, 1Ti 5:19, Heb 10:28) The witnesses of Hebrews 11 are those whose lives speak of the reality of their faith in God (Heb 12:1).

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#### Steven Cole - [Church Leadership: Keeping It Godly \(1 Timothy 5:19-25\)](#)

Moral failure among pastors is happening with shocking frequency in the American church. A Leadership survey (Winter, 1988, pp. 12-13) revealed that one out of eight pastors have committed adultery since they've been in local church ministry. Almost one out of four admitted to doing something they feel was sexually inappropriate. One out of five acknowledged fantasizing at least weekly about sex with someone other than their spouse. If you widen the question to monthly, the number grows to over one out of three.

When a church leader falls into sin, it always wreaks havoc to the cause of Christ. The more visible and well-known the leader, the greater the harm. Some in the church justify their own sin by thinking, "If that strong leader fell, then who am I to resist?" Divisions arise in the church between those who advocate tolerance and love toward the fallen leader and those labeled as unloving because they call for his removal from public ministry. The world mocks the whole thing and shrugs off the gospel.

So it's crucial for the church to put godly men into leadership and to make sure that they remain that way. How can we do that? How can we do everything possible to insure that our church leaders are godly men? And, if and when a church leader does fall into sin, how do we deal with it properly?

These are the questions Paul answers in 1 Timothy 5:19-25. Some of the elders in Ephesus had fallen into false teaching and ungodly conduct, which always goes with false doctrine. Paul doesn't give a comprehensive answer, but he brings up two crucial safeguards to help keep church leadership godly: First, the proper exercise of church discipline toward sinning elders (5:19-21); and second, the careful selection of elders (5:22-25). He is saying that ...

To keep church leadership godly, elders must be disciplined properly and selected carefully.

Since some in Ephesus had already fallen, and, perhaps, rumors and accusations were circulating about others, Paul deals first with the remedial process of discipline before going on to talk about the preventative steps to take in selection, so that the church will put only godly men into office.

### **1. To keep church leadership godly, elders must be disciplined properly (1Ti 5:19-21).**

This section is like strong medicine: you don't want to have to use it, but it's good to have on hand in case you get sick. I hope we never have to apply these verses in our church, but we had better know that it's in our "medicine cabinet" in case we ever need it.

The verses reveal three aspects of proper discipline of church leaders: The need for factual evidence (5:19); the need for public rebuke (5:20); and, the need for impartiality (1Ti 5:21).

#### **A. PROPER DISCIPLINE OF CHURCH LEADERS REQUIRES FACTUAL EVIDENCE (1Ti 5:19).**

Paul is citing the law of Moses here. Deuteronomy 19:15 states, "A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed."

It's a simple principle: a case must be tried on the basis of factual evidence, not hearsay or rumors. Paul specifically applies it to church leaders here because they're more liable to false accusations and slander than others, especially men who preach God's truth. Satan is always trying to discredit the authority of God's Word. One method he often uses is to attack the credibility of the man who teaches the Word. If people doubt his integrity, they can easily shrug off his exhortations to godliness. So Satan often stirs up people who have been offended by the preaching of God's truth or who are upset because a church leader has had to confront them privately about their sin. They spread half-truths and outright lies to discredit the man and his message.

What do you do if someone comes to you with something damaging against me, one of the other elders, or some Christian leader? It's important to the testimony of Christ that we handle such situations in a godly way. If the person is spreading rumors or gossip, he needs to be corrected. If he has a legitimate problem, it needs to be processed according to Scripture. I've found these five questions (which I got from Bill Gothard) to be useful:

(1) "What is your reason for telling me?" Widening the circle of gossip only compounds the problem. Why do I need to know this? If the person says, "I just wanted you to know so you could pray," then you should caution him not to say anything more to anyone before he checks out the facts and takes biblical steps to deal with it (Matt. 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1). Gossip flatters our pride by giving us "inside" information. But we must resist both the temptation to listen to it and to encourage someone else to give it unless we're part of the solution.

(2) "Where did you get your information?" Refusal to identify the source is a sure sign of gossip. Is there more than one independent witness? If not, the accusation should not be received and the accuser should be shown this Scripture and warned about spreading the charges any further.

(3) "Have you gone to those directly involved?" If the person has not gone to those involved, he is probably more interested in spreading gossip than in helping to restore the one or ones who have sinned.

(4) "Have you personally checked out all the facts?" It's easy for "facts" to get distorted as they travel from one person to another or when they're given by a person with negative motives.

(5) "Can I quote you if I check this out?" A person spreading gossip won't want to be quoted by name. They don't want to get involved in the messy business of helping confront and restore a person in sin. They're just spreading an evil report.

Thus the first need in disciplining an elder is to get factual information. If the charges are true, then there is a second need:

#### **B. PROPER DISCIPLINE OF CHURCH LEADERS REQUIRES PUBLIC REBUKE (1Ti 5:20).**

The proper translation here is, "Those who are sinning," meaning, those guilty of the charges who do not repent. Sinning means some clear violation of God's Word, not just something someone doesn't like or agree with. I once was called in by another church to arbitrate a conflict where a deacon had sent a letter to the entire congregation charging the pastor with not feeding the flock and not visiting the members enough. The pastor hadn't sinned and the deacon hadn't talked directly to the pastor about the situation, so

the deacon was in sin.

If it is a public sin, such as false teaching on some major issue or a sin that is in public view, then a public rebuke may be called for as a first step (as Paul did with Peter, Gal. 2:11 ff.) If a leader has gone public by writing a book promoting serious error, then it requires public rebuke, either in print or verbally, to warn God's people (Titus 1:9). Paul often named individuals (1 Tim. 1:20) and specified the nature of the false teaching (2 Tim. 2:17-18; Titus 1:10-16).

But normally the steps of private rebuke (Matt. 18:15-17) need to be followed before any public rebuke is made. The goal is never to blast the man, but to restore him. If he repents after private rebuke, it may be necessary for a public confession to the church. Depending on the seriousness of the sin, the man may need to step down from his office until he rebuilds a godly reputation. While moral failure need not disqualify a man from public ministry for the rest of his life, he can't possibly restore the necessary qualifications of being above reproach, a one-woman man, and having a good reputation with outsiders in a few months (1 Tim. 3:2-7).

Public exposure of sin, especially in a church leader, is just the opposite of our human tendency. If a church leader sins, we're inclined to cover it quickly and keep it under wraps, or perhaps gossip about it. But to expose it seems like it would damage the reputation of Christ or the church. And so we "hush-hush" the matter. I know of situations where pastors who sinned morally are just quietly moved to new places of ministry. Thankfully, I've also received several letters from churches or Christian organizations exposing the sin of a leader who fell, asking prayer for his restoration.

If we don't deal with the matter God's way, Satan will deal with it his way. It will lead to gossip, slander, divisions, and greater sin in the body. God's way is to deal with the matter publicly. There are three values of rebuke before the church:

(1) Public rebuke clears the name of God and His church from association with and toleration of evil. If a church leader sins and the matter is covered up, there are still going to be leaks. When the leaks spread, people begin thinking that the church tolerates evil. That erodes trust in the message we proclaim and in the holy God we serve. Thus God's method, even in the case of His choicest servants, is to uncover the sin before everyone. As the Lord said to David after his sin with Bathsheba, "Indeed, you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun" (2 Sam. 12:12). God wants evil exposed so that the world may know that He is apart from all sin and does not tolerate it.

(2) Public rebuke causes others to be fearful of sinning (1Ti 5:20). Fear is not necessarily a bad motivator, if it keeps us from sin. Public discipline, especially of a church leader, makes people see the gravity of sin. It causes a healthy fear of God. If people know that church discipline will be administered impartially (1Ti 5:21), they will be fearful of becoming the object of such rebuke and will avoid sin.

(3) Public rebuke causes the sinner himself to be fearful of sinning again (1Ti 5:20, "also"). No one would want to go through something like that again. If the church is consistent in carrying out discipline, it will act as a deterrent to sin.

Thus, proper discipline of church leaders requires factual evidence and, in some cases, public rebuke. Paul adds a third need for proper discipline:

### **C. PROPER DISCIPLINE OF CHURCH LEADERS REQUIRES IMPARTIALITY (1Ti 5:21).**

Church discipline will be effective only if it is applied impartially. If a man of influence is shown leniency, while a less powerful man is treated harshly, much harm will be done to the church.

Paul here invokes a solemn charge to Timothy: "in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, ..." "God and Christ Jesus" are contained under the same article in the Greek, which points to the deity of Christ. God is the ultimate judge, who has committed all judgment unto the Son (John 5:22, 27). Church discipline is carried out in the presence of the Lord (Matt. 18:15-20). The elect angels are probably included to bring up the awesome picture of God on His holy throne, surrounded by the angels, or because when Christ returns in judgment, He will use the angels as reapers.

Why does Paul lay this heavy charge on Timothy? I think he did it because Timothy, by nature and personality, was a timid soul who loathed confrontation. Thus he would have a tendency to back off from confronting a powerful elder who was in error. But to do so would be to be partial in administering discipline, which undermines the whole process. Thus Paul is saying, in effect, "Timothy, fear God more than any powerful man. Maintain these principles without bias or partiality."

Thus to keep church leadership godly, elders must be disciplined properly. That is the remedial step which the church is required to take. But there is also a preventative step which the church must take so that church leaders will not fall into sin:

### **2. To keep church leadership godly, elders must be selected carefully (1Ti 5:22-25).**

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. If we want to avoid having leaders fall into sin, then we must use caution (5:22) and

careful observation (5:24-25) in the process of selecting them for office. Sandwiched in is a brief digression about Timothy's health (5:23).

#### **A. THE NEED FOR CAUTION IN SELECTING ELDERS (1Ti 5:22).**

Some interpret the laying on of hands to refer to the restoration of a repentant elder. But in light of the usage in the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6) I take it to refer to a public commissioning of elders to their office. Since some elders had fallen into sin, Timothy may be inclined to hastily appoint others to replace them. But if he did and those men were not well qualified and fell into sin, Timothy would have a part in their sin. So Paul warns him to keep himself pure.

The mentioning of keeping himself pure brings to Paul's mind the other danger of the false teachers, namely, their bent toward asceticism (1Ti 4:3). He does not want Timothy mistakenly to think that he should abstain from all wine, especially in light of his frequent health problems. So he digresses to give his son in the faith some fatherly advice, namely, to drink a little wine for medicinal reasons.

Since Paul digressed, I will too. The moderate use of wine is not prohibited in Scripture, but drunkenness or being enslaved to alcohol clearly is. Drinking any alcohol is dangerous, since it is physiologically addictive. No one plans to become an alcoholic. It sneaks up and ensnares you unawares. Also, since we live in a culture where so many are enslaved to alcohol, we need to be extremely careful that we don't cause our brother in Christ to stumble. If a believer who has had a problem with alcohol sees me drinking and is led back into enslavement, I have sinned against my brother. For that reason, I choose to abstain.

A second part of this digression is to note that Paul didn't say, "Timothy, claim your healing by faith!" He was recommending a medicinal use of wine and a sensible recognition that Timothy needed to take care of his body. Good nutrition, proper rest and exercise, and using medicine when we need it are not opposed to a life of faith, but rather are a part of being good stewards of our bodies as unto God. Yes, we should pray for healing; and yes, we should thankfully use modern medical knowledge.

Coming back to the subject, Paul goes on to urge ...

#### **B. THE NEED FOR CAREFUL OBSERVATION IN SELECTING ELDERS (1Ti 5:24-25).**

The manner in which Timothy can avoid appointing unqualified elders is to take his time (5:22) and observe the lives of these men carefully. Careful observation will reveal two classes of men:

(1) Those unfit for office (1Ti 5:24). There are two categories here: Those obviously unfit—their sins march on ahead of them for everyone to see; those not so obviously unfit—their sins follow after them, but eventually come to light. At first glance, they may seem qualified, but time will show their track record, that they are not godly men.

(2) Those fit for office (1Ti 5:25). Again, there are the same two categories: Those obviously fit for office—their good deeds are evident; those fit for office, but not so obviously. The last half of the sentence is a bit confusing, but I take it to be parallel to 1Ti 5:24, so the sense is, "Those good deeds of other men are not so evident at first, but they can't be hidden in the long run."

So Paul is saying that people aren't always what they appear to be on the surface. Men should not be selected for leadership in the church on a superficial or hasty basis. They don't always turn out to be what they seem to be at first. Carefully observe their way of life, especially in their home (1Ti 3:2, 4, 5). Also, how is their public reputation (1Ti 3:7)? Don't put a man into church leadership unless he has a proven record of godly character and good deeds.

#### **Conclusion**

We always are in danger of drifting with our worldly culture rather than confronting it with God's truth. The theme of our culture is tolerance of anything except someone who is not tolerant. It has affected the American church. A recent Christianity Today news article told of two well-known Christian authors who are under attack from what the article described as "self-appointed heresy hunters." Yet as the article quoted from one of the authors, it is clear that she has fallen into seriously false and non-Christian teaching, which she excuses as a failure on her part to communicate. But the tone of the article was that these "heresy hunters" are hounding these poor victims.

The Bible is clear that elders are not only to exhort in sound doctrine, but also to refute those who contradict (Titus 1:9). But the mood of our day is that we can't criticize or judge anyone, no matter how far out of line they are, because that implies that we're right and they're wrong, and that doesn't fit with the supreme virtue of tolerance.

During the time of the Reformation, many Catholic priests had mistresses and illegitimate children. Many of them were greedily misusing church funds to live in luxury. One major distinctive of the Reformed churches was a return to church discipline. They sought to hold their pastors and members accountable to the holy standards of God's Word. God greatly honored that return to



righteousness among His people.

Although you get accused of being hateful when you confront sin and call people to holiness, and although some do it wrongly because they lack compassion, it is not hate, but the love of God that confronts sin and false doctrine. Sin and teaching contrary to God's Word destroy people. Holiness and sound doctrine save people from God's judgment and build them in the joy of the Lord. Our God is holy. We His people, and especially we who are church leaders, must be holy ourselves in all our behavior. God's word to all of us from these verses is, "Keep yourself pure from sin" (1Ti 5:22b).

### Discussion Questions

1. When is it proper to expose false teaching by a Christian author or well-known leader? When is it not proper?
2. When does talking about someone who is not present cross the line into sinful gossip?
3. How should we respond when someone shares with us something inappropriate about someone else?
4. How can we faithfully carry out church discipline without becoming sinfully judgmental?

### 1 Timothy 5:20 Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning.

BGT 1 Timothy 5:20 Το ς μαρτ νοντας ν πιον π ντων λεγχε, να κα ο λοιπο φ βον χωσιν.

KJV 1 Timothy 5:20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

NET 1 Timothy 5:20 Those guilty of sin must be rebuked before all, as a warning to the rest.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:20 Publicly rebuke those who sin, so that the rest will also be afraid.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:20 As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:20 Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that the others may take warning.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:20 Those who sin should be reprimanded in front of the whole church; this will serve as a strong warning to others.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:20 As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest also may stand in fear.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:20 If anyone is at fault, reprimand him publicly, as a warning to the rest.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:20 Reprimand publicly those who do sin, so that the rest also will be afraid.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:20 Those sinning, reprove before all, that the others also may have fear;

GWN 1 Timothy 5:20 Reprimand those leaders who sin. Do it in front of everyone so that the other leaders will also be afraid.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:20 Say sharp words to sinners when all are present, so that the rest may be in fear.

MIT 1 Timothy 5:20 Correct those who sin in the presence of all of them, to instill fear in the rest.

- **rebuke:** Lev 19:17 Ga 2:11-14 2Ti 4:2 Titus 1:13
- **that others:** 1Ti 1:20 De 13:11 17:13 19:20 21:21 Ac 5:5,11 19:17

### Related Passages:

Matthew 18:15-17 "If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. 16 "But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED. 17 "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

## REBUKING OF ELDERS IN CONTINUAL SIN

**Those** - Who are **those**? In context this refers to the elders.

**Who continue in sin** ([hamartano](#) - present tense), **rebuke** ([elegcho](#)) **in the presence of all** - **Rebuke** is [present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#). Timothy was to continually be rebuking continual sinners. Some feel the **rebuke** is to be in the presence of the other elders. Alternatively the **rebuke** could be before the whole church since they are affected by a person in leadership.

**Hendriksen** says: Elders who walk in sinful ways must not be spared. In fact, their sin must be punished even more severely than that of others. The law made the same distinction (Lev. 4:22, 27). Timothy must not only bring their sin home to their conscience, but in their case he must do this not privately or in the presence of just a few, but publicly, that is, in the presence of the entire consistory, so that the remaining elders may also become filled with godly fear of wrong-doing. (Borrow [Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Guy King** says: This publicity may be a very painful proceeding, but it will prove salutary in the end, if its effect is to pull others up sharp. What a striking instance of such publicity we have in the incident in which Achan's transgression was dragged out into the light, and he himself, with his family, punished in the eyes of all, Joshua 7:16-26+. And how startling was the open treatment of Ananias and Sapphira, upon which, "**great fear came upon all the church**," Acts 5:2+. **A worthy leader is to be an example to the flock; an unworthy a warning to all.** (Borrow [1 Timothy - A Leader Led](#))

**Hiebert** - The verb "reprove" may be translated "convict" and unites "the sharp convincing proof of the error and the sharp condemning reproof of the vice" (Humphreys). "That the rest also may be in fear." Some limit the meaning of "the rest" to the fellow elders, but it seems better to refer it to the church generally. "A public rebuke in such case would at once vindicate the church from complicity with the sin, and deter others from falling into it" (Harvey).(Borrow [First Timothy](#))

**William Barclay** says: Those who persist in sin are to be publicly rebuked. That public rebuke had a double value. It sobered the sinner into a consideration of his ways, and wakened him into a sense of shame; and it made others have a care that they did not involve themselves in a like humiliation. The threat of publicity is no bad thing, if it keeps a man in the right way, even from fear. A wise leader will know when there is a time to keep things quiet, and a time for public rebuke. But whatever happens, the Church must never give the world the impression that it is condoning sin.

**Wiersbe** reminds us: The purpose of discipline is restoration, not revenge. Our purpose must be to save the offender, not to drive him away. Our attitude must be one of love and tenderness (Gal. 6:1-3+). In fact the verb restore that Paul used in Galatians 6:1 means "to set a broken bone." Think of the patience and tenderness involved in that procedure! (Borrow [The Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**So that** (term of purpose) **the rest** ([loipos](#)) **also will be fearful** ([phobos](#)) **of sinning**. - The rest would refer primarily to elders to have the fear of the LORD! But by application, if the flock sees their leaders rebuking their leaders, this would undoubtedly put the fear in them to. Fear is not the best preventative against sinning, but it can be very effective.

**THOUGHT-** I recall one married church leader who developed AIDS from homosexual encounters and he died very quickly. Sadly his sin was swept under the rug and was not revealed to the congregation. In my opinion, a golden opportunity was missed to put the fear of the LORD in the congregation. One has to wonder what effect full disclosure would have had on preventing secret sins by others in the congregation (cf Acts 5:2+).

**Demarest** says: Three things are said regarding elders: they are to be paid; they are to be protected from irresponsible accusations; they are to be strictly disciplined. (Borrow [The Communicator's Commentary. 1, 2 Thessalonians, 1, 2 Timothy, Titus](#) - now known as the "Preacher's Commentary")

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**Sin** (verb) ([264](#)) [hamartano](#) literally means to miss the mark (and so not share in the prize). Hamartano means to act contrary to the will and law of God. To commit a wrong. To be in error. **Hamartano** emphasizes loss which always results from missing God's mark or target, His **good and acceptable and perfect will** ([Ro 12:2](#)). **Gary Hill** on **hamartano** - **hamartánō** (from **a** = "not" + **méros** = "a part, share") [**ED: THIS PROPOSED DERIVATION WAS ORIGINALLY PROPOSED BY A. H. STRONG AND IS NOT FOUND IN MANY/MOST LEXICONS THUS ITS VALIDITY IS NOT ABSOLUTELY ESTABLISHED - IT DOES LEAD TO SOME INTERESTING APPLICATION AS HILL GOES ON TO UNFOLD**] – properly, **having no share in**; to sin, which **always brings forfeiture** (eternal loss because missing God's mark). Like **hamartía**, (**hamartánō**) is regularly used in ancient times of an archer missing the target (Homer, Aesch., etc). Every decision (action) done apart from faith ([pistis](#)) is sin ([Ro 14:23+](#); cf. [Heb 11:6+](#)). **Hamartanō** ("to sin") emphasizes **loss** which always results from missing God's mark (target; i.e. "His preferred will," see [thelema](#)). **Hamartánō** ("choosing sin") asserts the agenda of self, by (for) self, over God's loving plan. Ironically, this insists on bringing self-made condemnation (cf. [Titus 3:11+](#)). Reflection: **Believers experience loss every time they sin** (cf. [Heb 10:26+](#)), **as it diminishes their unique glorification awarded by Christ at His return.** ([The Discovery Bible](#))

**Rebuke** (convict, expose) ([1651](#)) [elegcho](#) or **elencho** is a primary verb but is related to **elegchos** = bringing to light) means

to **bring to the light** (to reveal hidden things) with the implication that there is adequate proof of wrongdoing. To expose, to convict, to reprove, to shame or disgrace and thus to **rebuke** another in such a way that they are compelled to see and to admit the error of their ways. To show someone that they have done something wrong and summon them to repent.

**Gary Hill** on **elegcho** - properly, to *convince* by solid, compelling *evidence* which especially exposes what is wrong or right....preeminently used of the Holy Spirit *producing conviction* in the heart. The Holy Spirit produces inner conviction, i.e. convinces people about what: misses God's mark ("sin"); has His approval ("righteousness"); and the eternal consequences of this (for everlasting punishment or reward). We constantly need the Holy Spirit to convict us about what is right as well as what is wrong so we don't hate what is wrong . . . more than love what is right! (The Discovery Bible)

**Rest** (others, finally, remaining, other things) (3062) **loipos** from **leipo** = to leave or to lack) is an adjective which refers to that which remains over - where it refers to people the sense is the rest, those that are left, the remainder (cf. Mt 22: 6; Mk 16:13; Lk 24: 9; Acts 2:37; Ro 11: 7; 1Co. 7:12; Rev. 12:17; 19:21). In the plural, loipos means remaining ones (Mt. 25:11; Acts 2:37; Ro 1:13; 2Cor. 12:13; 2Pet. 3:16) Loipos is used several times with the meaning of "other" which Webster defines as being the one (as of two or more) remaining or not included (Mk 4:19, 16:13, Lk 18:9, Acts 17:19, Rev 9:20)

**Fearful** (terrified) (5401) **phobos** from the verb **phébomai** = to flee from or to be startled) refers first to flight, to alarm, to fright or to terror (of the shaking type) (cf. Mt 14:26; Lk 21:26; 1Co 2:3). This type of fear is connected with fear of the unknown, fear of the future, and fear of authorities. It speaks of the terror which seizes one when danger appears.

**1 Timothy 5:21 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality.**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:21 Διαμαρτ ρομαι ν πιον το θεο κα Χριστο ησο κα τ ν κλεκτ ν γγ λων, να τα τα φυλ ξ ς χω ς προκρ ματος, μηδ ν ποι ν κατ πρ σκλισιν.

KJV 1 Timothy 5:21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

NET 1 Timothy 5:21 Before God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, I solemnly charge you to carry out these commands without prejudice or favoritism of any kind.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:21 I solemnly charge you before God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels to observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing out of favoritism.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:21 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:21 I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:21 I solemnly command you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus and the holy angels to obey these instructions without taking sides or showing favoritism to anyone.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:21 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels, I warn you to keep these instructions without prejudice, doing nothing on the basis of partiality.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:21 Before God, and before Jesus Christ and the angels he has chosen, I charge you to keep these rules impartially and never to be influenced by favouritism.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:21 I charge you before God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels to keep these rules without prejudice, doing nothing out of favoritism.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:21 I testify fully, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the choice messengers, that these things thou mayest keep, without forejudging, doing nothing by partiality.

GWN 1 Timothy 5:21 I solemnly call on you in the sight of God, Christ Jesus, and the chosen angels to be impartial when you follow what I've told you. Never play favorites.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:21 I give you orders before God and Christ Jesus and the angels of God's selection, to keep these orders without giving thought to one side more than another.

MIT 1 Timothy 5:21 I lay the responsibility on you before God, Christ Jesus, and his chosen angels. You must conserve these principles without prejudice, doing nothing influenced by favoritism.

- **charge:** 1Ti 6:13 1Th 5:27 2Ti 2:14 4:1
- **the chosen:** Mt 16:27 25:41 2Pe 2:4 Jude 1:6 Rev 12:7-9 14:10
- **that:** Ps 107:43 119:34 Mt 28:20
- **without bias,** Lev 19:15 De 1:7 33:9 Pr 18:5 Lu 20:21 Ac 15:37,38 2Co 5:16
- **in a spirit of partiality:** Mal 2:9 Jas 2:1-4 3:17

#### Related Passages:

Romans 8:33+ Who will bring a charge against God's **elect** ([eklektos](#))? God is the one who justifies;

Titus 1:1+ Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those **chosen** ([eklektos](#)) of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness,

### A SOLEMN CHARGE: BE IMPARTIAL

I solemnly charge ([diamarturomai](#) in present tense) **you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen** ([eklektos](#)) **angels** ([aggelos](#)), **to maintain** ([phulasso](#) - guard) **these principles without bias** ([prokrima](#) - prejudice) - Note the three "witnesses" (Father, Son, holy angels) to this charge which makes it all the more solemn and would certainly get Timothy's full attention and emphasize that this is a weighty task! The context is hearing accusations against elders and rebuking if necessary. Rank and leadership are not exempt.

[Albert Barnes](#) says: The word rendered **solemnly charge** means, properly, to call to witness; then to affirm with solemn attestations; and then to admonish solemnly, to urge upon earnestly. It is a word which implies that the subject is of great importance. Paul gives this charge as in the presence of God, of the Redeemer, and of the elect angels, and wishes to secure that sense of its solemnity which must arise from the presence of such holy witnesses.

[Hiebert](#) has a good word - It would be difficult to think of words carrying greater solemnity. Timothy is to carry out his task under the consciousness of working under the direct gaze of the spiritual world. All Christian work should be carried out as in God's sight. The use of one article with both "God and Christ Jesus" unites them, both being Deity, while another article with "the elect angels" sets them in contrast as creatures. "The elect angels" are the unfallen angels, as opposed to "the angels which kept not their first estate." (Borrow [First Timothy](#))

[Lowell Johnson](#) - Verse 21 says we are to do nothing in a spirit of partiality. If we play favorites in ministry, we do so before the watchful gaze of God, Christ and the heavenly host ... so there should be fairness. We live in a society that plays favorites. It's easy to give special treatment to those who are gifted, intelligent, rich, or beautiful without realizing what we are doing. We can also fall into the trap of deliberately working against people we happen not to like.

[Guy King](#) points out: Such cases are to be judged as in the sight of God and of Christ, and of His holy angels--who, if they rejoice at the conversion of sinners, must weep at the confusion of saints; and, in consequence, there must be nothing but exact rectitude in awarding praise or blame. (Borrow [1 Timothy - A Leader Led](#))

**Doing nothing in a spirit of partiality** ([proklisis](#)) - Paul says Timothy is to do no prejudging, nor is he to show an inclination toward one. Don't play favorites Timothy! Decisions on carrying out Paul's practical instructions were not to be made by personal bias toward or against a person. In light of the meaning of the word [proklisis](#) there should be no leaning toward one side more than the other in decision making. In short Timothy is to never allow personal inclination to bias his judgment!

[Lenski](#) says: Paul urges so solemnly upon Timothy, namely that he is to observe these things (about dealing with elders in v. 19, 20) "without prejudgment, doing nothing according to partiality." **Prejudgment** is risky and blinds the eye to just judgment when it should be rendered. [Partiality is] "leaning or inclining toward" somebody or something, hence "partiality." Timothy is usually thought of as being rather tender, some refer to his youth, and so "partiality" is taken to mean that he is warned against being tender and partial to accused elders. But the Greek means "leaning toward," either toward the elder or toward the accuser, for nothing is specified about the direction of the leaning. In a manner Timothy had to act as a judge in these cases, and in all of them, in those to be flatly turned down, and in those to be heard, his one course, for the good of all the elders and of all the churches, was genuine impartiality, consciousness of the fact that he was acting in God's sight. (Borrow [The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon](#))

**Hendriksen** says: Now in the matters discussed in verses 19 and 20, and, in fact, in any matter touching the discipline of churchleaders, one is easily influenced by purely subjective considerations. But this can spell ruin for the church and for all those concerned. Timothy, as apostolic delegate in the churches of Ephesus and vicinity, must not allow this to happen to him. Even today biased judges, ecclesiastical "machines," so-called "investigating-committees" manned by job-hunters, "buddy-ism," and the like can easily destroy a denomination. Corruption generally begins "at the summit." Church History furnishes many examples. The man in the pew does not know what happened "while he slept." When he wakes up--if he ever does!--it is generally too late. Hence, absolute impartiality and unimpeachable honesty in all such matters are essential. It is for that reason that the charge which the apostle now lays on Timothy is so very grave. Everything is at stake! The church of the twentieth century may well take to heart these solemn words! (Borrow [Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Demarest** says: To treat others impartially and without prejudice is not normally regarded in the realm of self-care. But for the Christian leader, the connection is clear. Credibility in pastoral ministry is closely tied to unprejudiced and impartial leadership. It's normal and natural to develop "favorites," folks with whom we work easily and naturally. But effective leadership requires that we work just as supportively with those we may not like as well.....To work impartially with all requires constant awareness and self-discipline. For most of us, it does not come naturally. But leaders who cater to or are controlled by "favorites" sow the seeds of division that ultimately destroy the effectiveness of any group. This could well be a motto on every pastor's desk: No prejudice, no partiality! (Borrow [The Communicator's Commentary. 1, 2 Thessalonians, 1, 2 Timothy, Titus](#) - now known as the "Preacher's Commentary")

**William Barclay** says: Timothy is urged to administer his office without favouritism and without prejudice. B. S. Easton writes: "The well-being of every community depends on impartial discipline." There is nothing which does more harm than when some people are treated as if they could do no wrong, and when others are treated as if they could do no right. Justice is a universal virtue, and in it the Church must surely never fall below the impartial standards which even the world rightly demands.

**Wiersbe** puts it this way: Paul's third caution is that Timothy obey the Word no matter what his personal feelings might be. He should act without prejudice against or partiality for the accused officer. There are no seniority rights in a local church; each member has the same standing before God and His Word. To show either prejudice or partiality is to make the situation even worse. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**J Vernon McGee** illustrates it this way: Timothy is to treat everyone in the church alike. There may be an officer in the church who is a wealthy man and who has been good to the pastor. Perhaps he has bought the pastor a suit of clothes or helped him buy a new car. A pastor will often brag that such a man is a member of his church, and he may not feel inclined to bring any charges against him even though it is evident the man is guilty. Paul says that we are not to show partiality in the church. James said the same thing in James 2:1-4, 9+.

**Bruce Barton - PLAYING FAVORITES** - We must be constantly on guard against favoritism, against giving preferential treatment to some and ignoring others. We live in a society that plays favorites. It's easy to give special treatment to those who are gifted, intelligent, rich, or beautiful without realizing what we are doing. We can also fall into the trap of deliberately working against people we happen not to like. The impartiality that Paul insisted on goes both ways: for example, we are neither to undermine those with whom we have a superficial disagreement, nor are we to overlook false teaching or sexual improprieties of a pastor who happens to be a dynamic speaker. Make sure that you honor people for who they are in Christ, not for who they are in the world. (Borrow [1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus](#))

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**Solemnly charge** ([1263](#)) **diamarturomai** from **diá** = intensifies meaning conveying idea of "thoroughly" + **marturomai** = witness, bear witness) means to thoroughly bear witness (give a thorough testimony), testify earnestly or repeatedly, to charge as if before witnesses (here God and Christ Jesus), to exhort earnestly and with authority in matters of extraordinary importance (here the integrity of the message proclaimed). It carries the idea of giving a forceful order or directive. Giving full, clear testimony. **Gary Hill** points out that **diamarturomai** always occurs in the Greek [middle voice](#). This emphasizes witnessing done with a *high level of self-involvement*, i.e. with strong *personal* interest motivating it. (The Discovery Bible).

**Diamarturomai - 15x/15v** - Lk. 16:28; Acts 2:40; Acts 8:25; Acts 10:42; Acts 18:5; Acts 20:21; Acts 20:23; Acts 20:24; Acts 23:11; Acts 28:23; 1 Thess. 4:6; 1 Tim. 5:21; 2 Tim. 2:14; 2 Tim. 4:1; Heb. 2:6

**Chosen** ([1588](#)) **eklektos** from verb **eklego** which in middle voice [[eklego/eklegomai](#)] means select or pick out for one's self which is derived from **ek** =out + **lego** =call) means literally the "called out ones" or "chosen out ones". The idea of **eklektos** is the ones who have been chosen for one's self, selected out of a larger number. **Friberg** - (1) generally, of a quality of persons or things choice, select, excellent (1Pe 2.4, 6); (2) in the Gospels of those who respond positively to the privileges of God's grace (Mt 22.14) and place trust in him ([substantivally](#) in Lk 18.7); (3) of the basis of salvation in God's calling people to belong to himself elect, chosen (Col 3.12); substantivally, of the community of believers elect (Mt 24.24); (4) substantivally, of the Messiah the Chosen One (Lk



23.35) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Ekleτος - 22x22v - choice(2), choice man(1), chosen(1), chosen(9), chosen one(1), elect(8)** Matt. 22:14; Matt. 24:22; Matt. 24:24; Matt. 24:31; Mk. 13:20; Mk. 13:22; Mk. 13:27; Lk. 18:7; Lk. 23:35; Rom. 8:33; Rom. 16:13; Col. 3:12; 1 Tim. 5:21; 2 Tim. 2:10; Tit. 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:1; 1 Pet. 2:4; 1 Pet. 2:6; 1 Pet. 2:9; 2 Jn. 1:1; 2 Jn. 1:13; Rev. 17:14

**Angels** (messenger)(32) [aggelos/angelos](#) possibly from **ago** = to bring) literally means a messenger (one who bears a message - Lk 1:11, 2:9, etc or does an errand). Most of the NT uses refer to heavenly angels (messengers) who are supernatural, transcendent beings with power to carry out various tasks. All uses of **aggelos** that refer to angels are masculine gender (the feminine form of **aggelos** does not occur.) **Vine** writes that **aggelos** refer to "an order of created beings, superior to man, Heb 2:7; Ps. 8:5, belonging to Heaven, Mt. 24:36; Mark 12:25, and to God, Luke 12:8, and engaged in His service, Ps. 103:20. **Angels** are spirits, Heb. 1:14, i.e., they have not material bodies as men have; they are either human in form, or can assume the human form when necessary, cp. Luke 24:4, with Lk 24:23, Acts 10:3 with Acts 10:30."

**Second use in 1 Timothy** - 1Ti 3:16 - By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by **angels**, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.

**Maintain** (guard) (5442) [phulasso](#) means to watch, to carry out the function as a military guard or sentinel (cp Ac 23:35, 28:16), to keep watch, to have one's eye upon lest one escape, to guard a person that he might remain safe (from violence, from another person or thing, from being snatched away, from being lost). The NT uses **phulasso** of guarding truth (eg, 1Ti 5:21, 6:20, 2Ti 1:14-[note](#)) **Phulasso** is the verb used to describe the shepherds **'keeping watch** (**phulasso**) over their flock by night (Lk 2:8), which congers up the image of savage wolves seeking to devour the helpless sheep. Elsewhere we read of the Good Shepherd, the Great Shepherd Who keeps watch over His sheep.

#### Other uses of Phulasso in the Pastoral epistles

1 Timothy 6:20 O Timothy, **guard** what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called "knowledge"—

2 Timothy 1:12 ( For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to **guard** what I have entrusted to Him until that day.

2 Timothy 1:14 **Guard**, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.

2 Timothy 4:15 **Be on guard** against him yourself, for he vigorously opposed our teaching.

**Bias** (4299)(**prokrima** from **pro** = before + **krino** = to judge) means prejudgment (with reference to place and time) or a judgment that involves taking a side beforehand, discrimination as the result of a prior unjustified decision, prejudice, partiality. "Prókrima includes an unfavorable prejudgment against one, partiality being included in the attitude of this prejudgment." ([Zodhiates](#)) Only here ([Hapax legomenon](#)).

**Partiality** (4346)(**prosklisis** from **prosklino** = to incline toward <> **pros** = to + **klino** = to incline) means an inclination towards or leaning against. Figuratively to show a relatively strong preference for something, inclination, a proclivity of mind. In classical Greek it can refer to the inclination of the scales to one side or the other. There would thus be a "bias" of the mind to one party or the other. The term is not found in the Septuagint. Only here ([Hapax legomenon](#)).

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#### QUESTION - [What are the elect angels?](#)

**ANSWER** - When God created the angels, they were all good just like the rest of creation (Genesis 1:31). Angels were holy and faithfully devoted to the Lord, but this changed when Satan rebelled against God (Isaiah 14:12–15; Ezekiel 28:16). Many angels followed Satan's rebellion and thus became "fallen" angels, or demons (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:3–4). In contrast, the angels who remained faithful to the Lord are known as "holy angels" or "elect angels" (Mark 8:38; 1 Timothy 5:21).

The Greek word for "**elect**" found in 1 Timothy 5:21 refers to being chosen or picked. This would indicate that God chose some angels not to fall with Satan. The same word in the verse, *eklektion*, is used elsewhere for Christians who are elected and chosen by God in salvation (Romans 8:33; Titus 1:1). The word suggests that the elect angels, like elect people, were chosen by God and cannot lose their elect position. None of the elect angels will rebel against God or lose their chosen status, just as Christians cannot lose their salvation as God's elect children (John 10:28; Romans 8:38–39). Secure in their standing before the Lord, elect angels cannot sin or go against the commands of God but will remain faithful to the Lord forever.



Of course, the fact that the holy angels are “elect” does not imply they are “saved” in the same way that Christians are. Both angels and Christians are chosen and elected by the Lord, but only humans can experience the new birth, forgiveness, and other aspects of salvation. The elect angels cannot experience forgiveness, since they have never sinned. Furthermore, Jesus died for humanity, not for angels. He took on human flesh and came to save mankind from their sins; His sacrifice was not to save the fallen angels (Hebrews 2:16). Angels “long to look into these things,” and are fascinated by the fact that the Son of God laid down His life to save humans (1 Peter 1:12). In this way, the election of angels is different from the election of Christians.

In addition to calling them “chosen” or “elect” angels, Scripture also designates them as good and “holy angels” (Mark 8:38). Worshipping and serving God are the main purposes of the elect angels (Revelation 7:11). Like Christians, elect angels are servants of God who seek to bring Him glory (Revelation 22:9). God uses the elect angels to carry out His will and to provide ministry to believers (Hebrews 1:14). Throughout history, elect angels have been a part of God’s plan in delivering messages (Daniel 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26), carrying out judgment (Genesis 19:13; Psalm 78:49; Revelation 14:17–20), and providing encouragement to God’s people (Acts 27:23).

The elect angels have the special purpose of serving God and doing as He commands. The elect angels [minister to believers](#) today, and they will also play a major part in the events of the end times. The power and position of the elect angels are awe-inspiring, but the Bible teaches that Jesus’ followers are more blessed than even they, since believers “have been made complete in Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority” (Colossians 2:10, BSB). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**1 Timothy 5:22 Do not lay hands upon anyone too hastily and thereby share responsibility for the sins of others; keep yourself free from sin.**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:22 χε ρας ταχ ως μηδεν πιτ θει μηδ κοιν νει μαρτ αις λλοτρ αις· σεαυτ ν γν ν τ ρει.

KJV 1 Timothy 5:22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.

NET 1 Timothy 5:22 Do not lay hands on anyone hastily and so identify with the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:22 Don't be too quick to appoint anyone as an elder, and don't share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:22 Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:22 Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:22 Never be in a hurry about appointing a church leader. Do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:22 Do not ordain anyone hastily, and do not participate in the sins of others; keep yourself pure.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:22 Do not be too quick to lay hands on anyone, and never make yourself an accomplice in anybody else's sin; keep yourself pure.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:22 Do not lay hands too readily on anyone, and do not share in another's sins. Keep yourself pure.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:22 Be laying hands quickly on no one, nor be having fellowship with sins of others; be keeping thyself pure;

GWN 1 Timothy 5:22 Don't be in a hurry to place your hands on anyone to ordain him. Don't participate in the sins of others. Keep yourself morally pure.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:22 Do not put hands on any man without thought, and have no part in other men's sins: keep yourself clean.

MIT 1 Timothy 5:22 Lay hands on no one hurriedly; neither be a party to sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

- **Lay:** 1Ti 4:14 Ac 6:6 13:3 2Ti 1:6 Heb 6:2
- **hastily:** 1Ti 3:6,10 Jos 9:14 2Ti 2:2 Titus 1:5-9
- **neither:** Eph 5:11 2Jn 1:11 Rev 18:4
- **keep:** 1Ti 4:12 Ac 18:6 20:26

## PROCEED WITH CAUTION BEFORE PUTTING HANDS ON

**Do not lay hands upon** (*epitithemi*) **anyone too hastily** (*tacheos*) - This command is a [present imperative with a negative](#) (see [need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) which means stop doing this or do not begin doing this. This command follows rebuking elders and it follows that if Timothy is slow and judicious to choose elders, the chances of having to serve a rebuke would be lessened! Instead of being very careful in observing potential candidates for a period of time, we often make decisions about these matters on the spur of the moment. Remember also that not everyone who wants to be a church leader is ready or capable. Hasty choices could lead to horrible consequences, and as explained below the one making the hasty choice would be guilty of the consequences.

[J Vernon McGee](#) says: Instead, today we often develop what I call Alka-Seltzer Christians and Alka-Seltzer churches--it's all fizz, foam, and froth, a lot of emotion, and a lot of talk about love, love, love. It is important that love be displayed in a church, but it needs to be anchored in the Word of God. Our mistake is that we often interpret some sort of experience as being the test of spiritual maturity. We've got the cart before the horse. The Word of God is the test, and experience can prove the truth of it.

[Lowell Johnson](#) - If we lay hands upon someone too hastily and publicly identify and authorize that person as a leader, we risk sharing in sin by putting someone in the office who proved to be unfit for the position.

**And thereby share** (*koinoneo* in present tense) **responsibility for the sins** (*hamartia*) **of others** - How could we "share" in their sins? In light of the previous command, if we (or Timothy in this case) fail to take our time in ordaining elders, we may end up selecting elders who are more prone to wander and thereby would be guilty of sharing blame for the negative consequences.

**Guthrie** says it this way -- The second half of this verse, neither be partaker of other men's sins seems to mean that whoever lays hands upon an unworthy man must take responsibility for the man's sins. (Borrow [The Pastoral Epistles : An Introduction and Commentary](#))

**Barton** - If we know about and yet enable the sins of others, those actions make us to some degree accessories in their wrongdoing. Our endorsement of the ministry of others must always be truthful. What we know carries with it heavy responsibilities. If we treat the damaging of truth lightly, we may end up indirectly participating in harm done to other people. Anyone who took part in ordaining an elder who later proved to be unfit for the position shared in the blame for negative effects on the church. If Timothy ordained a man who became a liability because of his persistent sinning, and if Timothy allowed that man to remain in the office despite those sins, Timothy would actually participate in those sins by compromising himself. (Borrow [1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus](#))

**Lange** says: Timothy gave to each man, in the laying on of hands, evidence of his own esteem; and should it appear afterward that he was, through haste, deceived in the person, then he would reproach himself as in some measure answerable for the consequences of others' sins.

In addition, if or when we fail to take disciplinary action against someone who has sin in his life, we become partners with him.

**Wiersbe** says: Only God knows the hearts of everyone (Acts 1:24). The church needs spiritual wisdom and guidance in selecting its officers. It is dangerous to impulsively place a new Christian or a new church member in a place of spiritual responsibility. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

[William Barclay](#) says: Before a man gains promotion in business, or in teaching, or in the army or the navy or the air force, he must give proof that he has earned it and that he deserves it. No man should ever start at the top. A man must give proof that he deserves a position of responsibility and leadership. This is doubly important in the Church; for a man who is raised to high office, and who then fails in it or brings discredit on it, brings dishonour, not only on himself, but also on the Church. In a critical world the Church cannot be too careful in regard to the kind of men whom she chooses as her leaders.

**Lenski** says: "Wait," Paul says, "until everything is duly and fully ascertained; wait also until thou art sure that he will make a capable, sound, well-informed teacher. Admit to the eldership and ordain only such a man." (Borrow [The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon](#))

**Keep** (*tereo*) **yourself free from sin** (*hagnos*) - **Keep** is [present imperative](#) (calls for continual vigilance against sin and calls for continual dependence [on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)). Timothy could neither capably assess those who were candidates for leadership

and could hardly deal with sin in the elders if he himself were in sin. And so the command calls for him to continually be vigilant as to this purity, something that he would only do by depending continually on the Holy Spirit.

**Hiebert** says: "keep thyself pure," so that he will remain fit to rebuke the sins of others. "Pure" must not be limited to moral purity, chastity, but refers rather to his purity of intention and singleness of life. (Borrow [First Timothy](#))

**Guthrie** says: The rather abrupt personal charge to Timothy, keep thyself pure, must primarily be understood in the general sense of honourable and upright behaviour. It is as if the apostle had said--make sure you appoint 'pure' men and keep yourself 'pure' in the process. (Borrow [The Pastoral Epistles : An Introduction and Commentary](#))

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**Lay** (laid, laying, put, place, attack) (2007) [epitithemi](#) from **epi** = upon + **tithemi** = to place, put) means literally to place or put upon, to lay upon (Mt 23:4; 27:29; Mk 4:21; Luke 15:5; Jn 9:15; Acts 15:10; 28:3; Ge 21:14; Ex 25:21, 30; Jos 10:24). **Epitithemi** was frequently used of laying on of hands (20 of 40 uses), including Jesus laying His hand on to heal (Mk 5:23, 6:5; 7:32; 8:23, 8:25, Mt. 9:18; Mt. 19:13, 15; Mk 8:25; Lk 4:40; 13:13; Acts 9:12; 28:8), of Jesus laying His hand on to bless (Mt 19:13, cf similar sense of benediction/ordination - Acts 8:17, 6:6; 8:19; 13:3; 19:6; 1Ti 5:22), of apostles Peter and John laying on of hands to "impart" the Spirit (Acts 8:17ff), associated with ordination (Acts 6:6), associated with imparting gifts by ordination (1 Ti 4:14).

**Share** (2841) [koinoneo](#) from **koinos** = common, shared by all) means literally to share one's possessions with the implication of some kind of joint participation and mutual interest. This Greek word was used in a marriage contract where the husband and wife agree to a joint-participation in the necessities of life. The things that are "shared" in the NT include needs of other believers (Ro 12:13-note), spiritual things (Romans 15:27-note), good things with one's teacher (Ga 6:6), giving to the work of missions (Php 4:15), responsibility in another's sins (! 1Ti 5:22), of Christ participating (sharing or taking part) in our humanity (He 2:14-note), of believers who experience the suffering for the sake of Christ (1Peter 4:13-note), in evil deeds ([2Jn 1:11](#)). The key idea in the word is that of a partnership, a possessing things in common, a belonging in common to. The saints at Philippi were in a glorious spiritual partnership with the great apostle Paul in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ! Believers have the same opportunity today as they pray for and give generously to missionaries taking the gospel to the thousands of hidden people groups. Are you sharing in the eternal endeavor? Don't pass up the once in a lifetime opportunity!

**Sins** (266) [hamartia](#) literally conveys the idea of missing the mark as when hunting with a bow and arrow (in Homer some hundred times of a warrior hurling his spear but missing his foe). Later **hamartia** came to mean missing or falling short of any goal, standard, or purpose. **Hamartia** in the Bible signifies a departure from God's holy, perfect standard of what is right in word or deed (righteous). It pictures the idea of missing His appointed goal (His will) which results in a deviation from what is pleasing to Him. In short, sin is conceived as a missing the true end and scope of our lives, which is the Triune God Himself. As **Martin Luther** put it "*Sin is essentially a departure from God.*"

**Keep** (reserve, guard, heed, kept in custody, observe, preserve) (5083) [tereo](#) from **teros** - a guard or warden) (4 more times in [2 Peter](#)) means to keep an eye on, to keep something in view, to hold firmly, to attend carefully, or to watch over it (watchful care - Jesus' prayer to His Father for His disciples - [Jn 17:11](#)). **Tereo** speaks of watching over, of taking care of, of guarding something which is in one's possession keeping it from loss or injury. It means to watch as one would some precious thing. The idea is to observe attentively, to heed, to keep watch over and to retain in custody.

**Free from sin** (chaste, pure)(53) [hagnos](#) means freedom from defilements or impurities. **Hagnos** describes what is morally undefiled and when used ceremonially describes that which has been so cleansed that it is fit to be brought into the presence of God and used in His service. Although **hagnos** refers primarily to that which is inwardly pure, this purity also affects a person's conduct. Here it indicates the irreproachable conduct of the wife. **Hagnos** means free from admixture of evil,

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**Rediscovering holiness** (borrow) by J. I. Packer - In The Great Divorce C. S. Lewis pictures a man with a lizard on his shoulder, representing lawless lust. The lizard whispers in his ear about how essential it is to his continued well-being. When the angel asks, "Shall I kill it?" the man's first response is to say no. (One thinks of Augustine's prayer: "Give me chastity, but not yet.")

We are all invalids in God's hospital. In moral and spiritual terms we are all sick and damaged, diseased and deformed, scarred and sore, lame and lopsided, to a far, far greater extent than we realize. Under God's care we are getting better, but we are not yet well.

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### Stay Out Of It!

Do not . . . share in other people's sins. — 1 Timothy 5:22

Today's Scripture: 1 Timothy 5:17-25

A Christian man in our community received a promotion that greatly increased his income. His fellow salesmen urged him to

upgrade his life through large credit card purchases. Whatever the others did, he did—family skiing vacations, cruises, new furniture, expensive shopping trips.

Then sales dipped, and he fell behind in his payments. The pressure put his marriage under tremendous strain. His buddies suggested that he do what they did: pad his expense accounts and turn in inflated sales reports. He did, but he became consumed with anxiety and guilt.

A wise Christian friend observed the strain he was under and prayed for him. He then counseled him to face the reality of his situation. The anguished believer finally cried out to God in shame and repentance. He confessed his sin, made things right with his company, and talked about it with his wife. Peace eventually returned to his life.

Paul's instructions to elders in today's passage apply to all believers in Jesus Christ. When so many cultures in the world are driven by pride and greed, the apostle's command not to "share in other people's sins" (v.22) is timely.

When enticed to join others in wrongdoing, stay out of it! By: David C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Sin's pleasures have such great appeal,  
They truly look like bargains rare;  
But seldom do we clearly see  
The hidden cost that we must bear.  
—D. De Haan

No one who follows Christ will ever stray from God

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## Keeping Clean

Keep yourself pure. — 1 Timothy 5:22

Today's Scripture: Genesis 5:18-24

A writer who visited a coal mine noticed a perfectly white plant growing by the side of the entrance. The author and the other visitors with him were astonished that there, where coal dust continually blew and settled, this little plant would be so pure and white.

As the people watched, a miner took some black coal dust and threw it on the plant, but not a particle stuck. The visitors repeated the experiment, but the dust would not cling. Nothing could stain the plant's snowy whiteness.

This illustrates what every Christian life should be like. We live in an evil world, surrounded by ungodly influences. It is our mission to be pure amid all this dirt and remain unspotted from the world. How is this possible?

Enoch lived in the days before the flood, a time when "the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). Yet the Bible tells us that "Enoch walked with God three hundred years" (5:22).

If the Lord can keep a plant white as snow amid clouds of black dust, can He not by His grace keep your heart pure in this world of sin? By: M.R. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Let me walk with You, dear Savior,  
Side by side and hand in hand;  
Keep me clean and pure and faithful  
Till I reach the heavenly land.  
—Hess

We live in the world, but the world must not live in us.

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## PERSONAL PURITY

Do not . . . share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure. 1 Timothy 5:22

Our society has become increasingly aware of the danger of polluting our air and other resources. We who are Christians have a responsibility to be concerned about such things. But there is another form of pollution that has always needed attention--the moral filth that contaminates our inner being and destroys the purity of heart and mind. That's why Paul told Timothy, "Keep yourself pure."

Holiness of life is important because it helps us maintain unbroken fellowship with God, and because it serves as a preserving influence in society (Matt. 5:13-16).

We can learn a lesson in purity from a member of the animal kingdom--the ermine. The fur of that little creature is well-known for its whiteness. The ermine has such a deep, instinctive desire to remain unblemished that it will allow itself to be captured and killed rather than let its feet or beautiful coat of fur be soiled. Those who hunt it know this. Finding an ermine's den, they will smear every opening with slime or filth. The ermine will yield itself to death rather than be defiled.

Are we as determined to keep our lives pure from the sin and moral filth that surrounds us? Remember the example of our lovely Lord. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26). The provision He has made for us is His own blood, which cleanses us from all sin. We also have the indwelling Holy Spirit, who guides us and keeps what God has cleansed. As we learn to yield to Him, personal purity becomes practice. --P.R.V. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Dear Lord, look down upon me,  
Forgive me when I sin;  
Make my heart a welcome place  
For You to dwell within. --Hein

**Purity in the heart produces power in the life.**

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### **GUARD YOUR PURITY!**

keep thyself pure. 1 Timothy 5:22

Two theological students were walking along a street in the Whitechapel district of London, a section where old and used clothing is sold. "What a fitting illustration all this makes!" said one of the students as he pointed to a suit of clothes hanging on a rack by a window. A sign on it read: SLIGHTLY SOILED--GREATLY REDUCED IN PRICE. "That's it exactly," he continued. "We get soiled by gazing at a vulgar picture, reading a coarse book, or allowing ourselves a little indulgence in dishonest or lustful thoughts; and so when the time comes for our character to be appraised, we are greatly reduced in value. Our purity, our strength is gone. We are just part and parcel of the general, shopworn stock of the world." Yes, continual slight deviations from the path of right may greatly reduce our usefulness to God and to our fellowman. In fact, these little secret sins can weaken our character so that when we face a moral crisis, we cannot stand the test. As a result, we go down in spiritual defeat because we have been careless about little sins.

After a violent storm one night, a large tree, which over the years had become a stately giant, was found lying across the pathway in a park. Nothing but a splintered stump was left. Closer examination showed that it was rotten at the core because thousands of tiny insects had eaten away at its heart. The weakness of that tree was not brought on by the sudden storm; it began the very moment the first insect nested within its bark.

With the Holy Spirit's help, let's be very careful to guard our purity. - H. G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Whatever dims thy sense of truth  
Or stains thy purity,  
Though light as breath of summer air,  
Count it as sin to thee.  
--Hale

Purity in your heart produces power in your life.

**1 Timothy 5:23 No longer drink water exclusively, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:23 Μηκ τι δροπ τι, λλ ο ν λ γ χρ δι τ ν στ μαχον κα τ ς πυκν ς σου σθενε ας.

KJV 1 Timothy 5:23 Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.

NET 1 Timothy 5:23 (Stop drinking just water, but use a little wine for your digestion and your frequent illnesses.)

CSB 1 Timothy 5:23 Don't continue drinking only water, but use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:23 (No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.)

NIV 1 Timothy 5:23 Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:23 Don't drink only water. You ought to drink a little wine for the sake of your stomach because you are sick so often.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:23 No longer drink only water, but take a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:23 You should give up drinking only water and have a little wine for the sake of your digestion and the frequent bouts of illness that you have.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:23 Stop drinking only water, but have a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:23 no longer be drinking water, but a little wine be using, because of thy stomach and of thine often infirmities;

GWN 1 Timothy 5:23 Stop drinking only water. Instead, drink a little wine for your stomach because you are frequently sick.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:23 Do not take only water as your drink, but take a little wine for the good of your stomach, and because you are frequently ill.

MIT 1 Timothy 5:23 No longer drink only water, but use a little wine (in it) for the sake of your stomach and your frequent sicknesses.

- 1Ti 3:3 4:4 Lev 10:9-11 Ps 104:15 Pr 31:4-7 Eze 44:21 Eph 5:18 Titus 1:7 2:3

## A LITTLE WINE FOR THE TUMMY

**No longer drink water** *exclusively* - This is a [present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)

**Hiebert** says: The words imply that Timothy was a total abstainer from wine. Perhaps the reason was that by his example he sought to deter others from the use of this enslaving and destructive drink. Paul advises him to drink "a little wine" as well as water. The purpose of Paul's counsel was hygienic. It was apparently the best known remedy for Timothy's troubles. (Borrow [First Timothy](#))

**But** (term of contrast) **use** ([chraomai](#)) **a little** ([oligos](#)) **wine** ([oinos](#)) **for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments** ([astheneia](#)) - Even if we do not completely understand what Paul meant by this advice, clearly he was concerned not only for Timothy's spiritual health but also his physical health.

**Hendriksen** ties this 23rd verse together with the passage by saying: The precept, "Keep yourself pure" was of a personal nature. This leads to another remark which is also personal: No longer drink water (only), but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments. Timothy was a conscientious person. He did not want to be accused of being the kind of individual who "lingers beside his wine" (1 Tim. 3:3). Hence, he had formed the habit of drinking nothing but water. However, in the Orient the water is often far from "safe." Those who have been there--including, for example, those who were there while serving in the armed forces--know this. If one insists on drinking nothing but unboiled water, attacks of dysentery may result. In fact, something worse might happen! Consequently, for the sake of helping Timothy to overcome his stomach-troubles and related ailments, which seem to have been coming to him "thick and fast," Paul advises him to stop being purely a water-drinker. Timothy must use some wine, not much wine, but some wine. That will do him good physically. Paul is here speaking of wine as a medicine, not as a beverage, as Wuest correctly observes. (Borrow [Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Lowell Johnson** - Some very carnal folks have used Verse 23 as justification for social drinking ... or habitual drinking. W. C. Fields tried that approach when he said, "I only keep a bottle around in case of snakebites. I also keep a small snake."

**William Barclay** says: Here is a sentence which shows the real intimacy of these letters. Amidst the affairs of the Church, and the problems of administration, Paul finds time to slip in a little bit of loving advice to Timothy about his health....Here we have a great



truth which the Christian and the worker for Christ forgets at his peril, the truth that we dare not neglect the body. No man ought ever to be too busy to look after his own health. And often a man will find that his spiritual dullness and flatness and aridity comes from the simple fact that his body is tired and neglected. No machine will run well unless it is duly cared for; and neither will the body. We wish to do Christ's work as well as we can; we will not and cannot do it well unless we are physically fit to do it.

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**Drink water** (5202)(**hudropoteo** from **hudor** = water + **pino** = drink) means to drink water, be a water drinker, drink (only) water, prefer water for drinking. Only here ([Hapax legomenon](#)).

**Use** (5530) **chraomai** from **chrao** = to lend) means to use, make use of, make the most of.

**Little** (small) (3641) **oligos** typically denotes a small number, a small amount of something, or shortness in size or time. There is significant overlap with mikros (small).

**Wine** (3631) **oinos** refers to a beverage (1) **literally**, of the juice of grapes, usually fermented (Lk 1.15); (2) **figuratively**, in apocalyptic symbolism; (a) as indicating the wrath of God outpoured in judgment (Rev 14.10); (b) as an enticement to immorality, like a love potion (Rev 17.2) ([Friberg](#))

**Ailments** (769) **astheneia** from **a** = without + **sthénos** = strength, bodily vigor) means literally without strength or bodily vigor = want of strength = lacking strength. Literally **astheneia** refers to bodily diseases or ailments (Lk 5:15, 13:11, 12, Jn 5:5, 11:4, 28:9). Another meaning of **astheneia** is incapacity to do or experience something, an inability to produce results, a state of weakness or limitation (1Co 15:43; 2Co 11:30; 12:5, 9, 10, 13:4; Ro 8:27; Heb 4:15; 5:2; 7:28; 11:34) Paul's use in 1Co 2:3 conveys the sense of weakness in terms of courage. **Richards** writes that "This group of words expresses powerlessness. The weak are without strength, incapacitated in some serious way.

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#### Walter Kaiser - [Hard Sayings of the Bible - go to page 632](#) - 1Ti 5:23 Wine for the Stomach?

In the context of a society in which the abuse of alcohol is such a serious problem, this piece of personal advice from Paul to Timothy raises for many the question of the legitimacy of the use of alcohol. Since alcohol is so easily abused, and since its abuse leads to the enslavement of people to addiction, should not Christians be encouraged to abstain from any use of it? This latter, prohibitionist view is expressed in a somewhat humorous anecdote from a discussion of this issue among a group of deacons. To the factual affirmation by one deacon that Jesus had turned water into wine at the wedding at Cana (Jn 2), another deacon replied, "Yes, he did, but he shouldn't have!" When the basic premise is the conviction that any use of alcohol is wrong, then Jesus' action and Paul's admonition become problematic.

Paul's word must be understood in the context of other advice in the correspondence with Timothy and Titus. It also must be seen as a sound piece of advice in the cultural context and as an expression of a central biblical principle for Christian living.

Earlier in 1 Timothy, Paul had listed among the characteristics of those who would be leaders in the church that they be "not given to drunkenness" (1 Tim 3:3) or "not indulging in much wine"(1 Tim 3:8). In advice to Titus, elders need to be examples who are "not given to drunkenness" (Tit 1:7), and the elder women in the church are to be taught not to be "addicted to much wine" (literally, "slaves to wine," Tit 2:3). In all these injunctions, the emphasis is clearly on moderation; namely, a responsible use of alcohol that does not lead to its control of one's life. (Gordon Fee understands these warnings as "negative reflections on first-century culture itself, which often admired heavy drinkers" (1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Good News Commentary [San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984], p. 140).) This is in keeping with a central principle of Christian life stated by Paul in Ephesians 5:18: "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit." The only legitimate controlling reality in the believer's life is to be God's Spirit. All other controlling realities are, in fact, idolatrous.

In light of these prohibitions against the excessive use of alcohol, Paul's advice to Timothy, "Stop drinking only water and use a little wine" (emphasis mine), implies that Timothy may have concluded, from the warnings against excessive use, that total abstinence was called for. It may even be that the false teachers, in their prohibition against certain foods (1 Tim 4:3), had argued for total abstinence. (Whether these teachings were grounded in Jewish regulations regarding clean and unclean foods, we do not know. But in the advocacy of an ascetic style of life, the Stoic philosopher Epictetus (A.D. 55–135) taught that one should "drink water only." (Cited by A. J. Hultgren, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, 2 Thessalonians, Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament [Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984], p. 93.))

In any case, Timothy's total rejection of alcohol seems to have had harmful consequences for his health. So Paul, in keeping with his warnings against abusive use, counsels for the use of "a little wine." In this, he is simply reflecting the common use of wine, especially for medicinal purposes, in the ancient world. Its beneficial effects "against dyspeptic complaints, as a tonic, and as counteracting the effects of impure water, were widely recognized in antiquity" (. N. D. Kelly, A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles (New York: Harper, 1964), p. 129, cites several Jewish and Hellenistic sources, including Hippocrates, who recommended moderate

amounts of wine for a patient for whose stomach water alone is dangerous.) and are confirmed by modern medicine. Paul's view on this matter may have been backed by the advice of his fellow worker Luke, the beloved physician.

See also comment on PROVERBS 31:6–7.

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### Norman Geisler - 1 TIMOTHY 5:23—[Was Paul recommending wine-drinking for Christians \(When Critics Ask\)?](#)

**PROBLEM:** The Bible repeatedly warns against abuse of strong drink and drunkenness (Prov. 20:1; 31:4–5; Isa. 24:9; 1 Cor. 6:9–10; Eph. 5:18). However, here Paul tells Timothy to “no longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities.” Doesn't this commend wine drinking?

**SOLUTION:** Once the entire context is understood, there is no basis here for Christians to engage in the social drinking of wine (or other alcoholic beverages). First, Paul says “a little,” not a lot. Paul elsewhere urges Christian leaders to be temperate (1 Tim. 3:3, 8).

Second, it was “for his frequent infirmities” not for pleasure. In other words, it was recommended for medicinal purposes, not for social purposes.

Third, the Bible speaks often of the evil of wine drinking. It pronounces woes on those who drink in excess (Isa. 5:11; Amos 6:6; Micah 2:11). All are warned that too much alcohol will lead to disgrace and judgment (Amos 6:6–7).

Finally, the wine that was used in the biblical times was mixed with three parts water to one part wine, thus diluting it to a relatively harmless amount of alcohol. When this was taken in this minimal amount in conjunction with a meal, there was little chance in a non-alcoholic society for it to be personally or socially harmful. The same is not true today, since the wine, beer, and whiskey being imbibed is by biblical standards “strong drink.” And this is even more problematic in an alcoholic culture where one out of ten persons who begins to drink becomes a problem drinker. In this context it is better to follow the advice of Paul elsewhere when he said, “it is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak” (Rom. 14:21).

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### Faith And Medicine

No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities. — 1 Timothy 5:23

Today's Scripture: 1 Timothy 4:1-11

Several years ago a young boy died of an illness because his parents refused to call a doctor. They believed that to use medicine implied a lack of faith in God. After the boy's death, they said, “It is God's will.”

In 1 Timothy 5:23, Paul advised Timothy to take wine for his stomach's sake and for his “frequent infirmities.” Bible scholars aren't sure what Timothy suffered from. Some say he had a nervous condition. Others say that Paul advised wine as a substitute for unsafe drinking water. Whatever the problem, Paul was recommending that Timothy take wine as a remedy for a physical or emotional condition.

Earlier Paul had told Timothy that every created thing is good and is not “to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer” (1 Tim. 4:4-5). This assures us that God approves of our using available means to promote health, including medicine. But there is one important requirement: We must pray about it and receive it with thanksgiving.

How grateful we can be for medical advances that improve the quality of our lives and give us more years to serve Him! But let's always remember that with or without medicine, God is the source of all healing. By: Dennis J. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The God who graciously imparts the skill  
To hands that practice healing arts is still  
The solitary source of every breath,  
And He alone delivers us from death.  
—Gustafson

Asking God for miracles is no substitute for using God-given means.

BGT 1 Timothy 5:24 Τιν ν νθρ πων α μαρται προ δηλο εσιν προ γουσαι ες κρσιν, πισ ν δ κα πακολουθο σιν·

KJV 1 Timothy 5:24 Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after.

NET 1 Timothy 5:24 The sins of some people are obvious, going before them into judgment, but for others, they show up later.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:24 Some people's sins are obvious, going before them to judgment, but the sins of others surface later.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:24 The sins of some people are conspicuous, going before them to judgment, but the sins of others appear later.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:24 The sins of some men are obvious, reaching the place of judgment ahead of them; the sins of others trail behind them.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:24 Remember, the sins of some people are obvious, leading them to certain judgment. But there are others whose sins will not be revealed until later.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:24 The sins of some people are conspicuous and precede them to judgment, while the sins of others follow them there.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:24 The faults of some people are obvious long before they come to the reckoning, while others have faults that are not discovered until later.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:24 Some people's sins are public, preceding them to judgment; but other people are followed by their sins.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:24 of certain men the sins are manifest beforehand, leading before to judgment, and certain also they follow after;

GWN 1 Timothy 5:24 The sins of some people are obvious, going ahead of them to judgment. The sins of others follow them there.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:24 The sins of some men are clearly seen, going before them to be judged; but with others, their sins go after them.

MIT 1 Timothy 5:24 The sins of some people are evident, preceding them to judgment; and for some, there are sins that follow them there.

- Jer 2:34 Ac 1:16-20 5:1-11 8:18 Ga 5:19-21 2Ti 4:10 2Pe 2:20,21

### NEITHER VICE NOR VIRTUE CAN REMAIN HIDDEN FOREVER

The sins ([hamartia](#)) of some men are quite evident ([prodelos](#)), going before them to judgment ([krisis](#)) For others, their sins ([hamartia](#)) follow after ([epakoloutheo](#)). - This passage fits nicely with 1Ti 5:22 and reveals one of the difficulties in choosing elders. Some sins are conspicuous and others are only revealed after examination. Thus a distinction is drawn between men whose sins are clearly evident and those whose sins are not immediately apparent but who will ultimately be pursued by them (they follow after). The certainty of God's judgment upon sin is clear here in this passage. The picture is frightening for one's open sins go before the perpetrator to the judgment-seat like heralds, proclaiming their sentence in advance! If this doesn't put the fear of the LORD in you, what will?

**Barton** - All people are headed toward judgment. Along that path, some people's sins are conspicuous (easy to spot), while others pass by us before their sins become apparent, if they become apparent at all. A person must be known well before deciding whether he is qualified to serve the church in a leadership position. The "judgment" Paul referred to included both the judgment of God and the judgment required by Timothy in authorizing leaders. Paul was warning Timothy and us about the importance of not judging by immediate appearances. Sometimes problems are easy to see, but other times they remain hidden for quite a while. (Borrow [1 Timothy](#), [2 Timothy](#), [Titus](#))

**John Phillips** - Some men's sins are flagrant, requiring no investigation to uncover them. Such sins march ahead of the guilty person to the place of judgment. Other sins are covered up and are not exposed without careful investigation. Some people manage to conceal their guilt all of their lives, but their sins, which follow them as a weasel follows a rabbit, will catch up with them at the judgment seat of Christ. The sin of Simeon and Levi, for example, was flagrant, heralding the need for judgment (Gen. 34:25-31; 49:5-7). The sin of Reuben, however, was concealed, so he mistakenly thought that he had gotten away with it-until it was exposed publicly by Jacob on his deathbed (49:3-4). (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Wiersbe** says: In other words, the church must carefully investigate the lives of potential leaders to make sure that there is nothing seriously wrong. To ordain elders with sin in their lives is to partake of those sins! If simply saying "Goodbye" (God be with you) to a heretic makes us partakers of his evil deeds (2 John 10-11), then how much more guilty are we if we ordain people whose lives are not right with God? ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Hiebert** says: Some sins are open and manifest to all and are like heralds going before the sinner proclaiming his guilt. "And some men also they follow after." In other cases the sins of men are concealed; they lag behind and are revealed only after the culprit has been thoroughly examined. The "judgment" here is not the final judgment of God, although that lies in the background, but rather the trial which Timothy must hold before candidates are appointed. The final revelation of a man's sins before the bar of God would not help Timothy now in his evaluation of a man's character. (Borrow [First Timothy](#))

**Hendriksen** has an interesting thought on this verse - In the case of other men the situation is different. Their sins follow them (literally follow after them, or follow them up). When their case is considered in order that a decision may be reached, they are found, after thorough examination, to be unfit for office. Before their case comes up, Timothy and perhaps several presbyters consider these men to be possible candidates for office. After thorough examination and the rendering of a judgment, things take on an altogether different aspect. The sins of these men have now been uncovered, so that, the judgment having been rendered, there is no longer any doubt about their unfitness for office (Borrow [Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles](#))

**Barton** on **OPEN AND HIDDEN SINS** - At times, the desire to have a great speaker or a growing church has caused people to overlook warning signs in ministerial candidates. Or, when improprieties occur, people avoid taking action because they want to "keep the peace." Churches that have too quickly overlooked the possibility of wrongdoing in leaders who appeared so acceptable have had to endure shocking and shaming humiliation when extramarital relations, wife and child abuse, alcoholism, and mismanagement have been uncovered. But Paul also mentioned inward qualities in 1Ti 6:3-10 that can be equally devastating to a ministry in the long run. What questions must be answered by those taking leadership in your church? How are they held accountable? How are moral and ethical failures by leaders handled? Who would be the best person to initiate the development of such procedures? (Borrow [1 Timothy](#), [2 Timothy](#), [Titus](#))

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**Quite evident** (4271)(**prodelos** from **pros** = before + **delos** = clear, evident, manifest) means to manifest openly before all and thus well-known or conspicuous. **Prosdelos** - 3x - evident(1), quite evident(2). 1Ti 5:24; 1Ti 5:25; Heb 7:14. Not in the non-apocryphal Septuagint.

Gilbrant - **Classical Greek and Septuagint Usage** Prodēlos is a compound form of **pro**, "before," and **delos**, "visible, clear." In the New Testament the preposition **pro** has an intensive force rather than temporal (Moulton-Milligan). **Prodēlos** refers to that which is perfectly clear, very obvious, or known to all. The intensive use is well illustrated in 2 Maccabees 14:39 where Nicanor, the governor of Judea, sent 500 soldiers to arrest Razis, a devout Jew, in order to clearly show his hatred of the Jews.

**New Testament Usage** The word is used three times in the New Testament. In Hebrews 7:14 it can mean "evident" as in the KJV or "well known": "It is well known that our Lord was born into a family from the tribe of Judah" (author's translation). In 1 Timothy 5:24,25 the KJV interprets prodēlos as temporal: "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment." However, most translations render this text intensively: "The sins of some people are very obvious, going on before them to the place of judgment" (see GNB, NEB, NIV, RSV). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Going before** (go ahead, lead way, walk in front)(4254) **proago** from **pro** = before + **ago** = go) means to go before. **Transitively** (BDAG = to take or lead from one position to another by taking charge) = to lead forward, lead or bring out (Ac 12:6; 16:30; 17:5; 25:26) **Intransitively** (BDAG = to move ahead or in front of) = to go before, lead the way, precede either (a) in space Mt 2:9; Mk 11:9; walk ahead of Mk 10:32 or (b) in time go or come before (Mt 14:22; Mk 6:45; 14:28; 1 Ti 1:18; 5:24; Heb 7:18; get in before Mt 21:31)

**Judgment** (justice, court, sentence)(2920) **krisis** from **krino** = to judge, decide) means a decision or judgment, verdict, justice, court (tribunal). The first use is by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount declaring "Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the **court**." ("in danger of judgment") (Mt 5:21, cp also Mt 5:22) Mt 10:15, 11:22, 24 all describe Jesus' sobering warning to the Jews of a

specific future and frightening "day of **judgment**." (cp "**sentence** of hell" Mt 23:33, see also 2 Peter 2:9, 11, 3:7, 1 John 4:17) In Jn 5:24 Jesus gives sinners the way of escape, the way to miss the horrible day of **judgment** (Heb 10:27)! In Mt 12:18 God's **judgment** is equated with **justice**, for He is the righteous and just Judge (cp Mt 12:20, 23:23, Rev 16:7). Note the striking contrast in Jn 5:29 "those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of **judgment**." There is no such thing as reincarnation but only one life, one death, one **judgment** (Heb 9:27)

**Follow after** (1872) **epakoloutheo** from **epi** = upon or an intensifier + **akoloutheo** = to follow and figuratively in a moral sense - see below) literally means to follow after, to follow upon or follow closely. To follow close upon. Literally to go along in someone's footsteps. The figurative meaning is to follow or imitate someone's life, living in the same way. Another nuance describes pursuing a matter (with devotion, dedication or attention) (as in 1Ti 5:10). Mark 16:20 refers to accompanying authenticating signs. The compound verb implies close following. From writers and painters, the metaphor changes now to a guide.

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**Henry Blackaby** - 1 Timothy 5:24–25 Every day we keep hearing the same old lie: "You can do something wrong, and nobody will ever know." News reports parade an endless string of scandals before our eyes—scandals involving people who thought they could sin and never be found out. If they had known they would be found out, they might not have sinned, but somehow they convinced themselves they would never get caught. Most sin begins with this lie.

Paul told Timothy that good deeds will eventually be made known as well. Even when we try to do good deeds secretly, people eventually find out. Sometimes, very soon. Sometimes it is not until a person's death that his kindness and generosity are revealed. Ultimately, everything we have done, whether good or bad, will be announced before the throne of the Lord of the universe (2 Corinthians 5:10). What a humbling thought!

Have you been under the misconception that you can sin and not be discovered? Remember these verses! God says you will be found out. Have you been performing good deeds but feeling a little hurt that no one seems to notice? Don't worry. A time will come when every good thing you've done will be duly recognized for what it was. God is perfectly just. He will reward you for your goodness. Remember that God sees everything. Nothing is hidden from him. Knowing this should be all the incentive you need to live a holy life. (Borrow [The experience : a devotional and journal : day by day with God](#))

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## Nothing Hidden

Some men's sins are clearly evident . . . Likewise, the good works of some . . . and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden. — 1 Timothy 5:24-25

Today's Scripture: 1 Timothy 5:24-25

A woman had been maligned and misrepresented by an envious co-worker. She was frustrated because her attempts to confront her in private had only made matters worse. So she decided to swallow her pride and let the matter go. She said, "I'm glad the Lord knows the true situation." She expressed a profound truth that both warns and comforts.

Paul pointed out that nothing can be concealed forever (1 Timothy 5:24-25). This serves as a solemn warning. For example, a news report told about a highly respected person who was arrested for crimes he had been secretly committing for years.

Yet the fact that nothing can be hidden can also be a great consolation. I have known people who never held a position of honor, nor were they recognized for their service. After they died, however, I learned that in their own quiet way they had touched many lives with their kind words and helpful deeds. Their good works could not remain hidden.

We can hide nothing from God—that's a solemn warning! But it's also a great comfort, for our heavenly Father knows about every encouraging smile, every kind word, and every loving deed done in Jesus' name. And someday He will reward us. By: Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Be strong and to the will of God be true,  
For though your book of life be sealed,  
God knows what lies ahead awaiting you,  
He knows when it should be revealed.

—Anon.

Neither vice nor virtue can remain a secret forever.

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**1 Timothy 5:25 Likewise also, deeds that are good are quite evident, and those which are otherwise cannot be concealed.**

BGT 1 Timothy 5:25 σα τως κα τ ργατ καλ πρ δηλα, κα τ λλωσ χοντα κρυβ ναι ο δ νανται.

KJV 1 Timothy 5:25 Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.

NET 1 Timothy 5:25 Similarly good works are also obvious, and the ones that are not cannot remain hidden.

CSB 1 Timothy 5:25 Likewise, good works are obvious, and those that are not obvious cannot remain hidden.

ESV 1 Timothy 5:25 So also good works are conspicuous, and even those that are not cannot remain hidden.

NIV 1 Timothy 5:25 In the same way, good deeds are obvious, and even those that are not cannot be hidden.

NLT 1 Timothy 5:25 In the same way, the good deeds of some people are obvious. And the good deeds done in secret will someday come to light.

NRS 1 Timothy 5:25 So also good works are conspicuous; and even when they are not, they cannot remain hidden.

NJB 1 Timothy 5:25 Similarly, the good that people do can be obvious; but even when it is not, it cannot remain hidden.

NAB 1 Timothy 5:25 Similarly, good works are also public; and even those that are not cannot remain hidden.

YLT 1 Timothy 5:25 in like manner also the right works are manifest beforehand, and those that are otherwise are not able to be hid.

GWN 1 Timothy 5:25 In the same way, the good things that people do are obvious, and those that aren't obvious can't remain hidden.

BBE 1 Timothy 5:25 In the same way, there are good works which are clearly seen; and those which are not so, may not be kept secret.

MIT 1 Timothy 5:25 Likewise, good works also are evident, and those that are otherwise cannot be concealed.

- **good:** 1Ti 3:7 Mt 5:16 Ac 9:36 10:22 16:1-3 22:12 Ga 5:22,23 Php 1:11
- **cannot:** Ps 37:5,6 Mt 6:3-6 Lu 11:33

## **GOOD DEEDS ARE SEEN & CANNOT BE HIDDEN**

**Likewise also, deeds ([ergon](#)) that are good ([kalos](#)) are quite evident ([prodelos](#)), and those which are otherwise cannot be concealed ([krupto](#))** Now Paul plays the other side of the record, for in verse 24 he talked about the sins, and now he talks about "THE GOOD WORKS." Whereas some sins are conspicuous and others are hidden, so likewise "THE GOOD WORKS": some are conspicuous and some are hidden, but they will not be permanently.

**Barton** - Many of the leadership qualities that Paul listed in 3:2–7 fit in this category. Some, like hospitality and gentleness, create immediate and visible results, while others, like household management and guilelessness, only become apparent over a period of time. Both verses 24 and 25 explain why Paul instructed Timothy to choose church leaders carefully. Hasty assessment of men for leadership positions could mean overlooking sins or good qualities; then unqualified men might be chosen and qualified men set aside. The hard fact is that in time, a man's true personality is revealed, for better or for worse. It is far better for the church when leaders are carefully and prayerfully selected. (Borrow [1 Timothy](#), [2 Timothy](#), [Titus](#))

**John Phillips** - "Likewise," wrote Paul, "the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid." We have all known people whose godliness, gifts, and greatness have earned them public recognition in this life. Men flocked to the standard raised by Martin Luther. Queen Mary of Scotland feared John Knox and his preaching more than she feared all of the armies of England. David Livingstone was honored in life and death by an admiring nation. George Müller's funeral closed down Bristol. Millions of people from all walks of life have acknowledged Billy Graham as an evangelist-statesman. Church history books are full of the stories of such people. Paul himself was confident of the reward that awaited him at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Tim. 4:6-8). By the same token, those who have opposed, attacked, and slandered the giants of the faith will one day receive their due reward, as did Shimei in the Old Testament. He cursed David, secretly at first but then openly, and he lived to rue the day (2 Sam. 16:5-13; 19:16-23; 1 Kings 2:8-9, 36-46). Those whose opposition has been secret and treacherous will be exposed openly. (See [Exploring the Pastoral Epistles](#))

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**Concealed** ([2928](#)) **krupto** English = crypt, cryptic) is a verb meaning to cover, to hide, to conceal, to keep secret (either protectively or for selfish reasons). To keep something from being seen. In some contexts **krupto** means to hide so as to keep secret (eg, Lk 19:42). The first use in the Bible (Septuagint) is sad describing when Adam and Eve who had just committed the first sin "heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife **hid** themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden." (Ge 3:8,10) In Ge 4:15 because of his sin of murdering Abel Cain cries "Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground; and from Your face **I will be hidden**" (Ge 4:14). In Ge 18:17 we see the first figurative use when God asked "Shall I **hide** from Abraham what I am about to do?"