

1. How are other people supposed to know we are Christians?
  - a) Do they know by the big study Bibles we carry under our arms?
  - b) Do they know by the bumper stickers on our cars?
  - c) Do they know by the fact they see us driving off to church every Sunday?
  - d) There is a biblical answer to this question:
    - i) Jesus said, “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35, NKJV)
      - a) The “all” of that verse, refers to non-believers as well as believers.
    - ii) People are supposed to look at us as believers and say, “boy, those people really take good care of each other. I have to admit there is an appeal to that”!
  - e) The point is there is nothing wrong with carrying around your Bible or putting a bumper sticker on your car. But Jesus said, the *main way* people are to know that we are Christians is by the love we have for each other.
  - f) What does that mean practically? How do we “love each other”?
    - i) Does that mean we walk around all day hugging each other?
    - ii) While there is nothing wrong with a good hug, I don’t think that’s the point. ☺
    - iii) The Greek word Jesus uses for love implies to give oneself totally to others. It is the idea of giving up your own desires and wants in order to help others.
      - a) Why do we do this? First of all, we do it as a sign to unbelievers. That is what Jesus stated in John 13:35.
      - b) I also believe another benefit is that it helps to strengthen and mature the church. God’s concern isn’t just to see as many people saved as possible. If that were the case, we could encourage death as soon as we’re saved.
        - (1) God wants us to mature as believers. To grow in his love. Part of that requires the encouragement and support of other believers.
        - (2) Thus, to “love one another” is to help fulfill that growth in maturity of other believers.
      - c) This is where spiritual gifts come into play. God gives all believers talents. God expects us to use those talents to help grow the church. By giving of yourself *through* those talents to others, you help to strengthen the church.
2. OK John, that’s all fine and dandy. What does any of this have to do with Chapter 5 of first Timothy? Glad you asked! ☺
  - a) If you read this chapter, it is full of practical lessons.
    - i) Mainly it focuses on 1) how to treat widows and 2) how to treat elders.
    - ii) Before I dissect this chapter verse by verse, I want you to see the big picture.
      - a) God cares about those who are saved. Not just so we can go out and save more people, but so we can strengthen and mature those who believe.
      - b) This is the underlying connection of all the verses of the chapter.
        - (1) That we, as believers, work together *in love* to support one another.
  - b) Another big-picture idea to see in this chapter is that in order for someone to grow as a believer, negative reinforcement is as important as positive reinforcement.
    - i) Rebuking those who are wrong has just as important a role as commending those who are doing what is right.
    - ii) A lot of Chapter 5 focuses on how to rebuke those who are in error.
      - a) The primary emphasis is not on removing from our church those who are causing harm, although there are discussions of that topic in this chapter.

- iii) The focus is on how to treat people. There is a place for rebuking and correction. If it is not done in love with a proper attitude, then we are not being a good Christian witness as Jesus commanded in “loving each other”.
  - c) With that idea of loving and helping one another, let’s start on Verse 1.
- 3. Chapter 5, Verse 1: Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, <sup>2</sup>older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.
  - a) Paul starts a new topic in Verse 1 of Chapter 5.
    - i) The end of Chapter 4 focuses on how pastors and elders are to behave personally.
    - ii) Chapter 5 switches to the topic of how pastors and elders are to treat others.
  - b) The opening two verses is a general statement. The next set of verses get into specifics.
    - i) The rest of Chapter 5 focuses on two specific types of examples: 1) widows and 2) other elders in the church. The last few verses of Chapter 5 also give some other examples, but widows and elders are the primary focus.
  - c) Let’s get back to Verses 1 -2. The key words to underline are “not rebuke” and “harshly”.
    - i) This verse implies the necessity of rebuking those within the church.
      - a) People are not perfect. They make mistakes. In order to correct those mistakes, rebuking by a pastor or an elder is a necessary part of the ministry. I believe that also applies for the laymen of the church.
      - b) I also emphasize “harshly”. We as Christians, often lack good diplomacy.
        - (1) When we see a sin of someone in the church, a natural reaction is to first tell others, out of fear of confrontation with that person.
        - (2) It is natural to not want to confront that person, as we all have a desire to be liked and no one wants an argument.
        - (3) The other problem is our ego. Some with boldness will think, “it is my job to be the sin-police. They are doing wrong and they need to know it.” ☺
      - c) Which leads us back to “not rebuke” and harshly.
    - ii) What Paul is saying in these two verses is “if this person who is sinning is your own father, or your own mother, or your own daughter or son, how would you then rebuke that person? If you really loved that person, and wanted to act in love, how would you then rebuke their act?
      - a) This is where prayer comes in. I have often fired up quick prayers in those situations something like “Father, guide my tongue in this action, and help me to speak in love and glorify you in this action”.
      - b) The funny thing about idea is sometimes we can be tougher on our own families than we can on strangers. There are situations where I would have “no problem” harshly rebuking my parents or my children. This is because I love them. Even if I argue with them, I will still love them and stand by them! I don’t fear being disliked by my parents, children or siblings because they know I still love them despite the chastising-in-love.
        - (1) That is the point. If people can sense that despite the criticism, underneath it all, we love them and care for them, they are more likely to accept that criticism, because they know that we love them and care for them.
        - (2) We tend to be more diplomatic with friends and strangers than we do with our own family because those friends and strangers don’t feel the long-term family bonds that Paul is talking about.
        - (3) That is the problem with the church. Paul wants the church to be more like the family unit.

- (4) Let's face it, In real life, you don't have "The Brady Bunch" ☺
  - (a) Families argue, family members rebuke each other, but at the end of the day, we are still family members and won't let outsiders interfere with that.
  - (b) That is what Jesus meant by the church being a family unit and the desire to "love one another".
  - (c) That is what Paul is trying to get home at in this verse about the idea of rebuking members of the church as if they were members of your own family.
    - (i) Rebuke has its place in the church. It needs to be done in love and diplomatically.
    - (ii) Again, ask God for words of wisdom in those situations. You will be *amazed* at what actually comes out of your mouth!
  
- 4. Now, Paul switches to the topic of widows: Verse 3: Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need.
  - a) The more literal translations say something like "Honor widows who are really widows." (From the NKJV). That sounds funny. From the New King James or New American Standard Version, it almost makes you want to ask the question "what, do I have to make sure they are *really* widows before I honor them? Do I check the death certificate? ☺
  - b) The NIV translation, which is more of a paraphrase, gives a better idea of what Paul meant in terms of honoring widows.
    - i) It may help to read ahead to Verse 9: "No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband,"
      - a) "The list" refers to widows who are financially supported by the church.
      - b) Therefore, Verse 3 is not a rebuke against any woman who is a widow.
      - c) What Paul is leading up to in Verse 9 is the qualifications of giving special honor and support as widows versus just "regular" widows.
    - ii) A big part of any church is to help those who are in need.
      - a) This includes financially support to the destitute.
      - b) What Paul is trying to do is to show which widows to take in under the church's budget and which are not to be taken in.
        - (1) It is not an anti-compassion against any-old-widow person.
        - (2) We'll see more of that as we study more verses in this chapter.
        - (3) The focus is not on which widows we should help, but on which widows we are obligated to help.
  - c) Before I move on, I want everyone to understand the importance of supporting widows.
    - i) Let's start with Jesus as an example. (That's always a good place to start! ☺).
      - a) When Jesus was dying on the cross, he had two "unfinished" pieces of business to take care of:
      - b) One is that he leads a man on dying on a cross next to his, to salvation.
        - (1) That man recognizes Jesus as the Messiah and asks forgiveness.
          - (a) "Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43, NIV)
        - (2) It is amazing to think while that Jesus was "busy" paying the price for sins for all time, he took the time and trouble to care about the individual on a cross next to him. That should be a model for us.
      - c) The second piece of business Jesus did was that while his mother was watching him die on the cross, Jesus looked down at John the apostle (writer of Gospel of John) and said in effect "she is now your mother, take care of her". Here is the scripture verse:

- (1) “When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby (i.e., John), he (Jesus) said to his mother, “Dear woman, here is your son,” and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, this disciple took her into his home. (John 19:25-26, NIV)
  - (2) The point is that despite the fact that Jesus was in horrible pain and dying on the cross, he took the time and trouble to take care of his mother. This is an example of taking care of “widows”.
    - (a) I should add that most commentators believe Mary’s husband Joseph was dead at this time. Whenever the Bible mentions Jesus and his brothers, his father his not mentioned in any of the stories of Jesus as an adult.
    - (b) Further, Jesus did not leave Mary in the hands of any of his siblings because they did not believe in him as the Messiah until after the resurrection. (Reference: John 7:5)
  - ii) Let’s get back to the topic of widows: There are references in both the Old Testament and New Testament that God himself takes special care for those who are less-able than others to support themselves. The Bible often singles out widows and orphans as being the lead examples of that category.
    - a) “Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan. If you do and they cry out to me, I will certainly hear their cry. My anger will be aroused, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives will become widows and your children fatherless. “ Exodus 22:22-24, NIV)
    - b) On that somber note, let’s move on to Verse 4. ☺
5. Verse 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.
- a) Paul is saying don’t put widows on the church budget if they have family who can take care of them.
    - i) My first thought is that sounds harsh. What if their family abandoned them?
    - ii) Paul wrote this verse primarily to the church and not the widows themselves.
      - a) Remember that the topic is the widows the church is obligated to support.
      - b) The message is: “Hey folks, God set up the family as a model of how to live your lives. It is not just about taking care of your kids; it is about taking care of your parents who raised you! Don’t burden the church with what should be your responsibility!”
    - c) Paul is saying in effect, “don’t disobey the 10 commandments”.
      - (1) Commandment #5: “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.”
        - (a) (Exodus 20:12, NIV).
      - (2) This is the only one of the 10 commandments that comes with the promise of a blessing. Re-read the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of that commandment and you will notice the blessing.
      - (3) The first four commandments deal with our relationship with God himself. The last six with our fellow man.
        - (a) The first of those six deals with our parents!
        - (b) This commandment comes before murder, theft and adultery. Think of that perspective.

- iii) Remember my opening premise of this lesson. If people are to know we are Christians, they will know it by how we love one another.
    - a) If we don't financially take care of our own parents, what kind of witness is that to the rest of the world? How do you expect others to see the benefits of the Christian life if we don't take care of our own family members?
    - b) Let me also turn this around to older people in the church. There is a cute bumper sticker that says, "Treat your children well. They are going to pick your out old-age home."
      - (1) Let's face it. All parents argue with their children. There is the joke that says, "Why do grandparents get along so well with grand-children? Because they are united against the common enemy! 😊"
      - (2) My point is that respect is earned. Yes, children are suppose to respect and honor their parents. The parents are also obligated to respect their grown children.
        - (a) One of the hardest things for parents to do is to treat their grown children with respect, because you see them as your children. Honor stems in love, not from being demanding.
  - b) Which leads us back to Verse 4. God desires the family as the ideal model for our lives.
    - i) There are situations and times where the church needs to step in and support those who have no other support. The point is that the church should never be the primary choice as caregiver. It should be the last resort.
6. Verse 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.
- a) One of the signs of a mature believer is their total dependency on God. God will often allow people to sink to a point where they have no one but God to turn to for support.
    - i) One of the points I pounded home earlier is that God never turns his back on those who are truly destitute. I believe that those people who seek God for their support *get* support through others.
      - a) "I have been young and now I am old. And in all my years I have never seen the Lord forsake a man who loves him; nor have I seen the children of the godly go hungry." (Psalm 37:25, TLB)
  - b) One of the beloved Gospel stories is Jesus watching a widow give out of her need to God.
    - i) "Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury...But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins." (Mark 12:41-42, NIV)
      - a) Jesus said in Verse 44. "They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on."
    - ii) The point of that story is that Jesus, who is God, has a "special eye" on those who are destitute. He watches out for those are in truly in need.
    - iii) That was written as an example for us.
      - a) God expects us to pray to Him during times of destitution.
      - b) God expects us to watch for those in that need so He can work *through us* to help them! That is the point of Verse 5.
7. Verse 6: But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives.
- a) I am not sure if this refers to believers or non-believers. You can argue it either way.
    - i) I do get the impression by reading the text in context of the surrounding verses, is that the church is not to help people like this.
    - ii) I may be wrong on this, but I don't believe the church is to be a catchall charity.
    - iii) There are charitable needs for the "world" to deal with and not the church.

- iv) Here we have the example of a widow who does not seek God, but “lives for pleasure”. It *sounds* like a non-believer.
  - a) I don’t believe it is the role of the church to financially support widows *permanently* who fall into this category.
  - b) It is not about not-being-compassionate or caring. One can turn to this person and witness to them. Part of being a good Christian witness might be helping them get back on their feet, or talking to their families about the importance of supporting them.
  - c) Remember that we are leading up to Verse 9, which is about widows being put on “the list” for church support. In exchange for the church supporting such people, the church asks those widows to be *involved* with the church, primarily as prayer ministers.
    - (1) Those widows who seek their own pleasure vs. seeking God don’t *deserve* to be on the “list” as they are not serving the church.
    - (2) Again, it is not about being anti-compassionate, it is about church-service. Keep this verse in perspective of Jesus command to “love one another.”
    - (3) The topic is not about what the church should voluntarily do, but what the church is *obligated* to do and not do.
  
- 8. Verse 7: Give the people these instructions, too, so that no one may be open to blame. <sup>8</sup> 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.
  - a) I argued earlier that these set of verses is not only given to the widows, but to the church in general.
    - i) The topic of widows-themselves is the specific topic.
    - ii) How we are to support each other, i.e. love one another, is general topic.
  - b) Notice that Verse 7 says that Timothy is to give the *people* these instructions.
    - i) That means they are directed to the church.
    - ii) Remember earlier I spent a page or two on the topic of rebuking people.
      - a) Here, Paul says in Verse 8 that those who don’t support their parents “are worse than an unbeliever”.
      - b) I don’t believe this is about losing your salvation. That is not the topic at hand. It is about our reputation to the outside world.
        - (1) I think when we get to heaven, we are going to see people who have minimal rewards for eternity. They fall into this category.
      - c) If we as believers can’t take care of “our own”, what does that say to the rest of the world about Christianity?
      - d) Remember that the definition of “loving each other” is the idea of giving up one’s one desires and wants in order to help other’s needs. This includes taking care of our parents and grandparents, the good ones as well as the pain-in-the-neck ones! Is it easy? No! The commandment is given by Paul here so we may be good witnesses the world.
      - e) Remember the “forever” perspective. Taking care of an obnoxious family member may *seem* like forever, but it isn’t. It is difficult, and tries ones patience as well as resources. This is another case of letting God working through you to give you the strength to get through those times.
  
- 9. Verse 9: No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, <sup>10</sup> 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.
  - a) Here we have the “list” reference, but I’ve already beaten that point to death. ☺

- b) Paul is teaching not to put widows on that list unless she is at least sixty years of age.
    - i) We'll get to the "why" of age 60+ in Verse 11.
  - c) Paul's other qualifications for putting widows on the list are all based on her reputation.
    - i) To be put on the list is not just about the church financially supporting her, but that she be used by the church in a supportive role.
    - ii) I take the view that you are never to be old to be used by God. One of my goals in my latter years is to spend more time in prayer. If I can't physically do anything else, I can always pray. Paul wants older widows to be helpful in the church.
    - iii) I believe a second reason is that they lead by example.
      - a) God wants older women to be teachers to the younger women:
      - b) "Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live... Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God." (Paul's Letter to Titus, 2:3-5, NIV).
  - d) I can discuss the specific examples of this list, but I still have a lot to cover. If you fall in this category, I encourage you to think about the specific examples shown on this list.
10. Verse 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. <sup>12</sup> Thus they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge.
- a) Being put on the "list" is not just to financially support the widows and then, let them go on their merry way, but the price widows must pay for being on the list is a remaining life-long service to the church.
  - b) Paul forbids younger women from being on the list because the desire for other things will drive them away from a remaining-life long service to God.
    - i) Remember my opening premise. The world will see we are Christians if we have love for one another. This chapter is about God's reputation and therefore, the church's reputation.
    - ii) If the outside world sees someone who is fully dedicated to serving Christ, and then leaves the church to get married and raise a family, they are no longer in full-service in that ministry. (Raising the family is a separate ministry all unto itself.)
    - iii) You and I may think, "well, what's the big deal? Somebody works for the church in a service roll, and then quit to get married. What's so bad about that?"
      - a) What we fail to see is the *primary importance* of the church as shepherding over the flock-of-believers. There is nothing wrong with being married. There is nothing wrong with church leaders being married.
      - b) The context of this paragraph is about widows specifically being made part of the church leadership to be leaders. To dedicate themselves to full-time intercessory prayer, service and all-around be good examples.
      - c) I also see this verse as being about maturity. Younger women have less experience than older women as well as younger men/older men. To lead by example requires a life of education.
11. Verse 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. <sup>14</sup> So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander. <sup>15</sup> Some have in fact already turned away to follow Satan.
- a) Let's face it; some people have too much idol time on their hands.
  - b) I have found this especially true for single people and some wealthier couples without children. They have more "disposable income".

- c) A general-rule is that married people are more mature than single people and people with children have more maturity than those who don't.
    - i) Again, let me emphasize this is a *general* rule. There are lots of exceptions.
  - d) The point is that when you get married, and again, when you have children, you learn to spend less time and effort focusing on yourself and onto others. This is necessary for the preservation of your marriage and the growth of your children.
  - e) The reason Paul is encouraging women to get married and have children is not a sexist comment, but an ideal to help women grow in maturity. Remember the specific topic is widows being put on the "list". The Bible has plenty to say to the men elsewhere.
  - f) I can get into a lot of specifics about being "idlers, gossips and busybodies". Most adults know people who fit into this category. Sadly, there are many of them in the church.
    - i) You *know* the church ones because they start their sentences by saying, "Let me tell you who we ought to be praying for!" ☺ Then the slander starts.
    - ii) Again, this gets back to Jesus' command of loving one another. It is one thing to privately rebuke. It is a sin to tell others about it as opposed to confronting them.
    - iii) A good response to someone who tells you "have you heard what happened to "Joe" last night?
      - a) The response should be, "No, tell me. What did Joe say when you confronted him on that issue?" ☺
  - g) I also want to comment on Verse 15: "Some have in fact already turned away to follow Satan."
    - i) Personally, I don't see people who are idol gossipers going around saying, "Well, I guess its time for me to worship Satan now. ☺"
    - ii) The point is about we are not doing what is right. When we are not focusing on what the Bible calls us to do, we are "following" Satan. The primary goal of Satan to a church member is to get them to not be a good witness for Christ. By any means that this person is being a bad witness, they are "following" Satan.
12. Verse 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.
- a) Verse 16 is a wrap-up verse for this section of the letter.
  - b) The focus is in our reputation as Christians.
  - c) The specific example is if a person(s) in church has a widow, that person(s) should be responsible for taking care of those widows, and not put the burden on the church.
13. Verse 17 to the end of a chapter starts a new topic.
- a) From Verses 17 to the end of the chapter, Paul goes back to the topic of elders.
    - i) A few chapters back, the topic was the qualifications for elders.
    - ii) Here, the topic is how the church should treat elders.
  - b) For those of you who don't like to read my entire lesson in one reading, this is good spot for a break. Put your bookmark's here, and I'll see you again soon.
14. Welcome back. ☺ Verse 17: The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.
- a) Remember that "elders" means the senior members. In some churches, this includes the pastors and the staff. For others, it is more like the board of directors or advisors.
    - i) Some churches have the senior pastor as part of the board of elders. Others have the pastors as part of the board of elders. One can make a biblical-case for either structural method.
  - b) What "double honor" means *practically*, was left vague. Just how *do* you double-honor somebody was left up to the individual churches to decide.
    - i) The focus of this verse is on which individual elder deserves this honor as opposed to "how" to double-honor that elder.

- ii) It could refer to some elders who do a lot of the work in the church versus those who barely contribute their time and effort to the church.
  - iii) Other commentators believe it refers to financial rewards. The Greek word for “honor” is the same word that we use for “honorarium”, which is a payment for service.
    - a) Remember earlier in this Chapter Paul was talking about putting widows on “the list” for financial support.
    - b) One can make an argument that Paul is *still* talking about financial rewards. Some elders were “just” in charge of overseeing the day-by-day activities of the church. Paul may be arguing for a double-financial payment to those who teach and preach over those who on the administrative side of the church.
  - iv) All functions of the church are important. Personally, I believe the *most important* is the teaching and preaching of God’s word. It’s my personal bias, but I could make a scriptural argument for this case based verses like this one.
    - a) I would much rather be in a church that is strong in doctrinal belief and focused *hard* on learning the Bible as opposed to a church where *service* is primarily emphasized.
    - b) The last fifty years has seen the decline in attendance in denominational churches in America and the rise of the non-denominational churches simply because those denominational churches got their *primary* focus off the Word of God and unto “good works”. Thank God some of those individual churches are wising up and it is starting to turn around.
15. Verse 18: For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages."
- a) Paul quotes Deuteronomy 25:4 with the “ox” reference.
  - b) Paul quotes Jesus (Luke 10:7) with the “worker” reference.
    - i) The interesting thing to note is that Paul refers to the Gospel as “Scripture”.
      - a) It means Paul had access to Luke’s Gospel at this time and calls it Scripture.
      - b) On a related note, in Peter’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Letter, he refers to Paul’s writings as “Scripture” in 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:15-16.
      - c) My personal theory is that when the New Testament letters were written, somehow, people just “knew” they were canonical Scriptures.
  - c) Back to the “muzzle the ox” reference.
    - i) Do you think that verse was written for the benefit of oxen or us? 😊
    - ii) The idea is that while an animal is working, you need to feed it and care for it.
      - a) All the more so for those who lead and oversee the church.
      - b) This verse supports the argument that the “double-honor” refers to double-financial reward to those who teach and lead.
  - d) Both of these references by Paul lead to the same point: It is a subtle way to say we need to support our leaders, both financially and prayerfully. It further supports the concept of “professional” pastors who should be paid for their work.
  - e) On a related note, I don’t ask for donations for my readers. I want people to realize my primary motivation to doing this is my desire to see people mature in their relationship for God, and not for money.
    - i) With that I *strongly* encourage and desire prayer for these studies, for spiritual protection, encouragement and inspiration.
16. Verse 19: Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses.
- a) The purpose of this section of Scripture is on how the church should treat an elder.

- b) With that, an accusation should not be brought against an elder by one person.
    - i) Let's face it, one person could be mad at an elder, or seek revenge for some complaint, etc. This is why two or three witnesses are important.
  - c) The concept of "two or more" witnesses comes from Deuteronomy:
    - i) "One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of any crime or offense he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses." (Deuteronomy 19:15, NIV)
  - d) This verse is also personal to me. There was a situation in my church a few years back where I did bring an accusation against our board of elders. I wrote a long letter, but I refused to submit the letter unless I could get other signatures, which I did.
    - i) The other Biblical model I followed is that once I submitted the letter, I had to "let go" of that issue. It was now up to my church and God to judge the actions.
    - ii) Notice the verse does not call for us to be judge and jury. The verses in this short paragraph focus on the proper model of how to bring forth an accusation.
17. Verse 20: Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that the others may take warning.
- a) Finishing my personal example, the elders disagreed with my view, so I had to drop it. Verse 20 implies that it is up to the church and not *me* to judge the actions. If the church refuses to judge the actions publicly, it is not up to me to start a new trial.
    - i) Remember the big-picture is for us to be witnesses to the world of our love for one another. There are times and methods for rebuking as laid out in this chapter. There are also times to let the issue go and accept the rulings of our elders.
  - b) The verse is the method of punishment for a "bad-elder." It calls for public rebuking.
    - i) This is something one rarely sees in the church today.
    - ii) The point of the church service is to focus our efforts on Christ. Some people think it is "unloving" and "unforgiving" to publicly rebuke someone.
    - iii) While it does need to be done practically and lovingly, it does have to be done.
      - a) I believe some of the greatest mistakes we make as a church is to try to "sweep our problems under the rug".
      - b) The outside world watches us a lot closer than we think. I find word gets out quickly about corruption and sin within the church.
      - c) The best solution is often the most painful in the short term, which is to publicly rebuke that member as a warning to others.
      - d) Remember this is about the reputation of the church.
      - e) It is far more hypocritical to ignore the problem "out of love" than to publicly rebuke those responsible.
18. Verse 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.
- a) Paul is now wrapping up this section by saying not to show any partiality nor favoritism.
    - i) That is easy to do when you get close to someone or want to help someone.
    - ii) Sometimes it is easier to rebuke one who isn't that involved in your church vs. one who has been heavily involved for years.
    - iii) Our reputation before God, before each other and before our surrounding community often means more than publicly chastising someone we know well.
19. Verse 22: Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.
- a) The first part of this verse is a caution against not raising up someone to be an elder too quickly. The "laying of hands" is a ritual performed to identify those who are elders.
    - i) There is nothing miraculous about the laying of hands. It is a word-picture of saying, "we identify" with this person, or "we accept this person as our elder".

- b) The second part of this verse focuses on Timothy himself. It says to “not share in the sins of others and keep yourself pure”.
    - i) It sounds like Paul is stating the obvious. What pastor would *want* to be sinful?
    - ii) It gets back to my theme of being a good example. People watch what you do much more than what you say. All mature Christians can name examples of ministers who have lost *everything* because their personal life got caught up in sin.
    - iii) The charge to ministers is to be extra zealous to be disciplined in their lifestyle.
      - a) As I’ve stated many times in this lesson, the world is watching us. If you desire to lead over other Christians, God holds you accountable to live a higher-than-others lifestyle as a witness.
20. Verse 23: Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.
- a) Verse 23 is the “balance” statement of Verse 22.
    - i) If Verse 22 urges one to go out of their way to push themselves to be zealous for God, Verse 23 is saying in effect, “don’t kill yourself doing so”.
  - b) With that said, let me get into the specifics of this verse, and it will make more sense.
    - i) In that culture, water had dirty bacteria that made one sick.
    - ii) In our modern American culture, we forget that our drinking water is treated and cleansed of all impurities so we don’t get sick.
    - iii) A medical remedy to drinking any water one is not sure about is to mix it with a little wine. Alcohol in small amounts as medicine is good for the stomach.
    - iv) This verse is not condoning alcohol for pleasure purposes. That is a whole topic unto itself. It is about using a little wine for medical purposes. The topic of should Christians drink or not drink wine is irrelevant to this verse.
  - c) Timothy, in his zealousness to be “pure” would not touch wine.
  - d) The point is Timothy was getting stomachaches in his effort to keep pure.
  - e) To paraphrase Paul points, Paul is saying, “look Timothy, you can’t preach God’s word if you are in such pain you can’t get out of the bathroom!” ☺
    - i) God expects his leaders to take care of themselves physically so they can be good teachers, preachers and all around good-witnesses for God.
    - ii) God does not expect you to forgo your health.
  - f) Again, reading Verses 22 and 23 together it is about “proper balance”.
    - i) God expects us to work hard, and commit our lives fully to him.
    - ii) Further, God expects us to take care of ourselves so we can be a good witness.
    - iii) It goes back to last chapter’s verse (Verse 8) about physical training:
      - a) “For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.
21. Verse 24: The sins of some men are obvious, reaching the place of judgment ahead of them; the sins of others trail behind them. <sup>25</sup> In the same way, good deeds are obvious, and even those that are not cannot be hidden.
- a) Paul is urging Timothy to “remain pure” and work hard at that point.
  - b) Paul ends his argument by saying in effect “those who are guilty of things will be obvious one day. Some people’s sins are obvious and goes ahead of them. Others are more subtle, but one day it will come out what they do.
  - c) This verse is not about being perfect. Nobody fits that role.
    - i) This verse is about one who continually and habitually breaks one of God’s 10 commandments.
    - ii) Remember this principal:
      - a) But if you fail to do this, you will be sinning against the LORD; and you may be sure that your sin will find you out.” (Numbers 32:23, NIV)

- b) What does that mean? It means that if you are a witness for God, especially as a leader, you will not get away with anything!
  - c) God cares about His reputation. Because he cares, he wont let you get away with sin for the long term.
  - d) This is why pastors who habitually commit a sin will be exposed.
  - e) That is the principal behind Verse 24. Some will be noticed quickly, others will be exposed later. But no matter when it will happen, it will happen.
22. My main theme for Chapter 5 is about reputation.
- a) It is about God's reputation being on the line. Because of his reputation, he wants us to be good witnesses for Him.
  - b) God wants others to see the benefits of the Christian life. God calls on his to live holy lives and have a *better* reputation of that of the world.
  - c) God expects us to give of ourselves to others as a witness to the world.
  - d) God gave us the model of the family as examples of how we are to live our lives.
    - i) The reason Paul encourages women to get married and have children is not to be sexist, but for all to see how we give of ourselves to each other.
  - e) This whole chapter is really a commentary on Jesus' command of "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:35, NKJV).
    - i) The "this" of Jesus command, is given in examples and illustrations of Paul to Timothy in Chapter 5.
      - ii) The specific examples are widows and elders.
      - iii) The general idea is for us to be good witnesses to a lost and dying world and be good witnesses *to each other* to help mature Christians to be *better* Christians.
23. With that, let's pray. Father, may our whole life be a glory to you. Work through us that we may live holy and respectable lives for you. Keep us focused and disciplined as to the reason we are called to be Christians. People are imperfect, and they try our patience. It is difficult and often painful to take care of those of our immediate family. We need to remember that your eternal purposes far outweigh the difficulties of our daily lives. Give us the strength and patience to act out what you call us to do. It is only through your strength, your grace, and your power that we are even able to do the things you ask of us. Keep our focus on you and not our ourselves. For we ask this in Jesus name, Amen.

Bonus Material – Below is the class handouts. It is a "summary" version of this lesson.

## **Notes for 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy – Chapter 5 (Page 1 of 6)**

### **How Christians are to Treat Other Christians**

#### **Introduction – How are nonbelievers suppose to “know” we are Christians?**

1. Jesus said, “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35, NKJV)
  - a. The “all” of that verse, refers to non-believers as well as believers.
  - b. Non-Christians are supposed to look at believers and say, “boy, those people really take good care of each other. I have to admit there is an appeal to that”!
2. What does that mean practically? How do we “love each other”?
  - a. The Greek word Jesus uses for love implies to give oneself totally to others.
  - b. It is the idea of giving up your own desires and wants in order to help others.
  - c. First of all, we do it as a sign to unbelievers. That is what Jesus stated in John 13:35.
  - d. God wants us to mature as believers. To grow in his love. Part of that requires the encouragement and support of other believers.
  - e. God gives all believers talents and gifts. God expects us to use those talents to help grow the church. By giving of yourself through those talents/gifts to others, you help to strengthen the church.
  - f. God cares about those who are saved. Not just so we can go out and save more people, but so we can strengthen and mature those who believe.

**Vs. 1-2:** “Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.” (NIV)

1. The end of Chapter 4 focuses on how pastors and elders are to behave personally.
2. Chapter 5 switches to the topic of how pastors and elders are to treat others.
  - a. The rest of Chapter 5 focuses on two specific types of examples: 1) widows and 2) other elders in the church
  - b. The last few verses of Chapter 5 also give some other examples, but widows and elders are the primary focus.
3. The key words to underline in verses 1-2 are “not rebuke” and “harshly”.
  - a. This verse implies the necessity of rebuking those within the church.
  - b. I also emphasize “harshly”. We as Christians, often lack good diplomacy.
  - c. If this person who is sinning were your own father, or your own mother, or your own daughter or son, how would you then rebuke that person? If you really loved that person, and wanted to act in love, how would you then rebuke their act?
    - i. The funny thing is sometimes we can be tougher on our own families than we can on strangers.
    - ii. Even if I argue with them, I will still love them and stand by them!
    - iii. If people can sense that despite the criticism, underneath it all, we love them and care for them, they are more likely to accept that criticism, because they know that we love them and care for them.
  - d. Rebuke has its place in the church. It needs to be done in love and diplomatically.
    - i. Ask God for words of wisdom in those situations.
    - ii. You will be amazed at what actually comes out of your mouth!

## **Notes for 1st Timothy - Chapter 5 (Page 2 of 6)**

**Verse 3:** “Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need.”

1. It may help to read ahead to Verse 9: “No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband,”
  - a. “The list” refers to widows who are financially supported by the church.
  - b. Therefore, Verse 3 is not a rebuke against any woman who is a widow.
2. A big part of any church is to help those who are in need.
  - a. This includes financial support to the destitute.
  - b. What Paul is trying to do is to show which widows to take in under the church’s budget and which are not to be taken in.
  - c. It is not an anti-compassion against “any-old-widow”.
  - d. The focus is not on which widows we should help, but on which widows we are obligated to help.
3. Jesus gave us an example of how to help widows:
  - a. Jesus’ mother was watching him die on the cross.
  - b. Jesus looked down at John the apostle (writer of Gospel of John) and said in effect “she is now your mother, take care of her”. Here is the scripture verse:
    - i. “When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby (i.e., John), he (Jesus) said to his mother, “Dear woman, here is your son,” and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, this disciple took her into his home. (John 19:25-26, NIV)
    - ii. The point is that despite the fact that Jesus was in horrible pain and dying on the cross, he took the time and trouble to take care of his mother. This is an example of taking care of “widows”.
4. God himself takes special care for those who are less-able than others to support themselves. The Bible often singles out widows and orphans as being the lead examples of that category.
  - a. “Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan. If you do and they cry out to me, I will certainly hear their cry. My anger will be aroused, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives will become widows and your children fatherless. “ (Exodus 22:22-24, NIV)

**Verse 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.”

1. Paul is saying don’t put widows on the church budget if they have family who can take care of them.
  - a. My first thought is that sounds harsh. What if their family won’t help?
  - b. Paul wrote this section to the church and not the widows themselves.
  - c. Remember that the topic is the widows the church is obligated to support.
2. The message is: “Hey folks, God set up the family as a model of how to live your lives. It is not just about taking care of your kids; it is about taking care of your parents who raised you! Don’t burden the church with what should be your responsibility!”
3. Paul is saying in effect, “Don’t disobey the 10 commandments”.
  - a. Commandment #5: “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.” (Exodus 20:12, NIV)
  - b. If we don’t financially take care of our own parents, what kind of witness is that to the rest of the world?

## Notes for 1st Timothy - Chapter 5 (Page 3 of 6)

Verse 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.”

1. One of the signs of a mature believer is their total dependency on God. God will often allow people to sink to a point where they have no one but God to turn to for support.
  - a. God never turns his back on those who are truly destitute. I believe that those people who seek God for their support get support through others.
  - b. “I have been young and now I am old. And in all my years I have never seen the Lord forsake a man who loves him; nor have I seen the children of the godly go hungry.” (Psalm 37:25, TLB)
2. One of the beloved Gospel stories is Jesus watching a widow give out of her need to God.
  - a. “Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury...But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins.” (Mark 12:41-42, NIV)
  - b. Jesus said in Verse 44. “They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.”
  - c. The point of that story is that Jesus, who is God, has a “special eye” on those who are destitute. He watches out for those who are truly in need.

Verse 6: “But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives.”

1. I am not sure if this refers to believers or non-believers. You can argue it either way.
2. I do get the impression by reading the text in context of the surrounding verses, is that the church is not to help people like this.
3. I may be wrong on this, but I don't believe the church is to be a “catch-all” charity.
4. Remember that we are leading up to Verse 9, which is about widows being put on “the list” for church support. In exchange for the church supporting such people, the church asks those widows to be involved with the church, primarily as prayer ministers.
  - a. Those widows who seek their own pleasure vs. seeking God don't deserve to be on the “list” as they are not serving the church.
  - b. The topic is not about what the church should voluntarily do, but what the church is obligated to do and not do.

Verses 7-8: “Give the people these instructions, too, so that no one may be open to blame. <sup>8</sup> 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.”

1. Notice that Verse 7 says that Timothy is to give the *people* these instructions.
  - a. That means they are directed to the church.
2. Paul says in Verse 8 that those who don't support their parents “are worse than an unbeliever”.
  - a. I don't believe this is about losing your salvation. That is not the topic at hand. It is about our reputation to the outside world.

## Notes for 1st Timothy - Chapter 5 (Page 4 of 6)

Verses 9-10: “No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, <sup>10</sup>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.”

1. Paul is teaching not to put widows on that list unless she is at least sixty years of age.
  - a. We’ll get to the “why” of age 60+ in Verse 11.
2. Paul’s other qualifications for putting widows on the list are all based on her reputation.
  - a. To be put on the list is not just about the church financially supporting her, but that she be used by the church in a supportive role.
  - b. I believe a second reason is that Paul wants the widows “on the list” to lead by example.
  - c. “Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live... Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.” (Paul’s Letter to Titus, 2:3-5, NIV).

Verses 11-12: “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. <sup>12</sup>Thus they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge.”

1. The price widows must pay for being on “the list” is a remaining life-long service to the church.
  - a. Paul forbids younger women from being on the list because the desire for other things will drive them away from a remaining-life long service to God.
  - b. Remember my opening premise: The world will see we’re Christians if we have love for one another. Chapter 5 is about God’s reputation and therefore, the church’s reputation.
2. You and I may think, “Well, what’s the big deal? A widow works for the church in a service roll, and then quit to get married. What’s so bad about that?”
  - a. What we fail to see is the *primary importance* of the church as shepherding over the flock-of-believers. There is nothing wrong with being married. There is nothing wrong with church leaders being married.
    1. Remember the qualifications for elders and deacons includes being the “husband of one wife”. This is not an anti-widow-getting married statement.
  - b. The context of this paragraph is about widows specifically being made part of the church leadership to be leaders. To dedicate themselves to full-time intercessory prayer, service and all-around be good examples
  - c. Younger women have less experience than older women as well as younger men/older men. To lead by example requires a life of education.

Verses 13-15: “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. <sup>14</sup> So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander. <sup>15</sup> Some have in fact already turned away to follow Satan.”

1. A general-rule is that married people are more mature than single people and people with children have more maturity than those who don’t.
  - a. The point is that when you get married, and again, when you have children, you learn to spend less time and effort focusing on yourself and onto others.
  - b. Paul is encouraging women to get married and have children is not a sexist comment, but an ideal to help women grow in maturity.
  - c. Remember the specific topic is widows being put on the “list”. The Bible has plenty to say to the men elsewhere.

## **Notes for 1st Timothy - Chapter 5 (Page 5 of 6)**

Verse 15: "Some have in fact already turned away to follow Satan."

1. "Personally, I don't see people who are idol gossipers going around saying, "Well, I guess its time for me to worship Satan now. ☺"
2. The point is about when we are not doing what is right. It is about when we are not focusing on what the Bible calls us to do, we are then "following" Satan. The goal of Satan for a Christian is to prevent them from being a good witness for Christ. When that this person is being a bad witness, they are, momentary "following" Satan whether they realize it or not.

**Verse 17 to the end of the chapter changes topics to how the church should treat elders.**

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

1. Remember that "elders" means senior members. In some churches, this includes the pastors and the staff. For others, it is more like the board of directors or advisors.
  - a. What "double honor" means practically, was left vague. Just how do you double-honor somebody was left up to the individual churches to decide.
  - b. The focus of this verse is on which individual elder deserves this honor as opposed to "how" to double-honor that elder.
  - c. Other commentators believe it refers to financial rewards. The Greek word for "honor" is the same word that we use for "honorarium", which is a payment for service.

Verse 18: "For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages.""

1. Paul quotes Deuteronomy 25:4 with the "ox" reference.
2. Paul quotes Jesus (Luke 10:7) with the "worker" reference.
  - a. It means Paul had access to Luke's Gospel at this time and calls it Scripture.
3. Let's discuss the "muzzle the ox" reference:
  - a. Do you think that verse was written for the benefit of oxen or us? ☺
  - b. The idea is that while an animal is working, you need to feed it and care for it.
  - c. It is a subtle way to say we need to support our leaders, both financially and prayerfully.
  - d. The "ox" reference is an illustration of our leaders to servants. It has nothing to do with physical appearance. ☺ An ox is strong animal that can be domesticated for service.

Verse 19: "Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses."

1. The purpose of this section of Scripture is on how the church should treat an elder.
2. With that, an accusation should not be brought against an elder only one person.
3. "One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of any crime or offense he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses." (Deuteronomy 19:15, NIV)

Verse 20: "Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that the others may take warning."

1. Verse 20 implies that it is up to the church and not me to judge the actions of an elder.
  - a. If the church refuses to judge the actions publicly, it is not up to me to start a new trial.
2. The verse is the method of punishment for a "bad-elder." It calls for public rebuking.
3. I believe some of the greatest mistakes we make as a church is to try to "sweep our problems under the rug".
  - a. Remember this chapter is about the reputation of the church as a primary concern.

## Notes for 1st Timothy - Chapter 5 (Page 6 of 6)

Verse 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.”

1. Paul is now wrapping up this section by saying not to show any partiality nor favoritism.
2. Our reputation before God, before each other and before our surrounding community often means more than publicly chastising someone we know well.

Verse 22: “Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.”

1. The first part of this verse is a caution against not raising up someone to be an elder too quickly. The “laying of hands” is a ritual performed to identify those who are elders.
2. The second part of this verse focuses on Timothy himself. It says to “not share in the sins of others and keep yourself pure”.
  - a. It sounds like Paul is stating the obvious. What pastor would want to be sinful?
  - b. The charge to ministers is to be extra zealous to be disciplined in their lifestyle.
    - i. The world is watching us. If you desire to lead over other Christians, God holds you accountable to live a higher-than-others lifestyle as a witness.

Verse 23: “Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.”

1. Verse 23 is the “balance” statement of Verse 22.
2. If Verse 22 urges one to go out of their way to push themselves to be zealous for God, Verse 23 is saying in effect, “don’t kill yourself doing so”.
3. This verse has a lot to do with the culture of that time era.
  - a. In our modern American culture, we forget that our drinking water is treated and cleansed of all impurities so we don’t get sick.
  - b. In that time era, a medical remedy to drinking any water one is to mix it with a little wine. Alcohol in small amounts as medicine is good for the stomach.
  - c. This verse is not condoning alcohol for pleasure purposes. That is a separate topic. It is about using a little wine for medical purposes.
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  - a. The point is Timothy was getting stomachaches in his effort to keep pure.
  - b. To paraphrase Paul is saying, “look Timothy, you can’t preach God’s word if you are in such pain you can’t get out of the bathroom!” ☺
4. Again, reading Verses 22 and 23 together it is about “proper balance”.

Verses 24-25: “The sins of some men are obvious, reaching the place of judgment ahead of them; the sins of others trail behind them. <sup>25</sup> In the same way, good deeds are obvious, and even those that are not cannot be hidden.”

1. Paul is saying in effect “those who are guilty of things will be obvious one day.
2. This verse is not about being perfect. Nobody fits that role.
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  - c. It means that if you are a witness for God, you will not get away with anything!
  - d. Some will be noticed quickly, others will be exposed later. But no matter when it will happen, it will happen.