

I Timothy 5, Sermon #4

I Timothy 5

- We should "do good unto all . . . especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10).
- God has always designed that women be the special objects of care. They are to be under the umbrella of male protection, provision, authority, and direction.
- God's people must treat widows with the same special care that He does.

Benevolence, good will, charity – philanthropic, humanitarian

- Dealing with widows who need regular support (financially and physically) from the Church.
- The reason for verses 4-16 is to determine who is truly to be helped. Not all people are to be helped – the church is to be selective.

God gives us four considerations that we must take into account so that we can determine true necessity:

- I. The **family** consideration: The Church is not to step in first - relatives are to take care of relatives.
- II. The **moral** consideration – what kind of woman is she – believer – vs. 5 and she also had to be faithful to her husband.

We will look at the 3rd and 4th consideration

I've entitled this series "Taking Care of Our Own, Part 3"

I Timothy 5:9

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word

I Timothy 5:9-13

Let us pray – you may be seated

Taking Care of Our Own

In Vs. 9 – We find our third consideration – the age consideration.

Vs. 9

First, a widow had to be at least sixty years old in order for the church to have full support of her.

- "Taken into the number" – literally means "to be enrolled and put on the list."
- The early church had an official list of the names of qualified widows – and if you were found on the list, you received regular financial support

Now, this does not prohibit the church in helping people that are under 60 and in need. This does not stop occasional help from the church.

The point is that the widow is not to be taken on as a regular obligation unless she is 60 years old

Why would we not take on a woman who was 50? 40? or 30?

Why 60?

Now, God chose that number, and beginning in vs. 11, God gives us three reasons for 60!

Vs. 11

Refuse is a strong word, expressing adamancy

God gives three reasons for His prohibition against putting younger widows on the list

Vs. 11-12

I. Reason #1 is the possibility of a younger woman defecting from the faith

“When they have begun to grow wanton” – vs. 11

There is an excessively strong internal desire (sexual or lustful) that wants to break out.

- It wants to overflow proper bounds
- They feel sensual desires in disregard of Christ (vs. 11 – against Christ)

This phrase is used to describe an ox trying to escape from its yoke. In keeping with those **sensual desires**, which include not merely sexual passion but all that is embodied in the marriage relationship, she would **want to get married**.

To the extent she could actually become hostile toward God.

The reference here is to the fact that with younger women – there is the possibility that their strong desire for marriage, or physical desire, overwhelms them – so that they cast off their first faith – vs. 12

What could a woman do that would cast off her first faith?

- Physical intimacy outside of marriage bonds – that’s called fornication
- Move in with someone
- She could marry an unbeliever

There is the possibility there that under that temptation, she would marry outside the will of God.

Her strong desire for a husband would leave her vulnerable.

With that vulnerability, she might even be tempted to go after someone else's husband.

Now, this is not against remarriage – vs. 14

- First reason, a younger woman’s defection from the faith

II. There is a second reason to refuse the younger woman – look at verse 13a, b

A second reason younger widows are not to be on the list is their lack of maturity:

At the same time they learn to be idle, lazy, inactive

- Idleness is very close to sinfulness – naturally leads to it.
- Idleness has a way of multiplying sin.

That's why many cities try to have things for the youth – to keep them busy and off the streets.

As they go around from house to house.

Nothing constructive takes place and, at best, vain activity occupies her.

So, what are the younger widows to do? Get busy.

That's why they are encouraged to marry.

God does make it clear that younger widows, if supported by the church, would have too much time on their hands and that could lead to sinful activities.

There is a definite connection between idleness and sin.

God warned Timothy against using the “charity” ministry of the church to encourage people to be idle.

The church certainly ought to assist those who really need help, but it must not subsidize sin and laziness.

III. The **third reason** not to place younger widows on the list is in vs. 13 – tattlers, busybodies, and saying things they ought not to say.

The word “tattler” comes from the word “to boil up” – they keep things stirred up – gossip.

- **Gossips** speak nonsense, talk idly, make empty charges, or accuse with malicious words.

- The word “busybodies” means someone who is busy but not with their own business.

This is one who sticks his nose into other peoples’ business.

Such people pry into things that do not concern them and should not concern them

The propensity to intrude in others’ affairs –

God does not want any of us to be this way and if the younger widow is fully cared for; she has too much time on her hands and this could be the result.

So, refuse the younger widow full support – do not put her on the list.

This is the age consideration.

The last consideration is the

IV. Practical help consideration – five things here:

Vs. 10

“Well reported of for good works.”

Her good works – the way she lived her life – would manifest outwardly the quality of her spiritual character.

God goes on to further define the nature of **a reputation for good works**.

The five qualities he lists show the type of **good works** required of any woman.

All women should seek to be of such spiritual virtue.

#1 – Vs. 10 - if she brought up children

It means to nourish children.

This quality views the Godly widow as a Christian mother; rearing children in a Godly home to follow the Lord.

To do so is a woman's greatest privilege and responsibility.

God does not here depreciate women who were unable to have children, or who had the gift of singleness.

Such fulfill different roles in the life of the family of God.

Since having children was the norm, however, He gives this as a general principle.

A woman with no natural children of her own could manifest this quality by rearing orphans or helping with the children in the church

#2 – In vs. 10 - If she lodged strangers

Secondly, she must be one who has shown hospitality to strangers.

Is she hospitable to any Christians? Is her home open? Is the spare bedroom used?

If a meal was needed, would she provide it?

She must show sacrificial devotion to the needs of people she does not know.

- There were no motels or hotels in the ancient world, and inns were often filthy and dangerous.
- Hospitality was an important ministry in those days when travel was dangerous and safe places to sleep were scarce.

Christians away from home depended on the hospitality of other believers.

- Was she hospitable? Did she open up her home?

#3 – Third – in vs. 10 – **she** must be one who **has washed the saints' feet**.

- How many of you ladies have ever done that?
- The task of washing the feet spoke of humility.

This requirement stresses that a widow have a humble, servant's heart.

She gives her life in service to those in need.

Since the roads were either dusty or muddy, guests entering a house had their feet washed.

I've been to homes – fixed me a brown bag lunch – stayed places – washed my clothes

#4 – Fourth, **she** must be one who **has assisted those in distress** – vs. 10

- Has she relieved the afflicted? Those in need?
- Have her possessions, her time, and her talents been at the disposal of people who were in need?

“Relieved the afflicted” could cover many kinds of ministry to the needy: feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, driving the elderly to the doctor, and encouraging the sorrowing

She devoted her life to helping those under any sort of pressure, whether physical, mental, or emotional.

Every pastor gives thanks for Godly women who minister to the material and physical needs in the church.

And, the last one is – Has she diligently followed every good work?

- In other words, has she had an interest in the ministries of the local church?
- Have her motive and interests in life been to the cause of Christ and the Church?

Diligently followed is a strong verb.

This describes the widow who has energetically given herself to the pursuit of the cause of Christ.

Because all those qualities describe the character of a widow to be qualified, they must also be recognized as the standards for every Christian woman to follow in her life.

The qualities God 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.

All five of these come to this—

- Has she in life done what she wants the church to do for her now?
- Has she helped people in need? Has she made a servant out of herself?
- Has she been interested in the good that other people are doing for the Lord?

To help the church at Ephesus to understand their responsibility to widows, God has given us numerous principles.

- Did this person help when they had opportunity? Reciprocity.
- Has it gone both ways? – when she had opportunity to do good to the saints?
- Or, has she been selfish?

Is this person moral?

Is this person totally unable to provide for himself or herself? Desolate?

Are there any family members that could help?

Those are pretty good rules, aren't they?

★Folks, we want to so serve the Lord so that if we ever find ourselves in financial embarrassment, there would be no shame in our past that would keep the church from helping us.

This is a special benefit to the faithful.

If she is the kind of person God has described and she is in need, we are to help her.

Our four considerations:

Family consideration

Moral consideration

Age consideration

Practical help consideration

Taking Care of Our Own

Let us stand for closing invitation.

Are you of the household of faith?

Without faith, it is impossible to please God

Faith in what?

You must believe

First, in who Jesus is

Second, what Jesus has done

and then, you must respond by application

Rear of Document

These younger widows, if supported by the church, would have opportunities to "live it up" and find other husbands, most likely unbelievers.

James 1:27 defines true religion as visiting orphans and widows in their distress.

What a benefit God gives to His saints! God has provided eternal security.

He has also provided for you as long as you live.

Ladies, remember this is God's insurance policy:

But if a woman has been what she ought to be during her giving in the service of the Lord, then if the time comes she cannot provide for herself, the local assembly will have care for her.