



Sunday School- March 27, 2011

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Unifying Topic: WORSHIP INSPIRES SERVICE

Lesson Text

I. Caring For The Church Family (I Timothy 5:1-8)

II. Listening To Sound Advice (I Timothy 5:17-22)

The Main Thought: 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. (I Timothy 5:8, KJV).

Unifying Principle: When people lead good and admirable lives, others want to honor them. What service might we give to someone we honor? The writer of 1 Timothy says to serve well the widows who need help and the elders who have earned honor.

Lesson Aim: To help students know that the Church is to be a caring family.

Life Aim: To teach how Christ wants the Church to be a loving, caring family in which the needs of all members such as widows, orphans, the elderly, the poor, youth, women, men, and children are met.

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

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

5:3 Honour widows that are widows indeed.

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.

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

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

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

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.

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

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.

5:19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

5:20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

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.

5:22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.

HISTORY:

In the previous chapter (4), Paul had spoken to Timothy about being fit for leadership. By writing to him was to ensure the proper spiritual training. Even though young, he was not to allow anyone to despise his youth but be an example for the believers. Whatever Paul had written to him, it was trustworthy and deserved acceptance; he was to command and teach till Paul was able to come. He now addresses certain continuing problems in the church at Ephesus. Timothy will have to deal with various classes and people in the congregation; he will have to face problems of discipline as he is given instructions by Paul for ministering to all the people in the church and how to honor them.

LESSON:

I Timothy 5:1-8 Caring For The Church Family

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MINISTERING TO ALL AGE GROUPS, 1 TIMOTHY 5:1-2

V1 Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father: This does not refer to a pastor, but in the sense of being an older person who is both mature in both age and experience. Paul's instructions indicate that older men are present in the church, who are not receiving the honor that was due an elder. Nevertheless they are to be respected. Timothy is told not "*to rebuke an older man but exhort him as you would a father.*" There is the duty to discipline various age groups.

"*Rebuke*" (*epiplesso*) means to be severely censured, angrily reprimanded, violently involved; no contempt or disgust. Quite simply, rebuking is confronting someone about their sin, pointing it out, bringing correction. Part of the pastor's job description is to bring rebuke where it is needed. It doesn't always make him the most popular in church, but it is necessary. After all, Jesus said, *Lk. 17:3 "...If your brother sins, rebuke him..."* And, some pastors want to be people pleasers. They neglect rebuke, wanting to make sure that everyone in the church is happy, so they can be popular and keep their job. But in doing so, they miss the real blessing, because the Scripture says, *Prov. 28:23 "He who rebukes a man will afterward find more favor than he who flatters with the tongue."* A church member is to be corrected, there is to be no severity, "*entreaty*" (*parekalei*), but "*appeal*", "*plea*" through exhortation and encouragement. Older people, at

times, resent being told by younger people what they ought to do and most of all be rebuked by younger people.

So Paul tells Timothy, "*Never speak sharply to an older man, but plead with him respectfully just as though he were your own father.*" There is a right way and a wrong way of calling a person's attention to a failure in their walk. The wrong way engenders strife and resentment. The way it is presented to a person can create animosity. Be careful not to build walls and barriers by the way in which we seek to correct someone. The meaning here is not that an elder must never be accused, because Paul, a little later, made provision for that.

V1b...and the younger men as brethren: The young are sometimes thought to know too little and to be too inexperienced to have a part in the decisions and ministry of the church. Therefore, there is the tendency to ignore and bypass them. But this is never to be. Young men are to be treated as brothers. If a younger man needs to be rebuked, talk to him like a brother. They need direction. There are times when younger men need to be taught, corrected, and disciplined—no matter their age. However, Timothy is told not to beat up on them. Again, this reminds Timothy that there is a family relationship involved. Timothy is not to let any man reject his youth. He should not rebuke with harsh words but entreat or beseech as a member of the family. The members of a church are to treat each other as family members. Elderly men are to be treated as fathers. Younger men are to be treated as brothers

V2 The elder women as mothers: Just think what a mother gives to a family and you can see what the older women can contribute to the church. In their character there should be:

· kindness · affection · warmth · compassion · care · tenderness · nourishment · energy · protection · concern
· giving · direction · guidance · understanding · love · discipline · perseverance · teaching · instruction · provision

A church is totally irresponsible if it ignores its elderly women who are true Christian believers. No son who had proper feelings would rebuke his own mother with severity. However, when they offend in any point, they are to be reasoned, and argued, and pleaded with, as children should with their mothers. Again, if an elderly woman needs correction and discipline, it must not be done in contempt and disrespect, but rather by the appeal and pleading of encouragement.

V2b ...the younger as sisters, with all purity: A young pastor is to be pure in his intentions, his attitudes and his dealings with the younger women in a congregation. Paul is simply reminding him that the normal relationship of a young pastor to young women is that of a brother who is helping them, seeking to understand them and know them as if they were their sister. Paul adds the words, "*in all purity*". Timothy, being unmarried, is to watch his sexual nature when he is admonishing younger women, talk to her like a sister. A godly man is not flirtatious or provocative, and does not use words that can be taken in a flirtatious or provocative way. But note: a woman must also guard how she dresses and how she would lead the conversation so she would not be misunderstood.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MINISTERING TO WIDOWS, 1 TIMOTHY 5:3-16

V3 Honour widows that are widows indeed: It was very difficult for a woman to be gainfully employed in that era of history. It was the father or husband that provided for a woman. If a woman's husband died, there was no retirement fund, welfare, or life insurance to depend on. The early church knew the importance of ministering Christ-like love and support to those in need, and thus they had established financial and practical support ministries for widows.

There may well have been two classes of women here. There were certainly widows who had become widows in the normal way by the death of their husbands. But it was not uncommon in the pagan 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 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 reckoned as widows and given the support of the Church.

Jewish law laid it down that at the time of his marriage a man ought to make provision for his wife, should she become a widow. It is to be noted that the Church did not propose to assume responsibility for older people whose children were alive and well able to support them. The ancient world was very definite that it was the duty of children to support aged parents.

Those that were really widows (Christians) are to be honored. "*Honor*" means to respect and esteem, but it also means to consider and give due care. It has the idea of looking after, caring for, and of giving material help. But note the term "*widows indeed*." The widows who have no family and inadequate finances are those who are to be helped and supported by the church. We will find out that there are two classes of widows that will be dealt with. Paul's instruction to Timothy is to give him the standards and qualifications that a woman must meet in order to be put on the list, and they of widows who are to be honored with the material support of the church. So certain limitations and qualifications had to be fulfilled. To be honored as, a "*widow indeed*", she must fulfill qualifications which the apostle gives here.

1. First, they had no family to help them (V5).
2. They trust in God, praying night and day in giving themselves to a spiritual ministry; keeping busy during these declining years of their life (V5).
3. They must be blameless (V7).
4. They must be 60yrs. and older (V9).

5. They were to be the wife of one husband (one husband woman) (V9).
6. Their good works are reported: relieve the afflicted (sick); be available in a ministry of help to others (V10).

These are the widows that are to be honored and helped by the church. Those strong words indicate how important this matter was in the early church, and, in principle, how important it ought to be to us today.

The local church had its limitations—the second class of widows; not all widows needed the material support of the church but still they were to be honored. Some widows had a family and estates that could help them. **V4 But if any widow have children or nephews:** The word "*nephew*" should be translated "*grandchildren*," This then limits the support of the church as to material support because this particular widow had children and grandchildren, those that can maintain her support. If the widow had some descendants, it was their obligation to care for the widow. It says **let them learn first to shew piety at home and to requite their parents:** Learning is a process, for not all siblings know this or are concerned with this. That is why parents are to bring them up in the admonition of the Lord; train them while they are young, to care for others instead of looking out for "*numeral uno*." Showing piety at home meant "*these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying, making a return to their parents and grandparents; showing proper respect toward their own family.*" Why? **For that is good and acceptable before God:** Think of the care and sacrifice parents make for their children. "*This debt can never be wholly repaid, but still a child should feel it a matter of sacred obligation to do as much toward it as possible.*" - Barnes

V5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. The word rendered "*desolate*" means "*solitary, alone*"; she had no children or other descendants; none on whom she could depend for support. She shows this by her devout life of continuing in supplications and prayers night and day. She trusts God in every way. It is not commanded them to set their hope upon God, etc., but it describes them as already doing so with a willing heart. The younger women would love to know older women whom they could call up to ask for advice, to pour out their hearts to, and share their struggles and problems with. This is the kind of ministry the Word of God encourages older women, especially widows, to have -- to be available to the younger women of the congregation for prayer, for support, for teaching, and for understanding.

V6 But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth: But note the contrast: some widows live in pleasure; that is, they give themselves over to the flesh and the world. They party, get drunk, and live immoral lives. These are not to be supported by the church. The church's energy and resources are not to be used to indulge and give license to worldliness and sin. Such a woman is "*dead while she lives*" "*is dead*" is a present participle meaning now she is already useless to God and others while she still lives physically. She is already dead to God and to the things of God. Her mind is upon her clubs and parties, the world and the flesh, not upon the Lord and His church and the desperate needs of a dying world. As a result she is missing out on a wonderful ministry. Paul urges Timothy to make this clear so that widows may be without reproach (criticism); that they may use the years left to them in ways that are filled with blessing and ministry for others.

V7 And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless: A good pastor will teach these things (all the things said in this chapter), so all will know what God expects of them and they will attend to these things so they won't be blameless. Both widowed parents and children are to obey these instructions. The reason is clearly stated: so that they can be blameless before God. We shall all be held accountable.

- For children: how they treat their widowed and aged parents.
- For the widow: how they live when widowed and aged, whether righteous or immoral, godly or ungodly.

We must both live obeying God and doing exactly what He says. We shall either be declared blameless and acceptable to God or else guilty of sin and unacceptable to God.

V8 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 (unbeliever): God's normal way of providing for the needy is not through the church, but through our own hard work. "*An infidel*" is a person who rejects Christ and sometimes even opposes Christ. He denies God and everything about God. The point is this: a person who does not take care of his parents (or anyone else of his household) stands opposed to God. He even denies the very existence of God by his behavior, for he shows that he does not fear God or God's command to respect and care for his parents. How we treat our aged parents is of critical importance to God. God holds us accountable and will judge us for how we treat our fathers and mothers when they become old.

NOT APART OF THE LESSON:

SYNOPSIS OF VERSES 9-16

Having given his definition of a widow that is in need and actually forsaken, he now proceeds to show in what manner the congregation should make arrangements for the support of the true widows: A widow should not be entered in the list (of dependents) unless she has reached the age of sixty, (having been) the wife of one man; well spoken of for good works, if she have brought up children, if she have been hospitable, if she have washed the feet of saints, if she have

brought relief to distressed (people), if she have diligently followed every good work. He wanted the names of only such women in the lists as were generally known to be women of a good moral, of a strictly Christian character. The apostle now describes another class of widows. Young widows should not be put on the list, because they will likely get married. It seems as though an older widow had a chance to become some type of servant, and be supported by a church. A young widow would likely break the covenant when the time came to get married. ¹Life does not seem to have been very different in those days than it does today! Young women with lots of time on their hands, being supported by the church, might tend to fill their hours going about from place to place, drinking endless cups of coffee, telling all the news of the neighborhood -- and getting far too involved in other people's business. Today we call this a soap opera! Verse 14-15 must give fits to the feminists of our day. It urges women to stay home, marry, bear children, take care of their households, and in doing so they will remove the opportunity for the devil to attack and destroy the Christian church. Paul recognizes that the enemy is quick to seize such a situation and use it to break up a marriage, a home, destroy the children, and change the relationship between a husband and wife. And lastly, believers (man or woman) are to care for their own relatives so that the church can care for those who have no one to care for them.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MINISTERING TO THE ELDERS OF THE CHURCH, 1 TIMOTHY 5:17-22

I Timothy 5:17-22 Listening To Sound Advice

V17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine: These verses include: 1) The honor and pay of an elder (v.17-18). 2. The discipline of an elder (v.19-20). These elders are not the same as those in verse 1, but refer to the pastors/elders of the church who rule. He uses the word "*let*", meaning allow this to be counted worthy; give permission to this double honor partly on account of their age, partly on account of the dignity of their office, but especially they who labor in the Word and doctrine (ideas taught as truth). The word "*rule*" (*proistemi*) is a general word meaning to oversee, supervise, and look after. More importantly, those who "*rule well*", for not all do are to have this double honor. All the leaders of a church staff are to be counted worthy as doing what they do unto the Lord. But there is one leader who is singled out: the elder who labors in the Word and doctrine, that is, who labors in the Word by preaching and teaching. It is he upon whom so much responsibility lies: he is the one who takes the lead in edifying and building up the believers—the church. He is the one who has to spend hours on his face before God and in the Word in order to preach and teach—this in addition to taking the lead in all the other ministerial duties of the church. If he is a committed leader, a leader who labors and labors for Christ and rules well for the church, then he is worthy of double honor.

Now the word "*honor*" means esteem, respect, pay tribute, acknowledge, and recognize. It means to pay and bestow what is due. One commentary, *Liddon* proposes "*honorarium*" (both honour and pay and so "*double*").

This elder is due an honorarium (fee for service); he is due compensation, some pay, some wage for his labor. And, if he performs his duty well, then he is due double honor.

John Gill sees this is to be understood both of that outward respect that is to be shown them by words and actions; and of a sufficient maintenance that is to be provided for them; in which sense the word "honour" is used in this chapter before; See Gill on 1Ti_5:3, and some think that the comparison is between the widows before mentioned, and these elders; that if poor widows in the church are to be honoured and maintained, then much more the officers of it; these are worthy of more honour, even of double honour, or, a larger and a more honourable...

However, those called of God would preach whether they are paid or not because it is their calling (1 Corth.9:16b-18). Although Paul concluded in First Corinthians 9:12 and 9:15 that he and others had certain legitimate "*rights*" of compensation for their work in the ministry. Paul often worked as a tentmaker (Acts 18:3) to avoid burdening the churches, but he also accepted a monetary gift gratefully. He did not say that he meant double salaries for all. Also remember the context of this section is of honour of the elder, then to the discipline of the elder.

V18 For the scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And The labourer is worthy of his reward: The oxen used to grind out the corn are used as an example. In the East, oxen have been used to pull a millstone around and around over grain. The oxen were never muzzled. They were allowed to eat as much grain as they wished, for they were considered to have earned all the grain they wished. So it is to be with the elder or leader God sends. He is worthy of his labor. As he grinds and grinds away at the harvest of souls for God and the church, the elder is to be given more than enough financial support. Again, men called of God would preach whether they are paid or not, but God ordained they are to live by their ministry (1Corth.9:7-11). The point is: if God ordained that working oxen should be cared for, how much more has He ordained that the labourer is worthy of his reward!

V19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses: The devil can easily raise up accusers to say, "*This elder stole that money! I saw him at the bar! He propositioned me!*" Paul reminds Timothy not to jump to judgment at the accusation of one person. "*Accusation*" (*Gr katēgoria*), the word is used of formal charges before a court. It was Jewish law that no man should be condemned on the evidence of a single witness: "*A single witness shall*

¹ <http://www.raystedman.org/new-testament/timothy/the-care-and-feeding-of-widows>

not prevail against a man for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offence that he has committed, only on the evidence of two witnesses, or of three witnesses, shall a charge be sustained" (Deuteronomy 19:15). An elder or leader had one solemn possession, his character. An accusation against him, therefore, is serious and must be witnessed before two or three persons or not at all. This would stop many rumors and save many of God's servants, if heeded.

V20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear: Now, when an elder is found guilty, God says, rebuke before all and it is to be done without partiality. Church leaders are not exempt from sin, faults, and mistakes. But they are often criticized for the wrong reasons—minor imperfections, failure to meet someone's expectations, personality clashes. When a charge is confirmed and the elder repents, no public action is necessary. But if he persists, then a public rebuke is required: "*As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear.*" Sometimes church leaders should be confronted about their behavior, and sometimes they should be rebuked. But all rebuking must be done fairly, lovingly, and for the purpose of restoration.

V21 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: This is the third charge and a strong charge given to Timothy. It could be combined with the former passage. Timothy might well have felt inadequate, but notice whom the apostle summons to his aid, whom he says is watching: "*in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels.*" God the Father is involved. He is at work in the congregation. He knows what is going on; nothing is hid from his eyes. Christ Jesus, Lord of the church, head of the body, is present also. The word "*elect*" in this place has the meaning of the faithful angels, the ones not carried away by the rebellion of Satan. Timothy was to observe and was held accountable for the way he discharged his duty to preach and teach these things. He was not to prefer close or special friends before another or feel intimidated or inadequate by certain powerful personalities among the eldership. Elders can be very strong-minded men and Timothy might have been afraid to take them on. So is every other minister and leader. Doing requires action, act -- patiently, lovingly, thoughtfully, carefully -- but act. "*Without partiality*" means, "*without previous judgment*"; without being inclined to favor one party or person more than another. There should be no bias from a servant of God.

V22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure: The laying on of hands was the recognition of a man by the other elders as being chosen of the Lord. When Timothy lays hands on, he is approving of a certain man for God's work. This is used in the sense of ordination. If he lays hands on someone too quickly, and that person is a wolf in sheep's clothing, he may endorse someone who will lead people away from the truth. Therefore he has endorsed his sin, and has helped spread it.

- We can share in the sins of others by setting a bad example before them.
- We can share in the sins of others by approving of them or ignoring them.
- We can share in the sins of others by joining a church that is spreading dangerous teachings

The danger is that someone is more concerned with image (how it appears to others) than with substance (what they can really be doing for the Lord right now). Time should be given to allow those gifts and callings to demonstrate themselves. Timothy was to keep his hands entirely clean in the matter—guarding it and guarding oneself, for which reason Paul adds a few rules: keep thyself pure; namely, from this offense and from every other evil. He should not become guilty of lack of strictness. He should keep himself morally clean, and guard against every pollution of the body and of the spirit.

SUMMARY:

This chapter contains Paul's instructions to Timothy regarding various members of the congregation. He starts with the honor of members in general—elder, younger men, elder women, and younger women—counseling Timothy to consider them as family, and exhorting them accordingly. That's what happens in a family. A major section is then devoted to the care of widows, if she was a real widow, in whom the church would support after meeting certain qualifications, or if she had children/relatives, in which they were to give support. These things were commanded (7). If anyone does not provide for his own he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Several remarks are then made regarding elders (not just older Christians, but those serving as overseers). Elders who rule well are to be worthy of financial support, especially if they are laboring in the word and doctrine. Accusations against an elder are not to be taken seriously unless there are two or three witnesses. Those elders who are sinning need to be publicly rebuked so that the rest may fear. Paul then gives Timothy a solemn charge to be free from prejudice and partiality as he goes about his duties. He is also to be cautious about those he may commend, being careful to keep himself pure from others' sins.

APPLICATION:

Worship causes us to act as a family because a family cares for one another. Your act of service will inspire those who least expect it and causes them to know what a real family is like.