

Chapter 5

Actions Toward All Age Groups

1TI 5:1 Do not sharply [harshly] rebuke [reprimand, chastise] an older man, but rather appeal to [gently correct] him [with respect] as a father, to the younger men as [much-loved] brothers,

- The reference to the four age groups shows the word “elder” (older one) is not used in the official sense, but in a general sense of “older men.”
 - **Paul is divided a congregation into four age categories.**
1. “older man” is from “presbuteros” meaning “elder, older man.”
 - KJV. has “elder”.
 - See Acts 2:17 where “old men” is used as the translation of “presbuteros.”
 - This is not a direct reference to the elders of the church in an official sense, but it refers to older men in general.
 - Elders are not excluded from the admonition since it is an admonition in regard of how older men were to be treated. It would clearly include elders.
 - a. A respectful son would not publicly rebuke his father though he might quietly and respectfully seek to correct him.
 - b. The older man was not to “get away” with sin because he was old, he is accountable for his conduct like all others.
 - c “appeal” is from “parakaleo” meaning to “exhort, beseech, appeal, entreat.” McCord “entreat him as a father.”
 - d. The word “rebuke” comes from “epiplesso” [e pee plays so] meaning “upbraid, chastise, rebuke.”
 - e. The word “sharply” is not in the original but is probably implied.
 - f.. The older man who not to be roughly or severely treated. There was to be a respect for age.
 2. “the younger men” - “neoteros”
 - a. He was to treat these men as much-loved brothers. Lit. “as brothers.”
 - b. He was not to be overly harsh even on “the younger men” who were “brothers” in Christ, and may have been more fragile than the older men.
 - c. Youth most often are more easily discouraged by criticism than older ones.
 - d. Those who are older usually have learned to better accept or cope with criticism realizing they cannot please

everyone. See Lk. 6:26

1TI 5:2 [treat] **the older women as mothers, and [treat] the younger women as sisters, in all [absolute] purity** [propriety, fleeing lustful thoughts and actions].

1. “the older women as mothers” - “presbutera” - older women
 - a. He was to treat with the same love and respect as he would his own mother. Timothy had a wonderful mother and grandmother. (2 Tim. 1:5f).
 - b. Honoring parents. See Exod. 20:12; Deut. 5:16; Matt. 15:1-9; Eph. 6:1,2.
2. “the younger women as sisters” - He was to treat them with love, respect and purity.
 - a. **“in all purity”** Gr. “hagneia” [hag nay a]- purity
 - 1) “thinking only pure thoughts about them” - Tay.
 - 2) There was to be purity in thoughts and actions.
 - 3) They were to be treated “with perfect propriety.” **Mof.**
 - b. 1 Tim. 4:12 - Timothy was to be an example “in purity.” See also 1 Cor. 6:18; 2 Tim. 2:22.

1CO 6:18 Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.	2TI 2:22 Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.
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Notes:

1. The church is the family of God. (1 Tim. 3:15), and those who do the will of God are the true family of Jesus. (Matt. 12:46-50).
2. We are to treat one another as beloved family members because we are members of God’s family.
3. This was written to Timothy, but it is applicable to all younger believers.
4. The principle of treating one another with love and respect is applicable to all. See Jn. 13:34, 35; Matt. 22:27, 38; Eph. 4:32.

Honor Widows

Distressed Widows (1 Tim. 5:3-8).

- Paul will proceed to write about four different kinds of widows.

1. Women who were widows by death and possibly by desertion. A godly woman abandon by her husband was in a practical sense a widow.	3. Enrolled widows - must be 60 or older. Honored with permanent support.
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2. Widows indeed (1 Tim. 5:3, 5, 6) - No property, income, relatives. They could be honored with long termed or permanent support.

4. Younger widows. Most of these widows would be needy.

1TI 5:3 Honor [respect, support] **widows who are widows indeed;** Gr. “ontos” is rendered “indeed.” McCord “true widows”

1. **“Widows indeed”** were destitute, without husband or children.

- a. They had no where else to turn. They would likely starve or become beggars without help.
- b. See 1 Tim. 5:5, 16

1TI 5:5 Now she who is a widow indeed, and who has been left alone has fixed her hope on God, and continues in entreaties and prayers night and day.

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

2. Care of widows See Acts 6:1-6; Jas. 1:27.

1TI 5:4 but if any widow has children or grandchildren [descendants], **let them first learn to practice piety** [religious duty, show their godliness] **in regard to their own family, and to make some return** [repayment] **to their parents** [progenitors, those who brought them up]; **for this is acceptable** [pleasing, mandatory] **in the sight of God.**

• KJV has “nephews”

1. Greek pl.:ekgona” from “ek go nos” - sprung from one, born of, grandchildren, offspring, descendants.
2. “learn” suggests children do not always volunteer to fulfill this obligation. Some think help is a one way street. They learn by being expected to obey these instructions and seeing others doing the same.
3. “piety” or “godliness” - Gr. “eusebeo” - “tois progonois” - to the forefathers, parents. “progonos” means “born before, parents, forebears, ancestors.”

4. Examples

- a. **Joseph** provided for his family. (Gen. 45:3, 9-13; 46:28-34; 47:7, 27-31; 50:1-14).
- b. **Jesus** made provisions for the care of His mother. (Jn. 19:26, 27).

5. Old Testament Scriptures And Widows

- a. They are under His special care and protection. (Exod. 22:23; Deut. 10:18; Prov. 15:25; Psa. 146:9).
- b. God made provisions for them. (Deut. 16:11, 14; 14:29; 24:19-21; 26:12, 13).
- c. He blessed those who help and honor them. (Isa. 1:17, 18; Jere. 7:6; 22:3,4).
- d. He rebukes those who hurt them. (Exod. 22:22; Deut. 24:17; 27:19; Zech. 7:10; Job 24:3, 21; 31:16; Psa. 94:5; Mal. 3:5).

e. They are objects of Christ’s tender compassion. (Mk. 12:42, 43; Lk. 7:11-17; 18:3, 5; 20:47; 21:2,3).

f. In the early church they were not forgotten. (Acts 6:1-6; Jas. 1:27).

6. **“for this is acceptable in the sight of God.”** - 1 Tim. 2:3

a. Gr. “apodektos” - acceptable, pleasing

b. “Acceptable” or “pleasing” is in this context the equivalent of mandatory - not an optional way to please God.

“A Widow Indeed”

1 Tim. 5:3

1TI 5:5 Now she who is a widow indeed [a true destitute widow], and who has been left alone has fixed her hope on God, and continues in entreaties [petitions] and prayers night and day.

1. **“widows indeed”** - she had nowhere else to go for help.
2. **“left alone”** - no husband, no children, grandchildren **“monoo”** - alone
3. **“has fixed her hope on God”** - She is living for God and depending on His help.
4. **“continues in entreaties and prayers night and day”** - See Anna (Lk. 2:36, 37).

Kinds Of Widows

Widows who did not meet spiritual qualifications. (1 Tim. 5:3-8).	Enrolled widows - 60 or above Honored with permanent compensation.	Older widows who did not meet qualifications of enrolled widows.
Widows indeed - 1 Tim. 5:3, 5. Faithful Christian widows who had no property, income, relatives	Younger Widows - Less than 60	Widows who did not need financial help.

Other Women

Single women of all ages	Abused women who were in desperate need. This might include slaves who had wicked masters.	Divorced women
Women who have been deserted.	Women who have disabled husbands	Disabled or mentally handicapped women without family.

1TI 5:6 But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure [sin, dissipation, self-indulgence] is [spiritually] dead even while she lives [still alive].

- “spatalao” [spa ta la o]- living wantonly, giving oneself to pleasure.
- “but the (one) living wantonly living has died.”

- Some widows were the opposite spiritually of those described in 1 Timothy 5:5, and gave themselves to sin and dissipation. They may have pursued fornication rather than fleeing it. (1 Cor. 6:18).

1TI 5:7 Prescribe [charge, command, insist on] **these things as well, so that they** [the people] **may be above reproach** [blameless]

- anepileptos”- irreproachable, above reproach, blameless..
 - NIV - “Give the people these instructions, too, so that no one may be open to blame.” See Amp.
 - NEB - “Add these orders to the rest”
 - Lit. “And charge you these things, in order that they may be without reproach.
 - McCord “that they may be blameless”
1. Timothy is to demand obedience to the things he has been teaching as well as to the things referred to in 1 Timothy 4:11 and the rest of this letter.
 2. “These things” certainly refer to what he had written in verses 1-6.

Providing For Own

1TI 5:8 But if anyone [a believer] **does not provide for his own** [relatives], **and especially** [particularly] **for those of his household** [family], **he has denied** [disowned, repudiated] **the** [Christian] **faith, and is** [behaving] **worse than an unbeliever.**

- “unbeliever” - “apistou”; “prono ϵ o” - care for, provide for.
 - “worse than an unbeliever” - Taylor has “has no right to say he is a Christian.”
1. It is a privilege and obligation to provide for family.
 2. It is horrendous sin to refuse this responsibility. (Matt. 15:1-9; Mk. 7:7).
 - a. “denied the faith” - They have denied Christianity and the commands of respect and mercy.
 - b. “worse than an unbeliever” - “than the heathen” - Tay.
 - 1) Even lost heathen with few morals most often take care of their own.
 - 2) It is deplorable to God for a Christian to neglect this duty unless there is no possible way for it to be done.
 - 3) There are instances because of sickness, disability, imprisonment, etc. where this would be impossible, but this is the exception and not the rule.

Enrolled Widows

Those Employed By Church (1 Tim. 5:9-16)

- This is a special group of widows.
- The qualifications for those enrolled seems to be directly related to the work to be done.

1TI 5:9 Let a widow be put on the list [be enrolled] only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man,

1. “katalego” - to select, to reckon in a number, enter in or a list or catalog, enrol.
 - a. KJV has “taken into the number.”
 - b. ASV & RSV “be enrolled.”
2. He is speaking of widows to be entered on a list or register to be permanently supported by the church.
3. **“having been the wife of one man”** - She was faithful to her husband. NIV “has been faithful to her husband.”
 - a. Polyandry was very rare and virtually unknown in the ancient world.
 - b. There is no evidence it was in the church.
 - c. It did not disqualify a woman who had 2 dead husbands. See 1 Tim. 5:14. Surely Paul would not instruct “younger widows” to marry, and then disqualify them later from being an enrolled widow if the second husband died.
 - d. See Titus 2:3,4 - God’s plan for “young women” in general.

Additional Qualifications Of Enrolled Widows

1TI 5:10 having a reputation [being known] for good works; and if she has brought up [reared] children [one or more], if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress [sickness, sorrow], and if she has devoted herself to every good [excellent] work.

1. **“reputation for good works”** - She was to be known for good works as an requirement for enrollment. Christians are to be “ready for every good work.” (Tit. 3:1).
2. **“If she has brought up children”**
 - a. It was required that she had raised children [one or more]. The implication is that the children had been properly raised and this experience would help her in her duties. Merely giving birth to children does not make one a good mother.
 - b. It seems that the children are dead (1 Tim. 5:4) or that these widows employed by the church could have living children. The text does not state her children were dead. This must be assumed.
 - c. They [the enrolled widows] are not the same as the “widows indeed.”
 - d. Nothing is mentioned about these women being destitute though it might have been the case.
3. **“shown hospitality to [entertained] strangers”** [to the ones in the brotherhood]
 - “xenod~~o~~cheo” [kse no do ke o] - show hospitality, help strangers. KJV “lodged strangers”
 - a. All Christians are to be hospitable. (Rom. 12:13; Heb. 13:2; 1 Pet. 4:9). See 1 Tim. 3:2.

- b. These women had manifested hospitality.
 - c. Widow of Zarephath helped Elijah. (1 Kg. 17:9).
 - d. Shunamite woman who lodged Elisha. (2 Kgs. 4:8-11).
4. **“washed the saints’ feet”**
- a. This was act of hospitality, not act of worship.
 - b. This may also be symbolic of humble service rendered to others.
 - c. There is absolutely no evidence that washing feet was an act of worship. (Jn. 13:1-16; Lk. 7:44; 1 Tim. 5:10).
 - d. This was a humble and gracious custom in the first century, but would be offensive in most instances today.
5. **“if she has assisted those in distress”** - One who has helped those in sorrow, sickness, heavy burdens, etc.
6. **“if she has devoted herself to every good work”**
- a. The word “devoted” is very significant and shows the enrolled widows were ladies who had given themselves and would continue to give themselves to good works.
 - b. The enrolled widows were to be devoted “to every good work.” See Tit. 2:14
 - c. This was a group of spiritual widows who were willing and able to devote themselves to “good works.”

“Younger Widows” Under 60

First Reason For Not Being Placed On List

1TI 5:11 But refuse to put younger widows on the list [of enrolled widows], for when they feel sensual [natural] disregard of Christ, they want to get married [again],

- **McCord** “When they are drawn from Christ by fleshly impulses.”
- **NIV** “For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ they want to marry.”

“grow wanton against” - Gr. “katastpenia^o” [ka ta stre nee ah o]

1. Do not put the “younger windows” on the list for permanent support. See 1 Tim. 5:9
2. All young widows would not be so inclined, but it would happen so often the church could not afford to take a chance.
3. It would be better for the younger widows to marry. (1 Tim 5:14).
 - a. “Self-control” can be a big issue for the single Christian or any single for that matter. (1 Cor. 7:8,9).
 - b. See Heb. 13:4; Gen. 2:18
4. 1 Timothy 5:14 was not an absolute commandment. (1 Cor. 7). One is not required to marry to be faithful to Christ. (1 Cor. 7:8).

5. He is not affirming “younger widows” cannot be helped under any circumstances.
 - a. He is not excluding temporary help.
 - b. They were not to receive permanent support as enrolled widows.
 - c. The church is permitted to “do good to all men” and especially “the household of faith.” (Gal. 6:10).
 - d. This would include needy widows of all ages and other needy. (See 1 Jo. 3:17,18; Jas. 2:14-17).

1TI 5:12 thus incurring condemnation [criticism, reproach, guilt], **because they have set aside their previous pledge** [promise, contract, agreement].

1. “previous pledge” - Greek “protos” - first, chief; “pistis” - faith, faithfulness
 - a. NIV “they have broken their first pledge.” — RSV “having violated their first pledge.”
 - b. NKJV “they have cast off the first faith.”
 - c. KJV “cast off their first faith”
2. Evidently one of the pledges on joining the order [group, number] of enrolled widows was not to marry.
3. These were not “nuns,” but were older women who had lost their husbands, and had raised up children.
4. “Condemnation” does not mean necessarily “hell,” but criticism, reproach, guilt. Gr. “having judgment” - “echousai krima”
5. It could mean hell if the widow went into a life of sin.

Second Reason For Not Being Placed On The List

1TI 5:13 And at the same time they [the younger women] **also learn to be idle, as they go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips** [tattlers] **and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention.**

- “argos” - lazy, idle; “periergos” - busybody
1. Those on the list would not have to worry about support, but may have had a good bit of free time.
 2. The nature of their church work might lead to boredom. It is assumed they (1) Ministered to the sick (2) cared for the elderly (3) Did counseling (4) Assisted others in a host of ways.
 3. The boredom might lead to sinful conduct. (Boredom has led to many sins).
 4. Nature would also play a big part in their behavior. (1 Tim. 5:11; 1 Cor. 7:2, 9).

“Younger Widows To Get Married”

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

1. “To get married”

a. This was not a commandment (1 Cor. 7), but was a strong recommendation especially for those who might be tempted to become enrolled widows.

b. It is not a sin to choose not to marry provided one can exercise self-control

2. “bear children”

a. All would not be able to bear children, but many in their 30's and 40's would still have that ability.

b. Titus 2:3,4.

3. “keep house” - “oikodespoteo” [oi ko des po te o]- to be the head of a family, to guide or manage the house., run the household”

a. McCord “to manage the household.”

b. “oikodespotes” - “householder, landowner, master.”

4. “give the enemy no occasion for reproach”

a. Because of conduct (1 Tim. 5:13).

b. Because violated pledge. (1 Tim 5:12).

c. Elders, deacons, evangelists were also to be “above reproach” (1 Tim. 3:2, 10; 4:12).

1TI 5:15 for some [perhaps younger enrolled widows] have already turned aside to follow Satan.

• “satanas” - **Adversary, Satan** ----- “**Satan**” - NASB, NIV, Marshall, McCord, KJV, RSV, ASV

1. He had earlier warned against misconduct. (1 Tim. 5:13).

2. This misconduct was following Satan and could lead to sinful conduct and apostasy.

1TI 5:16 If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, let her assist [relieve] them, and let not the church [congregation] be burdened [responsible for support], so that it may assist those who are widows indeed [that is true destitute widows].

• “dependent” is supplied by the translators.

• “bareo” - burden, weigh down

• “eparkeo” - I help, aid

Greek

1. “piste” - N, A, C “If any believing woman” - Gr. “ei tis piste”

2. “pistos e piste” - D, K, ψ - 5th, 8th, 9th century manuscripts.

“If any woman” - NASB, NIV

“If any man or woman: - KJV

“If any believing woman or believing man” **Amp.**

“If any woman who believers has widows” - McCord

“If any believing woman” - RSV

1. The words “if any believing woman” appears to be the correct translation. See Greek Notes above.
2. “Men” certainly had a responsibility to support widows. (1 Tim. 5:4, 8). See Acts 6:1-7; Jas. 1:27.
3. There may have been some question about the Christian’s woman responsibility to help.
 - a. Paul shows the Christian woman had the same responsibility.
 - b. Some women had this financial ability to do this.
 - c. These women might or might not be married.
 - d. Paul does not discuss the marital status of the believing women who were support “dependent widows.”
 - e. Paul’s instructions applied to a woman’s family as well as a man’s family.

Note:

- “**If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows**” is a curious statement.
- It may simply mean mother, grandmother, aunt, etc.

Comments

1. Children are to help parents. (Matt. 15:1-9; Eph. 6:1,2; 1 Tim 5:4).
2. Christians are to aid needy widows. (Jas. 1:27).
3. The church at Jerusalem helped needy widows. (Acts 6:1-7).
 - a. It is assumed these widows did not have family to support them or they were sharing in the goods that had been given to the apostles for all needy Christians. (Acts 2:44, 45; 4:32).
 - b. There are no special qualifications listed in Acts 6 for this support except being a needy widow.
4. Paul makes it clear that we have an obligation to help our parents, grandparents, etc. (1 Tim. 5:4,8). See Matt. 15:1-9; Mk. 7:5-12.
5. There seems to be little doubt that the church can help all widows who are in need and have no one to support them. (Gal. 6:10; Jas. 2:14-17; 1 Jn. 3:17, 18).
6. It is also likely the church has the right to help widows if family members refuse to do so, but family members who spurned this obligation are “worse than unbelievers” and should not be fellowshipped by the church. (1 Tim. 5:8).
7. There are 2 classes of widows the church could support permanently.
 - a. “Widows indeed” - See notes above

- b. "Enrolled widows" - See notes above
8. There is so little knowledge concerning what was involved in the enrollment of widows that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to duplicate today.
- a. Certainly the church can support or help widows who are destitute and have no family.
 - b. We have no exact information about what the enrolled widows did in the employment of the church, but likely they were involved in a host of duties assisting and helping women and children, etc.
9. Some are quiet strict on church support of widows, but very liberal on the support of widowers and others not discussed here.
- a. Though fewer in number then, there would have been older widowers who had needs that would need to be addressed by family and if no family the church.
 - b. Paul does not discuss their support or give regulations concerning their support,, but we can be certain they were not neglected.
10. Many churches have programs assisting widows, the elderly and others of all ages.
11. The church should not "jump in" helping these Christians without expecting the family to fulfill its obligation. (1 Tim.5:4, 8).
12. Too many in our age wish to shift or neglect their responsibility toward family and expect the government or church to fulfill their duty.

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