

**TITLE: INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CHURCH**

**TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 5**

**THESIS:** The purpose of this sermon is to study Paul's instructions to Timothy regarding the church and make application to today.

**INTRO:** As we look at the church today we recognize that it is not some club or establishment just thrown together on a whim, with no organization or instructions for its leadership and members. Every organization has its rules/regulations for membership, leadership, operations, discipline, etc. Certainly an organization established by God is no exception. Paul gives Timothy these types of instructions in this letter, as we've seen already in ch.1-4. This instruction continues in ch.5-6 as he gets into specific areas of the church & its members.

**I. INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING REPROVING (v. 1-2):**

- A. Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father
  - 1. "Elder" here contextually is clearly referring to an older man, not the office of Elder.
  - 2. Rebuke (chastise, upbraid, lit. "strike, pound, beat upon"); not the corrective "rebuke" of v. 20.
  - 3. "Intreat" him (παρκαλεω- "call near," exhort, admonish, comfort) the way you would a father...with respect (**Lev 19:32**).
- B. Younger men as brothers, elder women as mothers, younger women as sisters. *\*Reprove them gently, as family members*

**II. INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING WIDOWS (v. 3-16):**

- A. Thesis of this section: Honor widows that are widows indeed (that are truly widows). "Widow" has the idea of "deficiency."
- B. By her family (v. 3-8)
  - 1. Does she have children or grandchildren (i.e., family that can and should be taking care of her)?
  - 2. Is she desolate (alone, forsaken, bereaved), trusting (hoping) in God? Is she relying on God, expecting help from Him?
  - 3. Or is she living it up (luxuriously)? She is dead! Her life, her existence, is meaningless...no purpose in life.
  - 4. Will her family take care of her? The man who refuses to deny (contradicts) the faith – which teaches love for *all*! And, he is worse than an unbeliever (faithless). Even an unbeliever will provide for his family! But some might try to get out of their responsibilities by having the church take care of their widow. This is forbidden in v. 16.
- C. By the church (v. 9-16)
  - 1. She must be at least 60 years old (to be "enrolled" – if under 60, probably case by case. If she can work, let her work).
  - 2. Wife of one man - Not, as some might say, married *only* to one man during her life. This would exclude those who may have remarried when younger (v. 14)! Rather, her marital situation must have always been in accordance with God's will.
  - 3. Her conduct must have been well known (v. 10).
  - 4. Not the younger widows (v. 11-15) – they wax wanton against Christ, desiring to marry.
    - a. Marriage isn't forbidden. But it seems that it is excluded from this commitment being made by widows who are dependent on the church and dedicating themselves to service. The woman who will do this is the one who has already proved herself a servant (v. 10).
    - b. The younger widow has stronger sexual desires, and it will not be easy for her to hold this commitment. She'll then bring *judgment* (not "damnation") on herself because she disregards her first faith [pledge] or conviction (to God and the church as one dedicated to service).
    - c. (v. 13-15) Negative results of financially helping a young woman with no husband, children, or house to take care of!
  - 5. Summary and final reminder regarding widows (v. 16)

**III. INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING ELDERS (v. 17-20):**

- A. Rewarding an elder (v. 17-18) – a good elder is worth double honor (reference to money) – worthy of his hire (reward, payment) It seems that elders were intended to be paid (or at least worthy of it).
- B. Respecting an elder (v. 19) – we don't just accept an accusation against someone we respect (we give the benefit of the doubt).
- C. Rebuking an elder (v. 20) – Rebuke them publicly– we must see that even elders are not immune to sin and church discipline.

**IV. INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING TIMOTHY (v. 21-25):**

- A. (v. 21) God, Jesus, and angels called to be witness of Timothy's charge – shows the seriousness of these instructions
- B. Observe these things without prejudice (pre-judging someone).
  - 1. What things? Immediate context – rebuking of elders
  - 2. Chapter context? Exhorting members, handling of widows, treatment of elders
- C. (v. 22) "Lay hands on no man suddenly (hastily)..." Be careful who you choose to work. If you choose carelessly, *you* will be at least partially responsible for this man's failures in the job. Keep yourself pure!

- D. (v. 23) “Drink no longer water...” – why is this here? Paul may stop here to deal with the anxiety of Timothy’s task (heavy responsibility for a young man who obviously has some physical ailments). Possibly placed here in reference to “pure” in v. 22.
1. Strongs: “to be a water drinker, that is, to abstain from vinous beverages.” Timothy was one who abstained from any type of wine. Paul says to use a little wine for his stomach and other infirmities (?).
  2. This is not a command to drink no water at all. It is a command to drink some wine for medicinal purposes.
  3. This may be fermented or unfermented wine (“οἶνος,” translated “wine,” is fruit of the grape).
  4. Possibly non-alcoholic grape juice. There are benefits in the juice itself, fermented or not.
  5. Even if it is alcoholic, this is simply a command for medicinal purposes and NOT authorization for social drinking!
- E. Both sin and good works, whether visible to others or not, is not hidden before God, and will be seen eventually (v. 24-25). This is still in the context of v. 22 – not laying hands on (choosing) men quickly, and all this (v. 21-25) may still be in the overall context of elders (v. 17-20). If not, its contextual placement is a bit hard to explain.

**CONCLUSION:** God has never intended for His people to be left in the dark without His instruction for our lives and organization. Through Paul, He tells Timothy how He wants the church to operate in certain situations. The church today would be much more godly if we would dedicate ourselves to practicing what Paul and Timothy preached.