

**I TIMOTHY 5**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to I Timothy chapter 5 as we continue our study through the Word of God.

Make no mistake about it, this letter that Paul wrote to Timothy was so important. Timothy was more of a timid man and thus, Paul is admonishing him to deal with situations within the church and don't run from them.

One writer summed it up for us like this. He wrote,

Paul, the aged and experienced apostle, writes to the young pastor Timothy who is facing a heavy burden of responsibility in the church at Ephesus. The task is challenging: false doctrine must be erased, public worship safeguarded, and mature leadership developed.

In addition to the conduct of the church, Paul talks pointedly about the conduct of the minister.

Timothy must be on his guard lest his youthfulness become a liability, rather than an asset, to the gospel. He must be careful to avoid false teachers and greedy motives, pursuing instead righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, and the gentleness that befits a man of God.

- The Open Bible, Expanded Edition, p. 1224

And how we need to hear these words today!

Remember back in I Timothy chapter 3, starting in verse 14, what Paul said regarding the focus of this letter? He wrote, **“These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”** I Timothy 3:14-15.

Paul is telling Timothy what the church is all about. Its function, its leadership, how we are to conduct ourselves as part of the body of Christ, the various roles in the church and-so-on. And specifically, the church is the pillar and foundation of the truth, not opinions or feelings, but the truths of God found in the Word of God! It is the Word of God that needs to be spoken, explained and then applied to the lives of the people!

Now, here in I Timothy chapter 5 the focus is on family, and specifically, the family of God!

That is one of the phrases that is spoken of the church, that it is a family.

And if you really think about it, the family of God, our brothers and sisters in the Lord, we have a deeper bond with each other than we have many times with our unsaved family, our biological family!

Why is that?

Well, first of all, in Paul’s day, if you were a Jew and came to Christ and even a Gentile many times, your family would disown you, they wanted nothing to do with you and thus, your only family was the church family!

And even today we see that. You can’t talk about Jesus, you can’t talk about your faith with family members, they don’t want to hear it and many times they just distance themselves from you.

But that is not the case with the church family, at least it should not be!

Let me share this with you regarding the church being a family, because that is going to be our focus here in I Timothy chapter 5 this evening.

We are told,

Can you define what a Christian is without mentioning the church? If you can, your definition just might not line up with the Bible's.

Think about it. If you're an orphan, you don't adopt parents; they adopt you. If your adoptive parents are named Smith, you now attend the Smith family dinners with the parents and all the children. You share a bedroom at night with the Smith siblings. When the teacher at school calls out attendance and says, "Smith?" you raise your hand like your older brother did before you and your younger sister will do after you. And you do this not because you decided to play the role of "Smith," but because someone went to the orphanage and said, "You will be a Smith." On that day, you became the child of someone and the sibling of others.

Only your name's not Smith. It's Christian, named after the one through whom you were adopted, Christ (Eph. 1:5). Now you're part of the whole family of God. "The one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family" (Heb. 2:11).

And this is no dysfunctional family, with family members estranged from one another. It's a fellowship. When God "called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9), he also called you into "fellowship" with the whole family (1 Cor. 5:2).

And this is no polite and formal fellowship. It's a body, bound together by our individual decisions but also bound together by far more than human decision - the person and work of Christ. You would be as foolish to say, "I'm not a part of the family," as you would be to cut off your own hand or nose. As Paul said to the Corinthians, "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you!' And the head cannot say to the feet, 'I don't need you!'" (1 Cor. 12:21).

In short, it's impossible to answer the question "What is a Christian?" without ending up in a conversation about the church; at least, in the Bible it is.

Not only that, it's hard to stick with just one metaphor for the church because the New Testament uses so many of them: a family and a fellowship, a body and a bride, a people and a temple, a lady and her children.

And never does the New Testament conceive of the Christian existing on a prolonged basis outside the fellowship of the church. The church is not really a place. It's a people - God's people in Christ.

- <http://bit.ly/3cpU7Xq>

How true that is and how important that is for us to understand and then, live by!

These are very practical lessons and important ones for us to learn from. You see, family situations can get difficult at times and the church family, I am sorry to say, is no different.

With that said, let's begin reading in I Timothy chapter 5, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us this evening as we study His Word.

**I TIMOTHY 5****VERSE 1**

Here we see how we are to treat men in the church.

And please keep in mind that Paul is not speaking of the position of an elder here but a person who is older in age.

He will deal with elders later on in this chapter

But here Paul says to Timothy that he should “**not rebuke an older man,**” which sounds strange if you can’t rebuke them if they are sinning. What do you do, just ignore their sin?

That is not what we are to do and that is not what Paul is saying here. And again, as you read on you see this played out as we see in I Timothy 5:20 where Paul tells Timothy, “**Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.**”

Now again, in that verse Paul is speaking of the position of an elder and how to deal with their sin. But keep in mind that elders were many times older people and thus, if they sin, it was judged and exposed, they were rebuked!

Then what is Paul saying here?

The word that Paul uses for “**rebuke**” literally means, “*to strike at.*”

The idea here is to treat them with respect, treat them as you would your own father. Don’t lash out at them with violent words.

Yes, there are times when you must rebuke a person, you must correct them but in that process is the idea of exhorting them, building them up, getting them back on track.

In fact, Paul says that we are to “**exhort**” them and the Greek word that Paul uses here is *parakaleo* which means “*one who has been called alongside to help.*”

This word is also used of the Holy Spirit who comes alongside us to help us and that is what we are to do with *older men* in the church, come alongside and help them as you would do your father!

Then Paul speaks of the *younger men*, and he tells us that we are to treat them as brothers and that may get a little confusing.

I don't know about you, but with my brothers, we would fight, get at each other, but that is not the idea that Paul is making here.

Paul is also speaking of exhorting them, building them up, getting them back on track.

I think Paul, in Galatians 6:1-2 explains beautifully this idea as he says, **“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”**

The idea behind the word **“restore”** is that of setting a broken bone, putting it back in place so it can heal and be even stronger.

An older man or younger man in sin needs to be put back in place and as the healing occurs, his walk should be even stronger!

I hope that makes sense.

## VERSE 2

Here we see Paul speak of how women are to be treated in the church.

He tells us that the older women are to be treated with the respect, the same respect you would show your own mother.

Again, it is not that you can't correct older women, but do it with respect, and with the idea of exhortation.

With this Emergent Church Movement, Purpose Driven Movement, Seeker-Friendly Church Movement, they feel that the older people in their church, if they can't get on board in the direction that they are taking the church, then they either need to die off or move on. That is not what the Scriptures teach.

In fact, there is much wisdom with people that are older in the Lord and we can gain much from them.

Right now, in many churches, they are not interested in older teachers or older pastors to come to conferences, they want the younger and I guess Hipper pastors and teachers to come and teach them.

But they are missing out on so many valuable lessons.

Remember when Solomon's son, Rehoboam took over the kingdom. And Solomon taxed the people heavily and Jeroboam and the whole congregation of Israel came to Rehoboam and asked if he could lighten the heavy burden upon them and they would serve him faithfully.

And listen to what we are told in I Kings 12:6-13, **“Then King Rehoboam consulted the elders who stood before his father Solomon while he still lived, and he said, ‘How do you advise me to answer these people?’ And they spoke to him, saying, ‘If you will be a servant to these people today, and serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.’ But he rejected the advice which the elders had given him, and consulted the young men who had grown up with him, who stood before him. And he said to them, ‘What advice do you give? How should we answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, “Lighten the yoke which your father put on us”?’ Then the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying, ‘Thus you should speak to this people who have spoken to you, saying, “Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make it lighter on us” - thus you shall say to them: “My little finger shall be thicker than my father’s waist! And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!”’ So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had directed, saying, ‘Come back to me the third day.’ Then the king answered the people roughly, and rejected the advice which the elders had given him.”**

And the Kingdom was divided because he did not listen to the words from the elders. There was the Southern Kingdom of Judah with two tribes, Judah and Benjamin. And then there were the ten Northern Tribes of Israel!

So be careful in the counsel that you get, bring it in the light of God’s Word, seek His direction as well.

Now, as we minister to younger women, we are to treat them as sisters, not pulling their hair, but loving them as sisters.



And Paul's point is, "**with all purity.**"

Don't put yourself in a situation where you are ministering to a young woman and in doing so it deteriorates into a sexual relationship.

I don't encourage men to counsel, minister to young women by themselves, it opens the door for trouble.

You can come with the purist motives, but it can turn the other way.

If you are going to minister to a younger woman or a woman for that matter, men, I would encourage you to bring your wife with you and work together.

In fact, I truly would encourage men to minister to men and women to women.

Don't give the Devil any opportunity to cause you to stumble!

### VERSE 3

Now Paul speaks about widows and how we are to treat them, care for them.

This was a big concern for women back then. If their husband died and they did not have any family who would be willing to care for them, they would be in trouble. How would they survive in that culture since they couldn't work, especially if they were older?

Keep in mind, as we have seen in our study of I Timothy, God has placed the man as the spiritual leader of the family and he is to care for his wife, provide for her, care for her, protect her and-so-on. But again, if he died, widows had a tough time.

Let me show you what I mean. In Mark 12:41-44 we are told, **“Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood.’”**

They had nothing because they could not work!

Then in Acts 6:1-6 we see a problem in the early church regarding the care of widows. We are told, **“Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, ‘It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.’ And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.”**

Now, some 30 years later, it is still a problem in the church, how to care for widows and Paul is going to lay out some guidelines for the church to follow.

And here’s the thing. As you look at both the Old Testament and the New Testament, God provided care for the weak, the disadvantaged, and that included widows!

In Deuteronomy chapter 14, we are told, **“You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year. . . . and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are within your gates, may come and eat and be satisfied, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.”** Deuteronomy 14:22, 29.

This was kind of a welfare system. You go through your field once and whatever is left in the field was for the poor, the widows and so on, to come in and gather what they could for themselves.

Now, if you took advantage of the less fortunate, if you exploited their poverty for your gain, God has these words to say to you in Malachi 3:5 where we are told, **“And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness Against sorcerers, Against adulterers, Against perjurers, Against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, And against those who turn away an alien - Because they do not fear Me,’ Says the Lord of hosts.”**

Thus, since Paul understood the heart of God for the less fortunate, he shows us the church’s responsibility in the care for the widows who were in their church.

From what we can gather from first century Jewish culture, widows were usually poor, as I have said, and it was the responsibility of the local synagogues to provide for them, but they were still very poor. Even today a widow can have a hard time making ends meet.

Thus, these lessons still apply today.

What is interesting today is that many feel that the church is a welfare program and they are to give to anyone and everyone who asks for something. That is not true!

Yes, we are to help, but there are guidelines as Paul is going to show us.

And keep in mind what Paul just said about these widows and who we are to care for. He said, **“Honor widows who are really widows.”** I Timothy 5:3.

There are some who were just trying to take advantage of the system and Paul’s point is that you are not to help them. And he is, like I have said, going to lay down some guidelines to follow in regard to who are really widows.

#### VERSES 4-6

If you are a widow and you have family to support you, then the church is not to help out. It is the family’s responsibility to care for them.

Some might say, *“But it will be a hardship for us if we do!”*

So you think it is better to put the burden on the church because you don’t want to obey God?

In Matthew 15:3-6 we are told, **“He answered and said to them, ‘Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? For God commanded, saying, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’ But you say, ‘Whoever says to his father or mother, ‘Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God’ - then he need not honor his father or mother.’ Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.’”**

In other words, they got out of caring for their parents by saying all that we would have given to them, we have now dedicated to the Temple, to God.

Now don’t think the Temple or God ever saw that money, but they were just looking to get out of caring for their parents and that was wrong in God’s eyes, just as not caring for a widow in your own family is wrong.

So that is the first qualification of supporting a widow, they don't have any family to help them out.

Besides not having any family to help her out, what other qualifications are there?

We don't have to guess, Paul tells us!

First of all, she trusts in God, she is not only saved, but her faith is strong. Because of this strong foundation she intercedes before God for the people with prayers and supplications all day long, even into the night.

In Luke 2:36-38 we see an example of a widow who did these very things. We are told, **“Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.”**

Anna was a widow for some 84 years and instead of complaining, she is serving in the Temple with prayer all day long, for 84 years!

You see, the church did not support widows just because they were widows and they did not support widows so they could go out and party, but to serve the Lord, to serve the church.

Today, I am sorry to say, people want handouts, and if you mention work, they are offended.

That is not how it was in the early church, including for widows as we see here.

And then these words by Paul in I Timothy 5:6, **“But she who lives in pleasure [indulgence] is dead while she lives.”** What is that all about?

First of all, the word that Paul uses for “**pleasure**,” SPATALAO (spat-al-ah’o) in the Greek, speaks of sensual pleasure.

If they are not living appropriate lives, godly lives, then the church has every right not to support them.

Paul said in Romans 8:6, “**For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.**”

I don’t believe this person that Paul is speaking of here in I Timothy is necessarily saved or if she is then she is living in a backslidden condition. Thus, to support her would just be condoning her sin, her lifestyle.

#### VERSES 7-8

Timothy was to teach these truths so that all would be aware of them, no one would have an excuse.

And Paul hits them hard here telling them that if they don’t provide for their family, if they rely on the church or the state to help them when they could work, they could provide, then they are worse than an unbeliever! Ouch, that had to hurt.

Make no mistake about it, this is a scathing judgment against those who would not provide for their family. Why? Because in almost all the pagans in the Roman times, they did care for their parents. Thus, to do less than an unbeliever they were denying their own faith, they were acting worse than someone who had no faith!

The thing is, what went on back then is still going on today and the church is not responsible to provide the financial needs of everyone, only those who are truly in need, have faith in God, have no other family to support them and they are serving the Lord in the church!

I like the way that Warren Wiersbe sums this up for us. He wrote,

It has been my experience in three different pastorates that godly widows are “spiritual powerhouses” in the church. They are the backbone of the prayer meetings. They give themselves to visitation, and they swell the ranks of teachers in the Sunday School.

It has also been my experience that, if a widow is not godly, she can be a great problem to the church. She will demand attention, complain about what the younger people do, and often “hang on the telephone” and gossip. (Of course, it is not really “gossip.” She only wants her friends to be able to “pray more intelligently” about these matters!) Paul made it clear (1 Tim. 5:7) that church-helped widows must be “blameless” - irreproachable.

- Warren Wiersbe

#### VERSES 9-10

First of all, we see this term “**the number**” and what this is showing us is that the churches kept a roll or list of names of those widows who were being cared for by the church. What that tells me is that this was an official ministry of the church.

And Paul is very specific here, he says that no widow should be enrolled into “**the number**” who is under sixty years of age.

Why this stipulation of supporting those widows who were 60 years old or older?

Because if they were younger, they could support themselves, they could get remarried.

Also, these older women are mature, not easily driven by desire, and could serve the Lord faithfully as their life has shown.

She also needs to be a “**one woman man**” or that she was faithful in her marriage if she was married.

That would mean if she divorced her husband, as a Christian, for unbiblical reasons, she was not to be put on the list of widows that were supported.

But it doesn't apply to those widows whose husband divorced them for unbiblical reasons and maybe she then remarried a second time and her second husband died leaving her a widow.

We also see that she did many good works in her life, she had a good reputation in raising her children if she had children, caring for strangers, being a servant by washing the feet of the brethren, caring for those who are hurting and was diligent in her service to others and the Lord!

Now don't get the idea that these qualities are only for widows, they are for all women to practice – a heart of a servant.

I realize some of you women may feel you have wasted your life because you have been busy raising a family. You have not been able to serve the Lord like you desire.

But God's design for women, their role in the home is the highest calling.

Let me give you this example of a story told by the Scottish preacher Ian MacClaren. It is the story of a woman in his church and we are told,

As they were talking, she began to wipe her eyes with the corner of her apron, so Dr. MacClaren said, "What's disturbing you?"

"Oh," she said, "Sometimes I feel I have done so little and when I think about it, it makes my heart heavy, because really I've done so little for Jesus."

"When I was a wee girl the Lord spoke to my heart and I surrendered to Him. And I wanted to live for Him, oh so much. But I feel I haven't done anything."

"What have you done with your life?" he asked.



“Oh nothing,” she said, “just nothing. I’ve washed dishes, cooked three meals a day, taken care of my children, mopped the floor, mended the clothes, you know, everything a mother does, that’s all I’ve done.”

MacClaren sat back in his chair and asked, “Where are your boys?”

“Oh,” she spoke, “You know I named them all for the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. You know them all and you know where Mark is. You ordained him. He went to China. He’s learned the language and now he is able to minister to the people in the name of the Lord.”

“Where’s Luke?” MacClaren said.

“You know well enough where he is because you sent him out and I had a letter from him the other day. He is in Africa and says a revival has broken out at his mission station.”

“And Matthew?” he queried.

“He’s with his brother in China and they are working together. And John, who’s nineteen, came to me last night to say God has laid Africa on his heart. He said, ‘I’m going to Africa, but don’t worry about it, Mother, because the Lord has shown me that I am to stay with you until you go home to glory, and then I’ll go. Until then I have to take care of you.’”

MacClaren looked at the elderly saint and said, “Your life has been wasted, you say?”

“Yes, it has been wasted.”

“You have been cooking and mopping and washing – but I would like to see the reward when you are called home!”

- Ian MacClaren

That is an important lesson to learn.

VERSES 11-15

Paul, in speaking of the younger widows, speaks of them like this, that they may “**grow wanton.**” What does he mean by that?

This Greek word means “*to feel the impulse of sexual desire.*”

The point is this. It was generally believed back then that when a person turned sixty sexual desire began to wane. So these older women have made that transition from the younger child-bearing years to the older years of mentoring and training the younger women in the church. To use the resources that they have, the wisdom that they have learned over the years, to help the younger women!

And here was a problem if these younger widows were supported by the church. First of all, Paul is saying that younger widows can support themselves, they can get married again.

And the problem for some was that they committed their lives to the Lord but their desire for marriage overshadowed their love for the Lord and they compromised their faith and placed themselves in situations that were bad.

Not that marriage was wrong or is wrong, but if you are so desperate for a relationship, if you are not satisfied in the Lord, it is a dangerous path to be on.

In I Corinthians 7:34-35 Paul speaks of someone who is single and someone who is married. He says, “**There is a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world - how she may please her husband. And this I say for your own profit, not that I may put a leash on you, but for what is proper, and that you may serve the Lord without distraction.**”

You see, if you are single you can serve the Lord wholly with your life but if you are married, you also have your family to care for. It is not wrong; it is just the reality of the situation!

And then, in verse 13, Paul says, “**And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not.**”

And if you think about this, this not only goes for young widows, but for anyone who has too much time on their hands. They gossip, they are busybodies, they talk behind peoples back – they spend their time talking about other people’s lives when they truly need to get a life of their own! This is not a good thing and it can truly cause problems.

Then Paul said, “**Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully.**” I Timothy 5:14. In other words, they are so busy that they don’t have time to get into trouble!

Warren Wiersbe gives us this insight. He wrote,

The result of all this is a good testimony that silences the accusers. Satan (the adversary) is always alert to an opportunity to invade and destroy a Christian home. The word “opportunity” is a military term that means “a base of operations.” A Christian wife who is not doing her job at home gives Satan a beachhead for his operations, and the results are tragic. While there are times when a Christian wife and mother may have to work outside the home, it must not destroy her ministry in the home. The wife who works simply to get luxuries may discover too late that she has lost some necessities. It may be all right to have what money can buy if you do not lose what money cannot buy.

- Warren Wiersbe

VERSE 16

Paul closes this section by telling them that families need to care for their own, take care of the widows in their family and not to place that burden on the church because then it will be harder for them to care for the widows who are truly in need.

This is the third time Paul dealt with this subject in this chapter; do you think he is trying to make a point?

You bet he is!

Look at what he said, **“But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God. Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day . . . But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever . . . If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows.”** I Timothy 5:4-5, 8, 16.

It is something we need to heed as a church and as individuals.

Now, starting in I Timothy 5:17 and through the rest of this chapter, Paul gives to us some instructions regarding elders.

VERSES 17-18

Paul is speaking of elders here, shepherds or pastors and elders who were in charge of the spiritual aspects of the church.

And listen to how one writer speaks of this transition from supporting widows to supporting elders. He wrote, “What I have been saying about the support of widows reminds me of another question of Church finance: the payment of presbyters. Equity and scriptural principles suggest that they should be remunerated in proportion to their usefulness.” (White)

Now, from this text, it seems like some elders were not teachers, but let me also say this, all pastors must be teachers, they are to bring the Word of God to their people.

Now when Paul speaks of “**double honor**” what is he speaking of?

He is speaking of their pay for their service to the Lord, as the church is able.

Some argue that the church should not pay a pastor.

I, of course disagree, not because I want to be paid, but Paul was paid, and again, listen to what he says, “**For the Scripture says, ‘You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,’ and, ‘The laborer is worthy of his wages.’**” I Timothy 5:18.

The idea was that it would be cruel for the farmer to bind the mouth of the ox and prevent it from eating some of the grain while it pulled the threshing sled over the sheaves, after all, the ox was doing the work.

Thus, to refuse to support those who provide spiritual food is just as unjust and heartless as it would be to muzzle an animal or refusing to pay a hired man!

We even see this played out in the Old Testament as the people supported the priests who were serving in the Tabernacle and then in the Temple.

One more point and that is Paul, in verse 18, quotes out of Luke 10:7, and says that it is part of the Scriptures, God’s Word!

Peter, in II Peter 3:15-16 tells us that Paul’s letters are part of the Scriptures, God’s Word!

And Paul in I Corinthians 11:24 quotes once again from Luke 23:19 attributing it to the Scriptures!

Today many try to negate the New Testament writers, but these letters show that they were already considered part of the Scriptures!

#### VERSES 19-20

Make no mistake about it, those in leadership are targets for Satan's attacks; it is like a big bull's eye is painted on their chest!

Thus, Satan uses gossip, he uses idle words to bring leaders down, especially pastors.

Let me show you what I mean.

There is an old story about a pastor who was trying to defend himself against criticism.

He said, "There's a story going about that I told my wife not to go to a certain church that has wild meetings. They say my wife went anyway, and I dragged her out of the church by her hair, and I hurt her so badly she had to go to the hospital. Let me respond to these accusations. First of all, I never told her to stay away from that church. Second, I didn't drag her out by her hair. Third, she never had to go to the hospital. Lastly, I've never been married so I don't have a wife."

And that is Paul's point, before you believe anything about a leader, check out the story you were told with more than one witness, don't believe everything you hear!

On the other hand, if accusations are substantiated, then it needs to be acted upon. And folks, I am not talking about trivial things; likes and dislikes, people's opinions, I am taking about sin, false teaching, heresy, and that is what Paul is talking about!

I like the way that Barclay put it as he said, “Nothing does more harm then when some people are treated as if they can do no wrong and others as if they could do no right.”

And Clarke reminds us, “The reason of this difference is evident: those whose business it is to correct others will usually have many enemies; great caution, therefore, should be used in admitting accusations against such persons.” How true that is!

But again, let me say this. Leadership in the church does not shield a person from accountability; in fact, they are more accountable. But Paul puts in the protection of more than one witness to protect the leaders!

John Calvin, in his commentary on I Timothy, explained some reasons why people are so quick to receive an accusation against a pastor when perhaps, they should not.

He wrote, “The more sincerely any pastor strives to further Christ’s kingdom, the more he is loaded with spite, the more fierce do the attacks upon him become. And not only so, but as soon as any charge is made against ministers of the Word, it is believed as surely and firmly as if it had been already proved. This happens not only because a higher standard of integrity is required from them, but because Satan makes most people, in fact nearly everyone, over credulous so that without investigation, they eagerly condemn their pastors whose good name they ought to be defending.”

Calvin also pointed out that this is a spiritual attack on the leaders, “It is indeed a trick of Satan to estrange men from their ministers so as gradually to bring their teaching into contempt. In this way not only is wrong done to innocent people whose reputation is undeservedly injured, but the authority of God’s holy teaching is diminished.”

Be careful, be warned!

VERSE 21

Leaders serve the Lord, there is a great responsibility there, and in all that they do, they have to be above reproach, they are to do what is right.

And thus, as leaders serve, they are also to do so without “**prejudice**” and “**partiality.**”

James tells us in James 2:1-9, “**My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality. For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, ‘You sit here in a good place,’ and say to the poor man, ‘You stand there,’ or, ‘Sit here at my footstool,’ have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called? If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.**”

Also, there is to be no partiality according to race or gender as Paul tells us in Galatians 3:28-29, “**There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**”

Jesus is not a respecter of persons but treats us all on the same level.



Thus, as leaders we are to set the example, for they will follow our lead and if we show partiality towards certain people, then so will the congregation!

Clarke sums it up like this, “Do not treat any man, in religious matters, according to the rank he holds in life, or according to any personal attachment thou mayest have for him. Every man should be dealt with in the church as he will be dealt with at the judgment-seat of Christ.”

### VERSE 22

I have never truly been in a rush to raise people up in the ministry because I want to see if they can serve without a title, I want to observe what God is doing in their lives and those who I do ordain, I am only recognizing what God has done in their lives and He has raised them up and I am acknowledging that.

Have I made mistakes in the past?

Sure, because it is hard to know the heart of a person and sometimes when they are in that position, they do less than before they had that title!

Again, I error on the side of not raising people up until I am sure because it is a lot harder to remove someone from ministry, it is a lot messier than not raising them up in the first place.

We also see that Paul is admonishing Timothy to live a pure life, to be an example.

As a pastor, if you are looking for others to raise up in the ministry, you better keep your life in line with God!

And I pray that over the years you have known me, I have been an example to you of living out my faith in Christ. I pray that I have encouraged you in your walk.

Now, when Paul said, “**nor share in other people’s sins**” what is he speaking of?

There could be two ways to look at this and maybe both do apply.

He could have been warning Timothy not to let himself get drawn into the sins of others who were trying to accuse another in the church with hearsay or out of vindictiveness, especially a leader.

But, when you look at the context here, it would seem that Paul is maybe warning Timothy of the dangers of ordaining a pastor too soon and before long they are living an immoral lifestyle and Timothy would be responsible, in part, for whatever sins and damage that this person may bring to the church. I tend to lean more in this direction, that this is what Paul was speaking of, but again, both can apply.

### VERSE 23

As you read this verse it seems out of place in regard to what Paul has been saying so far, but it is not!

Timothy was probably abstaining from any alcohol to be an example, but he suffered from some kind of gastro-intestinal problem, we might call it Montezuma's Revenge!

The reason for this was that the water supply was not pure, it was contaminated, and you know what can happen if you drink the water in Mexico!

Thus, if wine was used, the fermentation process would eliminate some of these harmful bugs in the water and it would help Timothy out.

So Paul tells Timothy it is okay to drink a little wine!

And as you do read this it seems like Timothy was a sickly person or possibly he was sickly due to this gastrointestinal problem, he had these "**frequent infirmities**" or illnesses!

Now let me ask you this.

Why didn't Paul name and claim a healing for Timothy?

Because it was not God's will for Timothy or Paul would have touched Timothy and healed him.

It was not a lack of faith or some sin in Timothy's life, as some would have you believe!

And folks, God does heal miraculously today, but He also uses medicine, doctor's and-so-on to help us in the conditions we have!

Remember that Paul prayed three times for the thorn in his flesh to be removed from his life, whatever it may have been, and the Lord told Paul, "**My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.**" II Corinthians 12:9.

#### VERSES 24-25

Keep in mind the context here, the appointing of elders, church leadership, dealing with sin in the family of God.

Thus, some people are better at covering their sin than others.

So just by looking at what they are doing can be deceptive.

Watch and pray before you raise up leaders.

On the other hand, good works are clearly seen, they are not hidden, and it is also important to watch for them in people's lives.

Thus, take it slow; wait on God for discernment before leaders are raised up!

As I close tonight, let me remind you the reason God has placed leaders, pastor/teachers in the church today, they are for, **“the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head - Christ - from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”** Ephesians 4:12-16.

May the leaders equip the sheep to go and do the work of the ministry!