

Commentary on 1 Timothy Chapter 5 by Chuck Smith 7.14.24

Pastor John Donovan, cell phone 508-380-0471

Pastor Terry Gerlarneau, cell phone 603-455-4399

Web site todbc.org email us at opendoorbiblechurch@todbc.org

May memory verse Romans 6:8 (NKJV)

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

June memory verse Romans 6:9 (NKJV)

knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more.
Death no longer has dominion over Him.

July memory verse Romans 6:10 (NKJV)

For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God.

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Shall we turn now in our Bibles to First Timothy chapter five? Paul is a spiritual father to Timothy, Timothy's mentor. He looks upon him as a son; in fact, he calls him his son in the faith. Timothy has been left in Ephesus to oversee the church that Paul established there. While he is in Ephesus, Paul wrote to him this epistle. And in this epistle, he seeks to instruct Timothy in things of the church.

In a Bible doctrine class in seminary, you would have a subject known as Ecclesiology. And they use the epistles of Thessalonians and Timothy for their Ecclesiology classes. For as Paul said in verse fifteen, how that he has written these things in order that he might know how he ought to behave in the house of the Lord.

So as we get to chapter five, he deals first of all with Timothy's behavior towards the elders, men, the younger men, the elder women, and the younger women.

Rebuke not an elder (1Ti 5:1),

Timothy was a younger man. He told him don't let any man despise thy youth. And here Paul is telling him not to rebuke an elder.

but entreat him as a father (1Ti 5:1);

Looking upon him as a father and talk to him as you would a father, entreat him as you would a father. Older people, I think, naturally resent being told by younger people what they ought to do or being rebuked by younger people. So Paul said, Don't rebuke them, entreat him as a father.

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and the younger men as brothers (1Ti 5:1);

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, resentment. The way I present it to a person can create an animosity. Be careful that we don't build walls and barriers by the way in which we seek to correct someone. In dealing with the younger men, Paul said entreat them like a brother; treat the older men like fathers.

The elder women as mothers; and the younger as sisters, with all purity (1Ti 5:2).

Timothy was evidently unmarried. Paul tells him in another place to flee youthful lusts. Treat the younger women like sisters. And then,

Honour widows that are widows indeed (1Ti 5:3).

And now Paul seeks to define for Timothy who are the true widows.

If any widow have children or (1Ti 5:4)

let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God (1Ti 5:4).

So the first responsibility and Paul will repeat this again, for the welfare and the care of the widows lies upon the children and the grandchildren. Now the church did take upon itself the responsibility of caring for the needy within the body. It was a part of the ministry of the church.

You remember in Acts chapter six, where the Grecians came to the apostles and they complained that their widows were not being dealt with as bountifully as were the Hellenists, as were the Hebrews at the administration of the church's welfare program. And so there was a taking care of the widows by the church. But Paul seeks to define who are really qualified to come under the care of the church. If a widow had children or grandchildren, then it was their primary and first responsibility to take care of their needs.

Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate (1Ti 5:5),

Now these are the ones that the church is to take care of. One who is a "widow indeed, and desolate,"

who's trusting in God, and is continuing in supplications and prayers night and day (1Ti 5:5).

And that is really the qualification for those widows that were to be taken care of by the church. They really were given a ministry within the church, and the ministry

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within the church was the ministry of intercessory prayer. And so they "trusted in God, and were continuing in supplications and prayers night and day" for the church and the work of the church.

How grateful we are for those prayers of the older women within the church. I really feel a tremendous loss here at Calvary with the death of many of these older women who held the church up in prayer continually. We had a blessed group of older women, many of them widows, who have now gone to be with the Lord, but who had this special ministry of prayer and supplication night and day.

Paul said in contrast to those,

Those that are living in pleasure are dead while they still live (1Ti 5:6).

I think that one of the most reprehensible things going is a dirty old woman. Now, I think that dirty old men are bad, too. But you know, there's something about an older lady that there should have developed that softness and that beauty. And you see some beautiful older lady who is a grandmotherly type and then you hear her talk and she's using profanity and all, and there's just something that doesn't set right. It's just not there.

There is a beauty that comes to that older woman who has been walking with the Lord. There's almost a sacredness. I love to just sit down and share with those who have been walking with the Lord through the years. And from their mouth there pours the richness of God's love and God's goodness through the years. Widows indeed.

But those that are living for pleasure, Paul said, while they're still alive. I mean, they may still be breathing but man, they're dead and so is anybody who lives for pleasure, spiritually dead though they still may be alive.

And these things [Paul said] give in charge, that they may be blameless. For if any provide not for his own, specially those of his own house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel (1Ti 5:7-8).

That is, if they do not take care of the members of their own family, if they do not take care of the needs of those of their own family, really they have denied the faith. Honor thy father and mother, the Scriptures said. And you've denied the faith if you refuse to take care of your elderly parents and grandparents.

Let not a widow be taken into the number under sixty years of age, having been the wife of one man (1Ti 5:9),

Now this special ministry for widows, it seemed to be a ministry that was set aside in the church, and it was something that was an honored position. It was more or less

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a lifetime commitment by the older women to really give themselves to the burden of prayer and the prayer ministry for the church, and there was almost an office for the widows of the ministry of prayer. They were supported by the church. They were put on the church's payroll and their duty was just to continue night and day in prayer and supplication for the church. And I'll tell you, the church would be wise to hire the widows to do that, be profited by that kind of a ministry. A lot more than probably some of these young men that we put on staff who don't know quite yet what they're doing. If we had some widows that we put on staff just to pray for the church, a valuable asset. Any of you widows looking for a job?

So let the widow not be taken into the number; that is, the special ministry group who are cared for by the church, who are under sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband who are,

Well reported for their good works (1Ti 5:10);

These are the qualifications. They've got to have a good report that they have been doing good works.

if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work (1Ti 5:10).

Great qualifications. Then there was the special area of ministry for them. But Paul said the younger widows, don't take them into this special company.

Refuse them: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; Having [not damnation, but condemnation], because they have cast off their first faith (1Ti 5:11-12).

So Paul says that the younger widows should marry. If they are brought into this special company in ministry within the church, and then should leave that, fall in love and so forth, having made that commitment to Christ, having put the hand to the plough; turning back, they would feel condemned. Not good. It is better that they just go ahead and marry and bear children and all and not be brought into this special company of ministering widows within the church. For if the church is taking care of them,

They're apt to be just going around from house to house becoming idle, and tattlers and busybodies, speaking about things that they should not be speaking. So better that they marry, have the responsibility of bearing their children, guiding their houses, and then gives no occasion for the enemy to speak reproachfully. For [he said] some are already turned aside after Satan. Now if any man or woman that believes has widows, let them take care of them, and not the church be charged; that they may take care of them that are widows indeed. Let the elders that rule well

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be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in word and doctrine (1Ti 5:13-17).

These Elders should be accounted worthy of double honor. How I thank God for the ministry of the Elders in this church. The blessing that they are, the ministry that they have and they should be accounted worthy of double honor (salary).

For the scripture says, You are not to muzzle the ox that treads out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his hire (1Ti 5:18).

So the double honor to the Elders. Then,

And against an elder receive not an accusation, unless there be at least two or three witnesses (1Ti 5:19).

Don't take one person's word for it; let there be two or three witnesses.

Them that sin rebuke before all, that others may also fear (1Ti 5:20).

Now I'm afraid that if the church practiced this open public rebuke of the sinners, it would create, no doubt, a fear but it might also create an empty church. You remember when the woman was brought to Jesus, taken in the act of adultery and they said, Our law says stone her, what do you say? And Jesus said, Let him who is without sin cast the first stone. And He began to write on the ground; it doesn't tell us what, but I feel certain that He was writing the names of the individuals and the sins they were guilty of. And it says they began to leave from the eldest to the youngest until there was none left. And if there was an open rebuke for sin, and we started going down naming everybody and naming the sins, it would create fear, I'm sure, within the church.

Now I charge thee [Paul said] before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that you observe these things without preferring one before another, do nothing by partiality (1Ti 5:21).

We are all of us children of God. And as such, each of you are equally important to God. There are no second-class heavenly citizens. To Jesus you are as important as anybody else, and it is the church's business to follow the example of Christ and to show love, appreciation, honor, respect, and all, to everyone without partiality. We're not to say, Hey, he's got big bucks, you know, treat him good, and the church is guilty of sin before God. Paul is pretty straight with it. "I charge you before God and before Jesus Christ and before the elect angels." I mean, it's a heavy-duty charge. Don't show partiality, treat everyone alike.

How opposite that is from the natural tendency, if someone is a professional person; Oh, he's a doctor. Oh, he's a chief of police. Oh, he's a lawyer, or something, and

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oh, he's very wealthy, you know. And there is that tendency to, oh, you know, show little favors and oh, why don't you come sit at our table, you know.

James also wrote saying have no respect of persons. "God is no respecter of persons" ([Romans 2:11](#)). And we're not to have respect of persons. James says, Hey, someone comes in, you know, and they're well-dressed and you know, wearing diamonds and all, he says, you say, Hey, come on down, take this nice seat down here. Some guy comes in rags, you say, Hey, sit in the corner, man. And he said that's wrong. You see, in the eyes of the Lord we are all the same. God doesn't look upon me with any greater favor or honor or anything than He looks upon you. It is a tragic thing that the church has set up certain men that we say, Oh well, you know, look how close he is to God. We are equally close to God. We are equally in God's favor. God is no respecter of man's person. And we are not to be, either. So doing nothing by partiality.

Now lay hands suddenly on no man ([1Ti 5:22](#)),

He's talking now in the laying on of hands for the ordaining of a person for a ministry within the body of Christ. Let a person sort of prove themselves, don't be quick to ordain people to a particular task. Oh, glad to see you here this morning. Here, take this Sunday school book; we need a teacher for our sixth grade class, you know. A lot of churches feel that you got to lock the person into a job, you know, get them involved, you know, and hold them. But Paul said, "Don't lay hands on." You know, it's a lot easier to get people in than it is to get them out. And a tragic thing has taken --has happened in the church, and without really learning about the individual, ordaining them for particular tasks or particular job, and then you can regret that quickness of judgment for a long time. So don't lay hands on any man suddenly.

and neither be a partaker of other men's sins: keep yourself pure ([1Ti 5:22](#)).

Hey, that's not just good exhortation for Timothy; that's good for all of us. Keep ourselves pure. Now this is for Timothy.

Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine oft infirmities ([1Ti 5:23](#)).

Most of the people in that culture and in that day did drink wine. The wine that they drank was a mixture of water and wine, three parts of water, two parts of wine. And it was as common, as water as far as a drink was concerned, because in many of the areas the water was polluted. It would be like someone going down to Mexico and writing back and saying, Oh, man, I've got, you know, Montezuma's revenge, you know. And you know, so you would write to them and say, Hey, you better drink cokes or something, you know, instead of that water. You know, drink a little wine for your stomach's sake, for this dysentery and so forth. And that's basically what Paul is suggesting to Timothy.

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Now this is to me quite interesting, however. In that I have no doubt that of those men in the New Testament who had the gifts of the Holy Spirit in operation in their life, the gift of miracles, healings and all, certainly Paul ranks with the chiefest of the apostles in the ministry gifts of the Spirit. Paul had many miracles wrought through his ministry. Paul had, I'm sure, the gift of faith, the gift of working of miracles, gifts of healing working through his life. And yet here is his son in the faith, Timothy.

Now when Paul was in Ephesus, they took his aprons and his sweatbands and they laid them on the sick people and they were healed. Why didn't Paul just anoint the handkerchief and send it to Timothy and say, Sleep on this? Now I am certain that Paul had prayed for Timothy's stomach disorders. And there are indications that Timothy was a very feeble person and was a sickly person, yet a companion of Paul. The question, why didn't God heal Timothy? Why was he allowed to be sickly? Why would Paul write sort of a medical, physical prescription for his ailment rather than just pray for his healing? I am convinced that Paul did pray for Timothy's healing. But nonetheless, Timothy wasn't healed.

I believe the reason why is that we would not be caught up in that kind of heresy that we'd say, Well, brother, you're still sick because there's some sin in your life. Or you're still sick because you just don't have enough faith. Or you're sick because you have this personal problem or something of that nature. To keep us from that kind of foolish, unscriptural speculation, we have the case of Timothy, a close associate, companion, son of Paul in the faith who Paul is giving some just, pure advice to, from a physical level for his oft sicknesses rather than having a divine touch of God and a healing upon his body.

God does not heal in every case. And in those cases where God doesn't heal, God has a purpose for not healing. It is not the lack of faith. It is not something wrong in the life of the individual. There is something within those eternal purposes of God that we cannot, do not, and will not understand. And I am thoroughly opposed to that kind of teaching that if you will follow this formula, you will be healed, and then that person who has this chronic illness feels constantly guilty. There's something wrong with me, something wrong with my relationship with God. Why aren't I healed you know, what's wrong with me? And actually you are kicking a person when they are down if you lay some kind of heavy trip on them that way. Oh, brother, you know, there's just got to be something wrong, you know. If you just had enough faith it would happen to you, too.

Paul himself had an affliction, which he prayed three times that God would deliver him from it. God finally answered, but not by delivering him but by just giving him the grace to endure it, declaring, "My grace is sufficient for you: my strength will be made perfect in your weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9). So let us not be guilty of judging wrongly. Or of laying some heavy burden upon someone who is already burdened because of their illnesses, because of their weaknesses. Let us just recognize that God doesn't heal in every case. Now God does heal in some cases,

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He doesn't heal in other cases. Why He heals some and does not heal others is totally bound up in the sovereignty of God. As the Holy Spirit divides to each man severally as He wills of the gifts of the Spirit.

Now he said,

Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid (1Ti 5:24-25).

In other words, before you meet the person, often you hear about them and their sins have gone before them. People have told you, Oh hey, he's done this and he's done that and all. Before he ever comes and you meet him or he confesses whatever, you've already heard of what he has done. That happens so many times. A person comes to confess something and you've already heard it from two or three persons. And the same thing with a person's good works, they also go before them. Or people have shared with you, Oh, he's really, you know, outstanding and this, that or the other, and you hear of them before you meet them. Their works precede them. They're manifest beforehand, cannot be hid.