

1 Timothy Five

Paul continues in the Fifth chapter to elaborate on Timothy's duties as "a good minister" as well as a further description of "how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God." The chapter can be outlined in the following manner:

- 1 How Timothy is to treat older and younger men and women of the congregation. **(5:1-2)**
- 2 The treatment of widows depending upon their differing circumstances. **(5:3-16)**
 - A The widow indeed. **(5:3, 5, 16)**
 - B Widows who have family members in the church. **(5:4,8)**
 - C The widow who gives herself to pleasure. **(5:6)**
 - D The enrolled widow **(5:9-11)**
 - E The younger widow **(5:11-15)**
- 3 Further descriptions for those who are elders in the church **(5:17-20)**
- 4 An exhortation to Timothy to be fair and impartial in all his dealings with brethren **(5:21-22)**
- 5 A personal exhortation regarding Timothy's health **(5:23)**
- 6 A description of the nature of sin and good as it can affect a man's reputation **(24-25).**

1 Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father,

Although "older man" is also translated as elder many times in the New Testament for the office, it is clear from the context that it is not the office, but the general category of older men.

"presbuteros...[from Homer down], elder; used 1. of age; a. where two persons are spoken of, the elder...b. univ. advanced in life, an elder, a senior... 2. a term of rank or office; ... b. among Christians, those who presided over the assemblies(or churches)..." (Thayer, p. 535-536; 4245)

Since there is nothing in this passage that demands it be the elders of the church, it is better to understand it of all older men(including the elders). God has always wanted the younger generation to show respect toward their elders.

"You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and fear your God: I am the LORD. Lev. 19:32

In this case, every older man in the church is to be given the same respect and honor as our own father.

"pater... fr. r. pa; lit nourisher, protector, upholder... a father 1. prop., l. q. generator or male ancestor, and either a. the nearest ancestor... b. a more remote ancestor, the founder of a race or tribe, progenitor of a people, forefather: so Abraham is called, ... plur. fathers i.e. ancestors, forefathers... c. l. q. on advanced in years, a senior: ... 2. metaph. a. the originator and transmitter of anything... the author of a family or society of persons animated by the same spirit as himself... b. one who stands in a father's place and looks after another in a paternal way... c. a title of honor... 3. God is called the Father, ... " (Thayer, P. 493-494; 3962)

When a situation arises where an older man has sinned, or is out of line in his teaching or conduct, he is not to be "rebuked."

epiplesso... to strike upon, beat upon... trop. to chastise with words, to chide, upbraid, rebuke..." (Thayer p. 241; 1969)

If such a situation arises where the temptation to beat them up with words and chide them for their mistakes develops, Paul states that evangelists have no right to severely chide an older man. Regardless of what he is doing or is not doing, it is not the place or role of an evangelist to rebuke. There must always be a spirit of gentleness and a patient long suffering in such matters.

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. Gal. 6:1

All evangelists must learn how to move through "exhortation."

“parakaleo... I. to call to ones side, call for, summon:... II. to address, speak to;... which may be done in the way of exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction, etc. hence result a variety of senses... 1. to admonish, exhort;... 2. to beg, entreat, beseech; ...3. to console, to encourage and strengthen by consolation, to comfort;...4. to encourage, strengthen;...5. it combines the ideas of exhorting and comforting and encouraging;... 6. to instruct, teach...” (Thayer, p. 482-483; 3870)

In place of open rebuke, censure or strong criticism, there must be love, understanding and concern that clearly shows through the words that are used. The fault must be corrected, and error sin, or ungodliness must not be ignored, but there is a proper and improper way to handle them. When dealing with stubbornness, it is wiser to place oneself near the side of the person who is having trouble and seek the most gentle means to approach it. The word of God will do the rebuking. It should be read and pondered, but the attitude of the person who is showing the fault must be with gentleness. Even in the worst case scenario where one is completely overtaken and overcome in a trespass, it is not open rebuke but gentleness that will bring success.

The final consideration of the passage is in determining how much of it is to be applied to the other three groups. Are none of the groups to be rebuked, but all exhorted as father, mother, brother or sister? Is it only improper to rebuke the older men, but the other three groups can be rebuked? Is there any place in the Lord’s church for a chiding rebuke to an individual in private?

These are difficult questions. It is evident that in public settings rebuke was a common tool. Paul told Timothy to use it with all longsuffering and teaching.

I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. 2Tim. 4:1-2

The difference between the two passages lies clearly in that of a general public rebuke and a specific individual one. While in the midst of a sermon, a preacher offends no one in particular when he rebukes a particular conduct or doctrine severely when he chides it and proves it to be worthless. But it is a completely different thing to enter someone’s home and rebuke them in the same manner. It is much too difficult to separate the sin from the person who committed it. God therefore demands that when entering the home of another to speak with them about a fault, they are to be exhorted and not rebuked. That being the case, it seems clear that this is to be applied equally to all the brethren, whether they be male or female and whether they are young or old. The only difference is in the manner of the exhortation.

younger men as brothers,

The definition of “younger men” makes clear that it is not “younger” in reference to Timothy, but younger in reference to age. These are those who were recently born.

“neos... new... 1. recently born, young, youthful... 2. new...” (Thayer, P. 424; 3501)

When problems arise that need correcting among those who are still in their teens and possibly moving into the early thirties, there is no place for the kind of censure described above. They are to be exhorted as brothers. Remember the definition of exhort allows for admonition, but it does not allow for harsh stinging rebukes. God does not want this type of thing in the church. They should be treated like one would a brother. Again the family relationship comes to the forefront. This is the common term for the relationship that all those adopted into the family of God share with each other.

“adelphos... (fr. A copulative and delphus, from the same womb)... 1. a brother(whether born of the same two parents, or only of the same father or the same mother... 2. according to a Heb use... having the same nationally ancestor, belonging to the same people, countryman;... 3. ...any fellow-man as having one and the same father with others, viz. God... 4. a fellow-believer, united to another by the bond of affection; so most frequently of Christians constituting as it were but a single family... 5. an associate in employment or office... 6. brethren of Christ...” (Thayer, p. 10-11; 80)

The family tie is often very helpful in situations where problems have occurred. When members of the church see themselves as family, they are more patient. God wants evangelists to see the

younger men in the church as his brothers and treat them accordingly.

2 older women as mothers,

The term “older” is the same term as used of the men above, but it is in the feminine gender. These are the aged women, the women who are “old enough to be Timothy’s mother.” When an older woman needs correction it is not to be ignored. She is to be dealt with in gentle patience as a mother. Once again there is no place for severe chastising or rebuke. Older women are to be exhorted as a mother.

younger as sisters,

The terms are exactly the same as for younger men but are again in the feminine gender. The younger women are to be dealt with as one would deal with their own sister. Yet there is another problem with the younger women. Not only are they to be treated as sisters in regard to the correction, but the entire circumstance is to be approached with another very important principle.

with all purity.

Since the preposition “with” joins these two thoughts together it is important to see exactly what it means.

“en...a preposition taking the dative after it;... Eng. in, on, at, with, by among. I LOCALLY; 1. of Place proper; a. in the interior of some whole; within the limits of some space... 5. used of that with which a person is surrounded, equipped, furnished, assisted, or acts... c. of that which one either leads or brings with him, or with which he is furnished or equipped; esp after verbs of coming, (EN of accompaniment), where we often say with ... d. of the instrument or means by or with which anything is accomplished, owing to the influence of the Hebr. prep... much more common in the sacred writ. than in the prof... where we say with, by means of, by(through)...” (Thayer, p. 209-212; 1722)

Of the meanings above, 5 seems to best fit the context. When dealing with the younger women, an evangelist must “equip, furnish and assist” as well as us purity as “the instrument or means by which anything is accomplished.” “Purity” is just as important a part of the way an evangelist works with the younger women as exhorting them as sisters.

“hagneia... purity, sinlessness of life...” (Thayer, p. 7; 47)

“hagneia... “purity”, occurs in 1Tim. 4:12; 5:2, where it denotes the chastity which excludes all impurity of spirit, manner, or act. Vine Vol 3 p 232

Paul has already used this term once when speaking of the need for Timothy to be an example to the brethren in 3:12. He emphasizes this especially when speaking of the younger women. The evangelist must be very cautious to always keep things completely pure and sinless. His relationship with the younger women must always exclude all impurity of spirit, manner or act. There is just too much at stake for the evangelist to risk problems here. He must keep himself completely above all reproach or accusation. Like Paul, he must take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men.

for we take thought for things honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. (ASV) 2Cor. 8:21

3 Honor widows

The term “honor” is defined:

“timao... 1. to estimate, to fix the value; mid. to fix the value of something belonging to one’s self... 2. to honor, have in honor, to revere, venerate...” (Thayer, p. 624; 5091)

The root idea is that of fixing the value and then giving honor and veneration to those who are worthy. This is the term Jesus uses when quoting the Old Testament:

He answered and said to them, “Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? 4 “For God commanded, saying, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’ 5 “But you say, ‘Whoever says to his father or mother,

“Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God”-- 6 then he need not honor his father or mother.’ Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.” Mt. 15:3-6

It is evident that not only was Jesus concerned with the respect and reverence that is given, but also with financial assistance. Providing for the physical necessities is just as much a part of the giving honor to one’s parents as the obedience, submission, and reverence given to them when one is young. The question that must be pondered is whether the term honor here only refers to the respect and emotional care that one ought to give to older widows, but also to the caring for their necessities. That it is the real issue is made clear in the passages that follow. The widows discussed in this chapter fall into the following categories:

1. Widows indeed. 5:3,5

Those with no children to care for them. Left alone.
Trust in God. Continue in supplication & prayers night & day.

2. Widows who have children or grandchildren to care for them. 5:4

the children or grandchildren are to show piety at home and repay their parents.

3. Widows who live in pleasure. 5:6

Dead while she lives.

4. Widows who are to be taken into the number. 5:9-10

60 years old or older. Been the wife of one man.
Well reported for good works. Lodged strangers
Washed the saints feet. Relieved the afflicted.
Diligently followed every good work.

5. Younger widows. 5:11-14

Refuse because they will desire to marry.
Would then cast off their first faith. Would learn to be idle.
Wandering about from house to house. Gossips and busybodies.
Saying things they ought not.
Such widows need to marry, bear children and manage the house and give no occasion for the adversary.

This section therefore is set forth to give the church the details regarding how widows are to be classified and the type of honor that is to be shown to each group. The difficult decisions regarding them are all removed. God has clearly spoken on how each group is to be cared for and who is responsible for them.

The term “widow” is defined:

“chera... (fem. of the adj. CHEROS, ‘bereft’; akin to CHERSOS, sterile, barren...) a widow...” (Thayer, p. 668; 5503)

This is the term for those who were married and whose husband has died. There is no allusion or consideration here for the idea of divorce, or of women who have never married. These are in a different set of circumstances and would have to be considered differently from the things Paul discusses here.

who are really widows.

The term “really” is defined:

“ontos... adv., truly, in reality, in point of fact, as app. to what is pretended, fictitious, false, conjectural... foll. by a noun, that which is truly etc., that which is indeed, ...” (Thayer, p. 448-449; 3689)

Again, from the above reasoning, it is important to understand the nature of this “reality.” She is a true and real widow in the Christian sense that Paul speaks of here only if she is completely desolate and a godly person. These are the only widows the Holy Spirit is referring to when He uses the term “real widows.”

4 But if any widow has children or grandchildren,

The first thing the church must determine regarding all the widows who attend there are their family circumstances. The term “if” is generally used when something is conditional. It often offers options based upon the circumstances. In this case, it gives two conditions, one of which the widow will be under and upon which a decision can be made.

“*ei...* is first a conditional particle, *if...*; secondly, an interrogative particle, *whether...* I E I CONDITIONAL... is connected, according to the variety of conditions, with various tenses and moods; viz. 1. with the Indicative of all tenses, when anything is simply and generally assumed to be, or to be done, or to have been done, or to be about to be...” (Thayer, p. 169-172; 1487).

If she has children or grandchildren, then she cannot be a real widow in the sense Paul spoke of in this context. The term “children” is defined:

“*teknon... offspring*; plur. *children*; ... univ. and without regard to sex, *child...* (Thayer, P. 617-618; 5043)

This term includes all children that come from her womb. If she has sons or daughters then she cannot be this “real widow.” The second term “grandchildren” actually covers a larger group of offspring than our English term.

“*ekgonos... sprung from one, born, begotten...* commonly as a subst. ... *a son, daughter, offspring, children, descendants*;... In the N. T. once: I Tim. 5:4 *tekna he ekgonia, grandchildren...*” (Thayer, P. 193; 1549)

This term includes any descendants she might have. It includes children and grandchildren, but would also include even great grandchildren and beyond. Paul is simply clarifying that all descendants from this widow must be taken into account. If a widow has a son or daughter, a grandson or granddaughter, a great grandson or great granddaughter, then she cannot be strictly speaking a “real widow.”

let them first learn to show piety

Now the fulness of the term honor and the various applications of the term are brought out. If the woman has children or descendants, then the church is not to honor her in the sense of 5:1, but the children and the descendants are. They are to “learn” to show piety.

“*manthano...* to learn, be apprized; a. univ: absol. to increase one’s knowledge,... to be increased in knowledge,... b. to hear, be informed... c. to learn by use and practice;... to be in the habit of, accustomed to...” (Thayer, p. 389; 3129).

The children and grand children are to be informed of this information, and are then to learn it by use and practice. God here guards against the possibility that people will come to see the church as a strictly benevolent institution that replaces the family. It does not replace or supplant the duties that God placed on children and grandchildren. No one’s parents are to be cared for out of the church treasury. They are to learn the piety of caring for them themselves. This is to be the “first” thing they learn. This term is defined:

“*protos... first*; 1. either in time or place, in any succession of things or of persons... 2. *first in rank, influence, honor; chief; principal...*” (Thayer, p. 554-555; 4412-4413)

God considers this a very high priority. They are to become accustomed to using their own funds at whatever sacrifice to themselves in order to care for their widowed mother or grandmother. This is to be first in rank, it is to be a chief and principal priority. Children and grandchildren must be made to see that caring for their parents and grandparents is of great importance in the sight of God. It is a part of honoring of their parents as Jesus argued so strenuously with the Jewish leaders. It would be a terrible attitude for the descendants of a widow to feel that the church should take care of their parent/grandparent widow instead of themselves. It would remove from them their “piety.” This term is defined:

“*eusebeo... to be eusebes (pious), to act piously or reverently (towards God, one’s country, magistrates, relations, and all to who dutiful regard or reverence is due); ...*” (Thayer, p. 262; 2151)

“*eusebes... pious dutiful (towards God A. V. devout, godly)...*” (Thayer, p. 262; 2152)

It is a very close synonym to the term “godliness” which Paul discussed in the previous chapter. Exercising oneself to godliness is one of the greatest things one can do in this life. One of the acts of godliness is that of taking care of the physical needs of parents. One who does this is acting piously and reverently. They are showing the proper regard and reverence both to their parent, and to God who has asked them to honor them. Anyone who rejects this duty has no claim whatever to godliness.

at home (*literally one’s own — accusative case*)

Literally this would be translated: “in their own.” It is clear from this passage that when children leave the home and begin their own household, the material needs of parents and grandparents does not cease. It is a moral and ethical obligation for the Christian to take care of his needy widowed mother or grandmother. She is a part of his/her own household even if she does not live under his/her roof, and it is the obligation of her sons and daughters; grandsons and daughters to take care of her.

and to repay their parents;

This is an important concept for all children to understand. God holds them to a very grave duty here. The term “repay” is actually two Greek terms that would be literally rendered “and to return requitals” to their parents. The term “return” is defined:

“*apodidomi... a common verb in Grk. writ. fr. Hom. down, and the N.T. does not deviate at all from their use of it; prop. to put away by giving, to give up, give over,... who regards APO as denoting to give from some reserved store, or to give over something which might have been retained... 1. to deliver, relinquish what is one’s own... in mid. to give away for one’s own profit what is one’s own, . e. to sell 2. to pay off, discharge, what is due, (because a debt, like a burden, is thrown off, OPO, by being paid): ... 3. to give back, restore... 4. to requite, recompense, in a good or a bad sense:...*” (Thayer, p. 60-61; 591)

God wants children to give up and relinquish what was their own and give it to their parents when the need arises. He wants them to pay off or discharge what is due. The final sense is that of giving back, restoring, requiting and recompensing. God wants Christians to recognize that if their parents ever come into need, it is an opportunity for them to pay their parents back for all the sacrifices made for them when they were young. The sacrifices children must make for their parents is only a return of what they received as children. The second term is “*requite*”

“*amoibe... a very com. word with the Greeks, requital, recompense, in a good and bad sense(... to requite, return like for like): in a good sense, I Tim. 5:4*” (Thayer, p. 32; 287)

Hence parents (especially widowed mothers and grandmothers) are to be returned like for like. When children are young their parents give up things and make sacrifices to care for their needs while raising them. When they grow older, it must be returned like for like. Paul uses a different term than widow to describe those for whom they are to do this for. The term is defined:

“*progonos... born before, older... plur. ancestors... used of a mother, grandparents, and (if such survive) great-grandparents, I Tim. 5:4 [A. V. parents] (of surviving ancestors...)*” (Thayer, p. 538; 4270)

The Spirit stresses in every way, that in order to be a godly, reverent Christian, one must have concern and respect for the needs of all their ancestors. Parents, grandparents, great-grandparents are all the responsibility of their descendants. No one who rejects this duty has any claim to godliness.

for this is good and acceptable before God.

Paul uses “*gar*” here to stress the conclusive power of this next remark:

“*gar... is properly a particle of affirmation and conclusion, denoting truly therefore, verily as the case stands, ... the reason and cause of a foregoing statement is added, whence arises the causal or argumentative force of the particle, for... II It adduces the Cause or gives the reason of a preceding statement or opinion... III It serves to explain, make clear, illustrate, a preceding thought or word: for,*

I. q. *that is, namely...*” (Thayer, p. 109-110; 1063)

This is the reason and cause for all that is above. It is good and acceptable in the sight of God for children to feel this way. This is why it shows piety. It is good (*kalos - pleasing; ...beautiful to look at, excellent in its nature and characteristics, ... praiseworthy; morally good, ...conferring honor...*). This is how God sees the attitude of care and concern that one holds for their parents. It is also “acceptable” to Him.

“*apodektos... accepted, acceptable, agreeable...*” (Thayer, p. 60; 587)

It is agreeable to God, it is acceptable to God. It is something He desires to see. The term “in the sight of” is defined:

“*enopion...* (I. q. *ho en opi on*, one who is in sight...) ... *before, in the sight of any one... 1. of occupied place: in that place which is before, or over against, opposite, any one and towards which another turns his eyes... 2. before one’s eyes; in one’s presence and sight or hearing...*” (Thayer, p. 219-220; 1799)

All men walk before God’s sight, they are before his eyes at all times. This attitude is a way to be before the eyes of God and to have God like what He sees.

5 Now she who is really a widow, and left alone,

Paul now returns to the second side of the “if.” If she has children, then the above applies, if she does not have children then she has fulfilled the first qualification for being a “real widow.” If she has none of the things mentioned above: No children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren to care for her. If she is “left alone,” then the church has an obligation to give her the honor that she has no children to give her.

“*monoo... to make single or solitary; to leave alone, forsake memonomene*, I. e. without children, I Tim. 5:4... ” (Thayer, p. 418; 3443)

She must have no one left to care for her. There can be no living family (or her living family has forsaken her and will not help her [most likely because they are not Christians]). If this be the case then she can be considered to be a “real widow.” but once this first quality is met, others follow.

It is here that it becomes of great importance that we carefully heed the word of God. There are many needy people in the world. But the church is only to care for those God identifies as being worthy.

trusts in God

The term “trust” is defined:

“*elpizo... Sept for ... to trust; ... to flee for refuge... to wait, to hope; to hope* (in a religious sense, *to wait for salvation with joy and full of confidence*)... *hopefully to trust in... to direct hope unto one ...*” (Thayer, p. 205; 1679)

She has put her hope in God. She has fled to Him for refuge, and waits upon him for salvation. There is a lot in this term. It implies that the person is faithful, it implies that they are living to fulfill the will of God, that they are seeking first the kingdom and in every other way manifesting their great concern to be ready. Like the five wise virgins of the Lord’s parable, she keeps her lamp trimmed and bright and she has the extra oil prepared for a long wait. (Mt. 25:1-6).

and continues in supplications and prayers night and day.

The term “continues” is defined:

“*prosmeno... a. to remain with... to continue with one... b. to remain still..., stay, tarry...*” (Thayer, p. 548; 4357)

It is a part of her life now. It is something she has turned to since she is desolate and has little else to look forward to in this life. It is of the highest importance that women (and men) consider strongly the implication here. Though this is the necessary criteria for the church to care for such a person, it is also God’s way of telling us how important these things are to Him. We should endeavor to

fulfill these things in our own life whether it be for physical help or simply to be pleasing to God. The term “supplication” was used back in 2:1 and describes the seeking asking and entreating one does for the needs of themselves and others. It reveals just how much she trusts in God. She is leaning upon God, trusting God, and asking God to care for her.

The term “prayer” was also used in 2:1 and is the general term for all communion with God in prayer. It includes not only the needs expressed in “supplications,” but also thanksgiving, praise, intercessions and the many other things one might communicate to God in prayer. The point is simple. She spends a great deal of her time in communication with God. She gives herself to this night and day. Not just once or twice a day, but continually. Prayer has become a big part of her life.

This describes the “real widow” that God wants the church to honor. The next verse describes a different type of widow.

6 But she who lives in pleasure

The widow who after her husband dies begins to live her life in pleasure is not a “real widow” and does not deserve to be honored by the church. The widow has lost her husband and is still alive herself, but if she decides to spend the rest of her life living in “pleasure,” then some very sad things follow.

“spatalao...to live luxuriously, lead a voluptuous life, [give oneself to pleasure]... (Thayer, p. 583; 4684)

If she decides to live the rest of her life in luxurious and sinful pleasure, no longer heeding the word of God, but giving herself up to sexual pleasure or no longer giving the Lord his due because her husband is no longer with her, then she:

is dead while she lives.

“thnesko... to die; cf. to be dead... of the loss of spiritual life... I Tim. 5:6...” (Thayer, p. 291; 2348)

She is spiritual dead even while physically alive. She is no longer alive as far as God is concerned and therefore cannot be a “real widow.” Such a woman would need to be admonished and exhorted to repent. Even if she were in financial need, the congregation would have to refuse her under such circumstances. Regardless of her arguments she is no longer worthy of the congregation’s consideration.

7 And these things command,

Timothy is not only to use these things as his personal criteria for knowing how to deal with widows, but they are to be given to the congregation as commands to be obeyed. This is the same term that was translated “charge” earlier in the letter(1:3).

“paraggello... 1. prop. to transmit a message along from one to another... to declare, announce. 2. to command, order, charge...” (Thayer, p. 3853)

Timothy is to transmit this information from God to these people. This is a charge that must be kept. No widow can give herself to pleasure and remain a faithful member of the congregation, no family member can neglect his widowed ancestors and remain faithful, no widow who does not hope in God and give herself to prayer and supplication day and night is worthy of being a “real widow.” These things have to be commanded as well as acted upon, they must be the expectations of all Christians as well as the criteria for judging them.

that they may be blameless.

The term “that” is “HINA - a final conjunction... denoting purpose and end: *to the intent that; to the end that,*) the purpose and goal of this command will lead to the brethren being blameless. This was one of the qualifications for the elders(3:2).

“anepileptos,...prop. not apprehended, that cannot be laid hold of; hence that cannot be reprehended, not open to censure, irreproachable,...” (Thayer, , op. cit. p 44; 423)

All Christians who do not want to be open to censure by God and who desire that God view them as irreproachable must submit to the commands set forth in 5:1-6. What happens if they do not heed these commands is set forth in verse eight.

8 But if anyone does not provide for his own,

Those who do not heed the above commands will find some terrible consequences following. God expects His people to “provide” for their own.

“pronoō... 1. to perceive before, foresee. 2. to provide, think of beforehand... to provide for one, I Tim. 5:8... Mid. with an acc. of the things, I. q. to take thought for, care for a thing...” (Thayer, p. 540; 4306)

It is interesting that the term *provide* describes *forethought*. One does not wait for the need to exist and then fill it. The devout Christian thinks of the needs before they occur. Children are to be taught from a young age that the needs of their parent are to be of the greatest importance to them. What they need is carefully pondered and mechanisms are put into place so that when the needs arise, they will be cared for. In a sense this is only a reinforcement of what was said in verse four. God expects children to repay their parents. Devout children have already thought of this and are ready and waiting for the needs to come so they can take care of them.

Yet this passage goes a little further for it can also apply to the parents initial responsibilities to their children. One’s “own” begins when man leaves father and mother and cleaves to his wife. She is generally his first “own,” then come the children and then the parents.

“idios... 1. pertaining to one’s self, one’s own; used a. univ. of what is one’s own as opposed to belonging to another... to do one’s own business (and not intermeddle with the affairs of others),... b. of what pertains to one’s property, family, dwelling, country, etc. ... c. harmonizing with, or suitable or assigned to, one’s nature, character, aims, acts; appropriate... 2. private...” (Thayer, p. 296-297; 2398)

One’s own would obviously include the family and any others that are considered an integral part of one’s life. How far this extends would be defined by culture and need.

and especially for those of his household,

The term “especially” is defined:

“malista (superlative of the adv. mala)... adv. especially, chiefly, most of all, above all...” (Thayer p 387)

As a superlative, it becomes the highest of priorities. Above all other things that a man might need to take thought for and provide for, the highest of all would be those of his household. This term is defined:

“oikeios... belonging to a house or family, domestic, intimate: belonging to one’s household, related by blood, kindred... belonging to God’s household,” ... (Thayer, p. 439; 3609)

The term could mean either “those related to him by blood, kindred, or it could refer to all who live in his home. It seems from the context that it is the latter that best fits the context. God demanded that a man take care of all those in need who are related to him by blood. This would include brothers and sisters, it would include children, parents, grandparents, widowed parents, etc. There is no valid excuse a man could make to remove himself from this duty. It belongs to him, and if he shirks it:

he has denied the faith

The term “deny” is defined:

“arneomai... 1. to deny, I. e. [... to say...not, contradict]... 2. to deny, with an acc. of the pers., in various senses...a. ... of the followers of Jesus who, for fear of death or persecution, deny that Jesus is their master, and desert his cause [to disown]... b.. of those who by cherishing and disseminating pernicious opinions and immorality are adjudged to have apostatized from God and Christ... c. ...to deny himself... 3. to deny i.e. abnegate, abjure;... to renounce a thing, forsake it... 4. not to accept to reject, refuse something offered...” (Thayer, p. 74; 720)

This is a very powerful word which must have been very startling to some who read it. It was used

of Peter's denying Christ(Mt 26-70-72) and of our denying Jesus.

*If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we **deny** him, he also will **deny** us: 2 Tim 2:12*

The basic principle set forth here is that if someone does not live up to one of the commands set forth in the Scripture, then they have denied the entire system.

For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. Jas. 2:10-11

If they do not provide for their own it is the same as rejecting and refusing the faith. When someone cannot be convinced to take care of his own flesh and blood, then they have placed themselves in the position to reject all that the gospel stands for.

and is worse than an unbeliever.

The term "worse" is defined:

"cheiron... (compar. of kakos;...) [to grow worse], of one whose illness increases,... lest some worse thing befall thee, ... [A. V. how much sorer punishment], ... [A.V. wax worse and worse];... of the moral character... I Tim. 5:8." (Thayer, p. 668; 5501)

This term is used as a comparative. When something is worse than, more evil, more wicked, and more bad(good translation, though poor English grammar) than something else. In a comparison between an unbeliever, and a believer who will not take care of the needs of his own flesh and blood, Paul pronounced that the unbeliever is better. With "*love thy neighbor as yourself*" one of the two things the law hangs upon, how could we not be seen as worse if we will not provide for such needs?

Those who do not believe in God and cannot be persuaded to believe the gospel and who consequently live wicked and sinful lives are among men a very wicked class of people. Yet God considers those who profess belief but do not care for their families to be worse.

9 Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number,

Having dealt with those widows who have family members in the congregation, and those who are unworthy because of their own wickedness, he returns again to the "*real widow.*" Yet there are still more things to be discussed about these widows and the responsibility of the congregation toward them. Of those widows who do not have family, Paul now speaks of three more categories. The older widows who have the qualities now listed in 5:9-10, those older widows who do not have these qualities, and younger widows. The term "*taken into the number*" is not used elsewhere in the Scriptures and is defined:

"katalego... 1. prop. to lay down; mid. to lie down... 2. to narrate at length, recount, set forth... 3. to set down in a list or register, to enroll,(esp. of soldiers...) ...of those widows who held a prominent place in the church and exercised a certain superintendence over the rest of the women, and had charge of the widows and orphans supported at public expense, I Tim. 5:9..." (Thayer, P. 333; 2639)

"katalego... to select; to reckon in a number, enter in a list or catalogue, enrol." (Analytical Lexicon p. 217).

The term is generally used of registering someone, of entering their name into a list, of reckoning them in a certain number, or enrolling them, but since this is its only use in the New Testament, what that list is and what responsibilities and obligations belong to them are not stated. The text itself reveals:

1. They must have specific qualities which stress age, child rearing, hospitality, benevolence and good works 5:9-10.
2. There is a faith(pledge) involved in this registration that the younger woman might break in marrying, but the older ones would not.
3. Since it is in the overall context of the church honoring widows, it seems very possible that this is some type of arrangement where the church supports her. Whether something was expected in return is not revealed.

From these considerations, it is clear that some form of permanent registration was involved, some sort of pledge was given, some kind of highly skilled role that required the qualifications Paul listed, and the churches continued care for her physical needs. Anything more than this is just speculation. After considering the qualities Paul states she needs to have we will be in a better position to comment on what her role might have been.

The first qualification that the Spirit of God sets forth is that she must not be “under” 60 years of age.

“elasson... less: either in age younger... or in rank... or in excellence, worse... Neuter elaston adverbially, less... A. V. under... 1 Tim 5:9.” (Thayer p. 202; 1640)

She must not be under or less than sixty. There is an impropriety in allowing a widow any younger than this to be “enrolled” in a congregation as one of their widows. The reason given later is that any women younger than that could change her mind in the passing years and would then be placed in a very unfortunate situation. The congregation could help a widow under the age of sixty, but they could not enroll them in the manner set forth here.

and not unless she has been the wife of one man,

The wording is nearly identical to that found in 3:2 in the qualifications of the eldership. The only difference being the gender. An elder must be a “one wife husband”(one woman man) and the widow must be a “one husband wife”(one man woman). For reasons of purity, sanctity and holiness, God desired a woman under consideration for being enrolled must have been married to only one man. This is a little more difficult than that of the qualification since she is already a widow. As with the elders and their wives, whether previous husbands who had died, or a scriptural divorce would disqualify her from this role is a decision each local church would have to make.

10 well reported for good works:

Literally “*by good works being witnessed.*” The term “good” comes from a broad term with the following definition. (*kalos - pleasing; ...beautiful to look at, excellent in its nature and characteristics, ... praiseworthy; morally good, ...conferring honor:..*). All her works must look like this in light of the Scriptures. The things she had done with her life, her activities and accomplishments must be pleasing, excellent, and thus confer honor upon her. Much like Dorcas’s good works did for her.

At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. 37 But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. 38 And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them. 39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them. Acts 9:36-39

Just as the widows there at Lydda showed the tunics and garments she had made, so to this woman’s good works must be witnessed:

“martureo... to be a witness, to bear witness, testify, i.e. to affirm that one has seen or heard or experienced something, or that (so in the N. T.) he knows it because taught by direct revelation or inspiration... a. in general; absol. to give(not to keep back testimony... i.q. to prove or confirm by testimony... to bear witness concerning one... to testify a thing, bear witness to (of) anything... b. emphatically; to utter honorable testimony, give a good report... to be borne (good) witness to, to be well reported of, to have (good) testimony borne to one, accredited, attested, of good report, approved... “ (Thayer, P. 390-391; 3140)

Those in the church could testify to it. Well reported of stresses the honorable testimony that others would be willing to make concerning her life and demeanor prior to the death of her husband. She must have lived in such a way that others would speak highly of her.

if she has brought up children,

“brought up children” is defined:

“teknotropheo... to bring up children...” (Thayer, P.618; 5044)

“teknotropheo... young teknon, and trepho to rear, signifies to bring up children. (Vine vol. 1 p. 188)

From these definitions it is clear that for a woman to be enrolled, she must have brought up children, she has had experience in raising children. Their spiritual outcome is not discussed as it was with the elders, only that she has physically borne and reared them. One might wonder where these reared children are now that she is in need. One of two conclusions must be considered. Either the enrolled widows could have children who were taking care of her and thus the church was not burdened even though she was enrolled, or these children have died or are gone.

if she has lodged strangers,

The term “lodged strangers” has two possible translations. The term itself is defined differently by Thayer and Vine:

“zenodocheo... to receive and entertain hospitably, to be hospitable...” (Thayer, P. 432; 3580)

“zenodocheo... to receive strangers... R. V. “(If) she hath used hospitality to strangers,” A. V., (if) she have lodged strangers.” Vine.

The translations bear this out:

if she hath used hospitality to strangers, ASV
if she has shown hospitality to strangers, NASU

has shown hospitality ESV
showing hospitality NIV

As in the term “given to hospitality” in the qualifications of the elders(see this term discussed in 3:2), so now here there are two distinct ideas behind the term. Both are wonderful attributes. The first is simply the basic idea of hospitality. She must have opened her home and allowed others into it. For some reason this duty is often looked upon as one that shows a very important part of one’s character. God does not want a widow enrolled into the number who has been accustomed to staying at home and having little interaction with the saints. God desired that she be very accustomed to having others into her home. Whether this carries even to the point of lodging strangers in her home who pass through the city and are members of the church from elsewhere is a question for scholars to discuss. The point is that she show hospitality, both to members of the congregation and to those who pass through and need a place to spend the night.

if she has washed the saints’ feet,

This is the only place outside of Jesus example on the night he was betrayed where the washing of feet is mentioned.

So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? 13 “You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. 14 “If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. 15 “For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16 “Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17 “If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. Jn. 13:12-17

Jesus had washed the feet of His disciples to teach them about humility and service. This leads to the question of whether this is literal or figurative. If it is literal, then this woman has had brethren into their home and when she saw that their feet were dirty, she was willing to wash them. Though one cannot deny that this is a possibility, the more likely interpretation is that this concept had found its way into the common speech of the day as an idiom for those who had learned from the example of the Lord and was truly a humble servant of others.

if she has relieved the afflicted,

The term “relieved” is defined:

“*eparkeo*... properly, to avail or be strong enough for...(See *arkeo*); hence a. to ward off or drive away... to defend... b. to aid, give assistance, relieve,... Mid to give aid from one’s own resources...” (Thayer, P. 229; 1884)

“*arkeo*... to be possessed of unflinching strength, to be strong, to suffice, to be enough (as against any danger; hence to defend, ward off)... Passive (as in Greek writing) to be satisfied, contented ...” (Thayer, P. 73)

She must have been willing to give assistance and aid to those who needed relief. The term itself conveys the idea of being strong enough to do it. When it comes to helping those who are persecuted it would take strength to do it since it might fall on the one helping the “*afflicted*” also.

“*thlibo*... to press (as grapes), press hard upon... a compressed way, i.e. narrow, straitened, contracted,... metaph. to trouble, afflict, distress...” (Thayer, P. 291; 2346)

This term is a word picture in itself. It describes one who is pressed on every side, who is pressed hard upon and has entered some type of situation in life where they are uncertain which way to turn. They are therefore troubled, afflicted and in great distress. Anything can cause such a thing to happen. Bereavement, financial loss, illness, trouble with children can all bring one into a compressed, narrow, contracted way. When such times come the quality of woman under consideration here will do all possible to relieve it for them. Paul spoke of how this might be done in Romans and Jesus in the gospels

Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; 11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; 13 distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Rom. 12:10-15

Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' 40 Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' Mt. 25:34-36, 40

Again, decorum would demand that this would have been done while still married or to the female members of the congregation.

if she has diligently followed every good work.

The term “diligent” is defined:

“*epakoloutheo*... to follow (close) upon, follow after; in the N. T. only metaph. ... to tread in ones footsteps, i. e. to imitate his example, ... to be devoted to good works, I Tim. 5:10; (Thayer, P. 228; 1872)

The verbal picture here is of someone following “good works” closely, walking in their footsteps, following upon them. She had assessed all the good works found in Scripture and then she had sought to follow them closely in her own life. The difference between this quality and the one found in the first clause centers on the term “good” which is different here.

“*agathos*... excelling in any respect, distinguished, good. It can be predicated of persons, things, conditions, qualities and affections of the soul, deeds, times and seasons.... 1. of good constitution or nature... 2. useful, salutary... 3. of the feeling awakened by what is good, pleasant, agreeable, joyful, happy... 4. excellent, distinguished... 5. upright, honorable... upright, free from guile, particularly from a desire to corrupt the people... pre-eminently of God, as consummately and essentially good... The neuter used substantively denotes 1. a good thing, convenience, advantage, ... 2. what is upright, honorable, and acceptable to God...” (Thayer, P. 2-3; 18)

She is to follow closely all things that fit the category of excelling in any respect, distinguished, good, pleasant, excellent, and honorable.

11 But refuse the younger widows;

Those younger widows who request to be enrolled are to be “refused.”

“paraiteomai... 1. to ask alongside..., beg to have near one; to obtain by entreaty; to beg from, to ask for, supplicate... 2. to avert... by entreaty or seek to avert, to deprecate ... b. to refuse, decline... c. to shun, avoid... to refuse, reject...” (Thayer, P. 482; 482)

Whatever it is that is under consideration by the term taken into the number, the younger widows are to be refused the right to enter it. They are not to be allowed in any way or under any circumstances. The term “younger” is the same term used back in 5:2, it refers to those who are (*“neos... new... 1. recently born, young, youthful*). These widows are still in their 20's and 30's and often even into their 40's. These widows are not to be allowed to be enrolled. In actuality any widow under the age of sixty would have to be denied. Perhaps anyone under sixty is considered to be new and youthful.

for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ,

The term “for” is (“GAR... the reason and cause of a foregoing statement is added... It adduces the cause or gives the reason of a preceding statement... It serves to explain, make clear, illustrate, a preceding thought). This is the reason why these widows must be refused. The time will come “when” they will change their minds.

“hotan... a particle of time, comp. of hote and an, at the time that, whenever, ... used of things which one assumes will really occur, but the time of whose occurrence he does not definitely fix (in profane auth. often also of things which one assumes can occur, but whether they really will or not he does not know; hence like out in case that,...) ... a. with the subjunctive present... as often as, of customary action... at the time when I. q. as long as... c. acc to the usage of later authors, a usage, however, not altogether unknown to the more elegant writers... a. future: when...” (Thayer, P. 458; 3752)

Paul does not fix the exact time, but it will likely happen at some point in the future. In Paul's mind it is not a question of whether, but of when. They will begin to grow wanton. This term is defined:

“katastreniao... to feel the impulses of sexual desire, [A. V. to grow wanton]...” (Thayer, P. 337; 2691)

When the mourning is over, and the natural feelings of life again begin to enter into her heart, she will begin to feel the impulses of sexual desire once again. At that moment, she will turn from Christ and desire to marry again. The term “against” is not in the original but is derived from this verb. When the feelings of sexual desire again return, her feelings for Christ will be different. There would be nothing wrong with this if they were not enrolled. But if they have been enrolled, then some serious problems will arise when she begins to feel such things again.

they desire to marry,

The term “desire” is a little broader in Greek than we generally think.

“thelo,... (derived apparently fr. helein with a fuller aspiration, so that it means prop. to seize with the mind; ...) TO WILL, (have in mind,) intend; i.e. 1. to be resolved or determined, to purpose ... 2. to desire, to wish:... 3. I. q. to love foll. by an inf., to like to do a thing, be fond of doing... 4. in imitation of the Hebr. ... to take delight, have pleasure... the will which proceed from inclination...” (Thayer p 285-286; 2309)

They are going to make up their minds to marry again. They are going to take great delight in the thought and will strongly want it. They will determine to marry again. Which would be fine if they are not enrolled, but if they are allowed to be enrolled, then this desire to marry again will lead to:

12 having condemnation

God is going to be displeased with them if they make whatever commitment that being enrolled required and then later decided they want to marry instead. He used the term “condemnation” to describe it.

“krima... 1. a decree... judgments;... 2. judgment i. e. condemnation of wrong, the decision (whether severe or mild) which one passes on the faults of others... IN a forensic sense, the sentence of a judge... of the punishment to which one is sentenced... where the justice of God in punishing is to be

shown, *krima* denotes *condemnatory sentence, penal judgment, sentence...* 3. *a matter to be judicially decided, a lawsuit, a case in court...*” (Thayer, P. 360; 2917)

Those who are enrolled and later decide to marry will have a sentence of condemnation passed upon them. It would be a grave wrong to allow a younger widow to be enrolled with this terrible danger waiting upon them. The final clause helps understand the nature of this enrollment.

because they have cast off their first faith.

The reason for the condemnation is summed up in the term “because.”

“*hoti...* I. the substance or contents (of a statement), *that*; 1. joined to verbs of saying and declaring... II the reason why anything is said to be or to be done, *because, since, for that, for,* (a causal conjunct. ...)... a. it is added to a speaker’s words to show what ground he gives for his opinion;... b. *hoti* makes reference to some word or words that precede or immediately follow it...” (Thayer p 458-460; 3754)

This is the reason. It would mean that she has “cast off” her first faith.

“*atheteo...* a. properly, *to render atheton; do away with theton ti* i.e. *something laid down, prescribed, established...* `to act towards anything as though it were annulled’ hence to deprive a law of force by opinions or acts opposed to it, to transgress it. ... to break one’s promise or engagement... b. *to thwart the efficacy of anything, nullify, make void, frustrate...* c. *to reject, refuse, slight...*” (Thayer, P. 13-14; 114)

They have done away with, nullified and made void their first faith. More than this, they have broken a promise. They made some type of promise or commitment and then they broke it. This is the terrible thing. But what is the “first faith?” The term first generally describes something either numerically first, or first in rank and importance.

“*protos...* *first*; 1. either in time or place, in any succession of things or of persons... 2. *first in rank, influence, honor; chief; principal...*” (Thayer, P. 554-555; 4412-4413)

This enrollment made very clear that something was placed first in rank and honor. They made some type of commitment and it had something to do with their faith or a pledge. The term here used is the general term for “faith” that is used throughout the gospel to describe one’s belief in God or trust in Jesus. Paul used it in verse eight to describe the faith which the man who would not provide for his own household was denying. Yet it can also mean to pledge.

broken their first pledge NIV *abandoned their former faith.* ESV
set aside their previous pledge. NASU *rejected their first pledge.* ASV

If that is its meaning here, then those enrolled who later want to marry are denying the faith. They are breaking their commitment to Jesus Christ. Yet it can also mean fidelity, faithfulness or reliability.

What part of this term could aptly describe a young widow’s “first faith/pledge?” It could be her conviction or belief respecting her relationship to God and divine things. it could refer to her conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, or it could be (as our translations lead us by their term) her faithfulness and fidelity to something else. What is this first and primary faith? Is it her belief in God, her belief in Christ, or some pledge she has made in being enrolled as a widow? There is simply nothing in the word definition, or the context to help us. If we speculate that these widows promised never to marry again when they were enrolled, then it is obvious what Paul is talking about here. If we refuse to so speculate, then the possibility exists that she should not be enrolled as a widow, but should be encouraged to remarry because when the sexual desires again begin to stir she may renounce Christ completely and reenter the world.

13 And besides they learn to be idle,

Yet this is not the only reason why younger widows should not be enrolled. Even if she never desires to marry again, there are some strong reasons not to do it. The term “besides” captures this:

“*hama...* Eng. *same...* 1. adv. *at the same time, at once, together...* all to a man, every one ... 2. ...

together with..." (Thayer, P. 30: 260)

At the same time that the above possibility exists, there are also other dangers to watch for. They might "learn" to be idle. Paul used this term back in 5:4 where he said that children need to *learn* to show piety at home. In this context it is *learning by use and practice*. It is not hard to learn how to be idle if one practices it long enough. Some even learn to like it.

This too may be a clue. There is something about this enrollment that would allow a young widow to learn how to be idle. There was some type of responsibility and obligation which younger widows could shirk and learn instead by practice how to be "idle."

"argos... fr. A priv. and *ergon* without work, without labor, doing nothing), *inactive, idle*: a. *free from labor, at leisure*... b. *lazy, shunning the labor which one ought to perform*... c. of things from which no profit is derived, although they can and ought to be productive: as of fields, trees, gold and silver... *unprofitable*..." (Thayer, P. 72: 692)

They learn how to be lazy, how to shun the labor they ought to perform. Worse than this, with nothing to do and time on their hands, they may begin:

wandering about from house to house,

Women with nothing better to do than to make a circuit from house to house to house all day long every day of the week. What kind of situation would this be. Only trouble can follow such a situation. It will lead from one problem to another.

and not only idle but also gossips

Not only would such people be idle and not really producing anything of their own, but they might actually learn other sinful activities like gossip.

"*phluaros*... (*phluo*, 'to boil up,' 'throw up bubbles', of water: and since bubbles are hollow and useless things 'to engage in empty and foolish talk'): of persons, *uttering or doing silly things, garrulous, babbling*, [A. V. *tattlers*]... of things, *foolish, trifling, vain*..." (Thayer, P. 655: 5397)

They sit around and blow bubbles all day with their tongue. They talk about silly things that are trifling and vain. Generally when such talk proceeds for very long, they begin to talk about things they ought not. When a tongue is allowed to go freely, it takes a very short time before things that are no one else's concern or business are discussed.

and busybodies,

This is a difficult term to grasp with just the English, how can one be a busybody when they are idle?

"*periergos*... *busy about trifles and neglectful of important matters, esp. busy about other folks' affairs, a busybody*..." (Thayer, P. 502: 4021)

This is someone who busies themselves with things that do not matter and are neglectful of the things that do matter. Generally they are busy sticking their noses into other people affairs which do not concern them and which they have no right to meddle with.

saying things which they ought not.

This leads them to saying things that simply ought not to be said. They use their tongues to form words which ought not to be formed, they utter with their mouths ideas and thoughts that ought to be kept silent. They learn how to use their tongues in ways God never intended them to be used. Sending the minds of those they talk to into realms they never would have imagined.

14 Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry,

Paul now sums up this part of his argument with a conclusion that he forms as a command. "Therefore" is defined:

"*oun*... a conj. indicating that something follows from another necessarily; [al. regarding the primary force of the particle as confirmatory or continuative, rather than illative...] Hence it is used in drawing

a conclusion and in connecting sentences together logically, *then, therefore, accordingly, consequently, these things being so...* a. in exhortations (to show what ought now to be done by reason of what has been said), l. q. *wherefore...* b. in questions, *then, therefore...* c. in epanalepsis, i.e. it serves to resume a thought or narrative interrupted by intervening matter... It serves to gather up summarily what has already been said, or even what cannot be narrated at length... e. it serves to adapt examples and comparisons to the case in hand... " (Thayer, P. 463-464; 3767)

This verse follows from the above necessarily. It draws Paul's conclusion in this matter. Paul desires that younger widows get married. The term "desire" is defined:

"boulomai...to will, wish; and 1. commonly to will deliberately, have a purpose, be minded... 2. of willing as a affection, to desire..." (Thayer, P. 105; 1014)

Paul has a will, purpose and desire in this matter. The inspired apostle who is teaching the disciples to observe all that Jesus commands wants to see the younger widows remarried. This is the best possible option for them. It removes the bad possibilities listed above and opens to her the wonderful opportunities to continue serving the Lord in the manner listed below.

bear children,

This is the same term Paul used above in describing the older widow. She needs to rear children. This is an honorable and safe thing for young widows to do. It is something Paul, as an inspired apostle wants them to do.

manage the house,

This term is defined:

"oikodespoteo... to be master(or head) of a house: to rule a household, manage family affairs..." (Thayer, P. 439: 3616)

"oikodespoteo... from oikos, "a house," and despotes, "a master," signifies "to rule the household"..." (Vines: 3616)

It is the role of the woman to take responsibility over the household affairs. It is her role to manage these affairs. This is a good example of the delegation which the wise husband utilizes in properly running his home. The worthy woman of Prov 31 reveals just how much a husband can delegate to his wife's control. Much of what needs to be done in the home can be given to the wife to do. She can manage and rule over much of the household affairs without usurping any of the husband's authority. The individual details of such an arrangement would be up to each husband and wife. Paul simply desired that widows marry so they can give their time and energy to such productive things and not to waste and idleness.

give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

"Give" is defined:

"didomi... to give... A. absolutely and generally... B. In construction... I to give something to some one, - in various senses; 1. of one's own accord to give one something, to his advantage; to bestow; give as a gift... 2. to grant, give to one asking, let have... 3. to supply, furnish, necessary things... 4. to give over, deliver, ... 5. to give what is due or obligatory, to pay: wages or reward... 6. DIDOMI is joined with nouns denoting an act or an effect..." (Thayer, P. 145-147; 1325)

The last thing Christians want to do is do something that would afford an adversary an opportunity to do them and their Lord's cause harm. They should never of their own accord give an opportunity to the adversary to do such a thing. The term "opportunity" is defined:

"aphorme... 1. prop. a place from which a movement or attack is made, a base of operations... 2. metaph. that by which endeavor is excited and from which it goes forth; that which gives occasion and supplies matter for an undertaking, the incentive; the resources we avail ourselves of in attempting or performing anything..." (Thayer, P. 90: 874)

There are things that Christians do that give a base of operation to those who hate them to speak evil of them. They already want to speak evil of them and are always looking for ways to do so. The

very last thing one ought to do is give them a real thing to sink their teeth into and carry everywhere. The term “adversary” is defined:

“*antikeimai*... 1. *to be set over against, lie opposite to, in a local sense, ... 2. to oppose, be adverse to, withstand... an adversary...*” (Thayer, P. 50; 480)

They are opposed to Christianity, they are adverse to it, they withstand it and despise it. They look for means to destroy it. They want to “speak reproachfully.” of it. This term is defined:

“*loidoria*... (*loidoreo*) *railing, reviling...*” (Thayer, P. 382: 3059)

“*loidoreo*... *to reproach, rail at, revile, heap abuse upon...*” (Thayer, P. 382: 3058)

“*loidoreo; loidoria; loidoros antiloidoreo* ... A common Greek word group... with the unanimous sense “to reproach,” “insult,” “revile,” even “blaspheme,” though it is not a religious term. In public life in Greece insult and calumny played a considerable part... (Kittel TDWNT #3058)

They want to heap abuse upon the Lord’s church. They revile and reproach it whenever possible. An immoral widow, or one who rejects Christianity to become the someone’s wife is just the thing for such a one to use. We can only imagine the things such a widow would say to justify her actions, and the use made of such things by those who are adversaries.

15 For some have already turned aside after Satan.

This is one of the reasons Paul speaks so strongly. It had already happened. Some had already done exactly what Paul was warning against. Not simply because they were enrolled, but also because the opportunity arose and they fell into the temptation. Whether it had been done in this local congregation or not is immaterial. It had happened, and thus the possibility of it occurring could no longer be doubted. To “*turn aside*” is defined:

“*ektrepo*... 1. *to turn or twist out; pass. in a medical sense in a fig. of the limbs... lest it be wrenched out of (its proper) place, dislocated, (R. V. Marg. put out of joint), ... to turn aside, go astray... 2. to turn off or aside; pass. in a mid. sense... to turn one’s self aside, to be turned aside... to turn aside... to turn away from, to shun a thing, to avoid meeting or associating...*” (Thayer, P. 200)

When a Christian falls away from their Lord, it is like a limb being dislocated or decapitated. They have turned aside and gone astray. They have turned themselves aside and away from Christ and gone after Satan. “after” is defined:

“*opiso*... *back, behind, after:* 1. *adverbially of place... the things that are behind... to go backward, ... to return home, of those who grow recreant to Christ’s teaching and cease to follow him,... to return back to places left... who return to the manner of thinking and living already abandoned...*” (Thayer, P. 449: 3694)

They have gone backward, gone back to what they were before gone back to Satan’s realm.

16 If any believing man or woman has widows,

The simple “has” always infers possession. In this case, there are widows that some believing men and women “*have*” in their possession. This was set forth earlier in the chapter: “*If any widow has children or grandchildren.*” If a widow has offspring, then those offspring have this widow. “If” is the general term that identified a sentence as being conditional:

“*ei*... is first a conditional particle, *if*...; secondly, an interrogative particle, *whether*... I *ei* CONDITIONAL... is connected, according to the variety of conditions, with various tenses and moods; viz. 1. with the Indicative of all tenses, when anything is simply and generally assumed to be, or to be done, or to have been done, or to be about to be. ...” (Thayer, , p. 169-172; 1487).

In any local church, this situation may or may not exist, but if there are widows, and those widow have children or offspring, then the following must be done.

let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened,

The term “relieve” is the same one Paul used earlier, “*if she has relieved the afflicted*” (5:10).” She

is now the afflicted one and those who have such widows are “*to aid, give assistance,*” and “*relieve.*” Although they are to provide for this widow, not only with financial assistance, but also emotional, both by companionship, and helping her with any other needs in her life, it appears that here it is only the financial that is under consideration. Since the church is not to be “*burdened.*”

“bareo... to burden, weigh down, depress: in the N. T. found only in Pass., ... used simply: to be weighed down, oppressed, with external evils and calamities... of the mental oppression which the thought of inevitable death occasions... weighed down with sleep... with their expense, I Tim. 5:15...”
(Thayer, P. 95: 916)

The church should not bear the full weight of the financial obligations. Obviously the social and other needs can be borne by all who are in the church, but the financial burden is to be born by those who “*have*” her as a widow.

that it may relieve those who are really widows.

There is an important *reason* why family should first take care of widows.

“hina... a final conjunction ... denoting purpose and end: to the intent that; to the end that, in order that... it is used 1. properly of the purpose or end;...” (Thayer, P. 302-304; 2443)

It is the widow who is really a widow (destitute and with no means of support) that the church is to be primarily charged with caring for.

As we conclude this section, it may be wise to spend just a moment in contemplation of the widows taken into the number. The only other place that such a thing is discussed in Acts 6.

Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. 2 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. 3 “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; Acts 6:1-3

What is missing in this passage is any statement of permanence and any statement of an office. All of this is read into I Tim 5. There is no reason to conclude it or practice it except human assumption and presumption. When in doubt great caution must be exercised. If this is an office, then we have no idea what they were to do. It is therefore safer to let this go.

I Tim. 5:17-25;

Paul continued to discuss how one ought to conduct oneself in the house of God(3:15). He continues his discussion describing how the church must treat those shepherding the flock.

17 Let the elders who rule well

Paul repeats the same vocabulary from the qualification "*rule well his own house*"(3:4). So all that had gone into assessing how he had ruled over his house, training his children and loving his wife, should be used to assess how he ruled well in the house of God. How did he make the transition from presiding, guiding and directing his family "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4) to doing exactly the same thing for all the members of the church? How well does he take heed to himself and all the flock(Acts 20:28) How does he lead by example(I Pet. 5:1-4); and exhort and convict the gainsayer(Titus 1:9)? If they are doing all this "well", then that are to: After dealing with how the needs of widows are to be dealt with by the church, how various circumstances will have a bearing on that treatment, and how the funds contributed on the first day of the week are to be used to help them, he now moves to the work of elders and how the church is to respond to their needs.

be counted worthy of double honor,

"Be counted worthy" is defined:

"axioo... a. to think meet, fit, right: ... b. to judge worthy, deem deserving..."(Thayer, p. 53)

This is the tangible reaction to the assessment that they have a good elder. If they see his work and toil in such a light that he is ruling in a good way, then they are to "judge him worthy" "deem him deserving" and "think it right" that he receive "double honor."

"time.... 2. honor which belongs or is shown to one: the honor of one who outranks others, pre-eminence... veneration, ... deference, reverence..." (Thayer, p. 624; 5092).

"diplous... twofold, double..."(Thayer, p. 152; 1362)

The exact meaning of this expression has been debated for centuries. Is this to be viewed as two honors? If so, what is the first honor that they are to be accorded and what is the second? Or, is this a demand that they be given a double heaping of honor? It is obvious from the qualifications and the nature of the position as revealed by God that they are worthy of honor. Members of the congregation ought to view them with enough respect to obey and submit to them.

Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you. Heb. 13:17

Obviously a part of the honor given to elders by the congregation is this obedience and submission. But this would be given to all the elders regardless of how well they rule. What more is to be given to those who rule exceptionally well? The idea that the congregation should obey and be more submissive to those elders that rule well can be rejected immediately. Any teaching that would give greater respect and obedience to one elder over another simply because of their ability or effort would be very divisive. What then is the double honor that ought to be given to such a man? Only the context can decide because the concept is not discussed outside of this passage.

The reference points we have to define and explain the scope of this honor are "*those who labor in the word and doctrine,*" "*You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,*" and "*The laborer is worthy of his wages.*" The ruling well centers especially on those who labor in the word and doctrine. Those elders who not only shepherd the flock and care for their needs but go beyond that to spend additional time laboring in the word and doctrine(studying for and teaching classes(public and private) to members and nonmembers). Since Paul identifies "ruling well" and double honor with "*the laborer is worthy of his wages,*" the most simple logical and scriptural explanation is that it refers to financial pay for their work. What other additional honor would a congregation give an elder who was doing exceptional work as an elder?

Does it make more sense to us that those elders who rule well should be accorded a higher honor and deference by the congregation than those who are less capable? This would obviously cause

problems among the eldership. If on the other hand one of the elders spends more of his time and effort in the work, or is laboring in the word and the doctrine (possibly even doing the work of an evangelist), then there would be no difficulty if one were paid for what he was doing.

especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.

“Especially” is defined:

“malista (superlative of the adv. MALA)... adv. especially, chiefly, most of all, above all...” (Thayer, p. 387; 3122)

Paul has mostly in mind these people. There might be an elder ruling well who is not doing these two things, but it would be an unusual case. Elders who wish to rule well need to expend their “labor” here to accomplish this goal.

kopiao 1...to grow weary, tired, exhausted, (with toil or burdens or grief)...3. in bibl. Grk. alone, to labor with wearisome effort, to toil... of bodily labor...of the toilsome efforts of teachers in proclaiming and promoting the kingdom of God...” (Thayer, p. 355; 2872)

The basic idea of this term is to work so hard that one becomes exhausted. It is effort that leads to weariness. Elders that rule well are identified by the amount of labor they engage in regarding the word and doctrine.

What does it mean to labor “*in the word?*” In the earliest days of the church when the apostles were preaching and teaching in Jerusalem, and the problem of their neglect of the widows arose, they made it clear that though others could do that work, they must not “*leave the word of God to serve tables*” but instead “*give*” themselves “*continually to prayer and the ministry of the word.*”

Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. 2 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. 3 “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; 4 “but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” Acts 6:1-4

That which the apostles had been doing prior to this event and after it is called the “ministry of the word.” What were they doing? They were preaching to the lost, and edifying the members. They are teaching daily in the temple and from house to house. This is the ministry of the word. Another part of laboring in the word is the time necessary to rightly divide it.

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. II Tim 2:15

“*Doctrine - teaching, instruction, that which is taught*” adds just a little more dimension to this. The elder worthy of double honor is the elder who wearies himself in the labor of studying, teaching, and preaching the word of God.

18 For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,”

By using the preposition “for” Paul “*gives the reason and cause of a foregoing statement that serves to explain, make clear, illustrate, a preceding thought or word:*” The reason why elders ought to be considered worthy of double honor, and the type of honor that God had in mind had already been perfectly described elsewhere in “*Scripture - a writing, thing written*” This term elevates those things God has revealed. All Scripture is inspired of God (II Tim 3:16) and possesses authority.

“You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain.” Deut. 25:4

This passage is found in a list of admonitions and laws that God demanded his people follow. When speaking of paying preachers, Paul gave a fuller explanation than here.

Or do only Barnabas and I not have a right to refrain from working? 7 Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard, and does not eat the fruit of it? Or who tends a flock and does not use the milk of the flock? 8 I am not speaking these things according to human judgment, am I? Or does not the Law also say these things? For it is in the law of Moses, “You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain.” Is it oxen God is concerned about? 10 Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. 11 If we have

sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? 1 Cor. 9:9-11

Paul quoted this Scripture to prove that every preacher has the right to be paid for the labor he does for the church. Since it was not the ox God really cared about but the principle that whenever someone labors and toils, they ought to be given some fruit from that labor. If the ox is muzzled, then it must work treading out the grain with no hope of eating the fruits of his labor. God never wanted this to happen. God wants those who labor to have hope that they will receive something for their labor. This is one of the things that the men of this world are wiser in than those in the church(Lk. 16:8). They know that if they pay people well, they will labor in hope and will work all the harder and all the better for it.

God wants the elders who labor to the point of exhaustion in studying the word and preaching, teaching and applying it to the members to receive the same honor an ox does when treading out the grain. Just as the ox, while working is worthy to eat, so also for preachers and elders.

and, “The laborer is worthy of his wages.”

This second Scripture is not found in the Old Testament, but only in Luke and Matthew. One of these books had been written at this time and Paul accords it the same authority as the Old Testament Scriptures.

“And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house. Lk. 10:7

When Jesus sent out the seventy(Lk 10:1), he told them to stay in the house where they first arrived, and enjoy the food and drink they offer as it is the “hire” for their labor. Those who labor are worthy of the wages they receive for doing that work. Spiritual labor is not exempt from this principle. If the elders are laboring to the point of exhaustion in the word and teaching and they are doing so well, then they are worthy of their wages for doing so.

19 Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses.

This is an additional honor accorded to elders. No accusation is to be accepted against an elder without two or three witnesses to verify it. If a single individual brings an accusation against an elder to the preacher, it is not to be received. This is different from the other members:

“Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. 16 “But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that “by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’ 17 “And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. Mt. 18:15-17

With any other member, if an accusation is brought to the preacher, the preacher and the member(s) would go to the brother and find out if they were true. But the command here is that elders are to be treated differently. Even if a brother makes an accusation, it is not to be “received” unless there are two or three witnesses to back it up.

“paradechomai... 1... prop. to receive, take up, take upon one’s self... 2. to admit i.e. not to reject, to accept, receive... to acknowledge...” (Thayer, p. 480; 3858)

Do not accept or acknowledge the legitimacy of an accusation made against an elder unless there are more than one witness. That which would get any other Christian into a situation where they must defend themselves cannot even be received by the congregation in behalf of an elder. The term “accusation” is defined:

*“kategoria ... an accusation, ... lit., ‘not under accusation.’ this and the verb *kategoro*, to accuse, and the noun *kategoros*, an accuser ..., all have chiefly to do with judicial procedure, as distinct from *diaballo*, to slander. It is derived from *agora*, a place of public speaking, prefixed by *kata*, against; hence it signifies a speaking against a person before a public tribunal...” Vine Vol 1 p. 26*

As one ponders God’s rationale for this exception two things stand out. First, the elder has gone through a very rigorous examination before being appointed to the office. His relationship to the congregation has been established for many years and therefore an accusation is not to be believed unless on the strongest evidence. The second thing centers on the fact that an elder is going to be the target of angry members who do not like some decision that has been made, and

the acceptance of an accusation can tarnish a reputation. God wants the elders to be protected from such things. No one is to accept an accusation or in any way pursue it unless there are two or three “witnesses.”

“martus... [etymologically one who is mindful, heeds...] ... a witness(one who avers, or can aver, what he himself has seen or heard or knows by any other means); a. in a legal sense...” (Thayer, p. 392; 3144)

A witness is someone who can acknowledge and testify that he is personally aware of the circumstances surrounding the accusation. There must be two or three who can do this or the accusation is to be ignored. God is concerned about the integrity of those who lead his people. Again, they have already proven themselves over years of service in the congregation and have been thought to have all the necessary qualifications. This gives them honor which is not to be removed by the accusations of one witness. One witness may truly have seen what he claims, but in light of the proven character of the elder, it is not enough proof to act on.

20 Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all,

Yet the other side is just as true. Just as they receive a greater honor, if they “sin - *to miss the mark, to err, be mistaken, violate God’s law*” they are to receive a greater condemnation. Such Elders must be “rebuked.”

“elegcho... 1. to convict, refute, confute, generally with a suggestion of the shame of the person convicted... of crime, guilt, or error; of sin... contextually, by conviction to bring to light, to expose... 2. to find fault with, correct; a. by word; to reprehend severely, chide, admonish, reprove... contextually, to call to account, show one his fault, demand an explanation... b. by deed; to chasten, punish...” (Thayer, p. 202-203; 1651)

They are to be reprehended severely by admonition and reproving. Their deed is to be brought to light, and they are to be condemned for doing it. This is to be done in the presence of all. This too is very different than the passage in Matthew above. There if the brother repents, he is forgiven and it need not go the church, but in his case, it is to be told to the church in a public rebuke.

that the rest also may fear.

The term “rest - *the remaining, the rest of any number or class under consideration*” may refer to the rest of the elders, but more likely to the rest of the congregation. There is always a grave danger and deadly temptation that occurs whenever a leader sins. Aaron sinned by making the golden calf for the people, but the sin allowed the people to break loose and become broken loose(ASV), unrestrained(NKJ, and out of control(NAS) (*Exod 32:25*).

And when Moses saw that the people were broken loose, (for Aaron had let them loose for a derision among their enemies,)

Now when Moses saw that the people were unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them, to their shame among their enemies),

Now when Moses saw that the people were out of control-- for Aaron had let them get out of control to be a derision among their enemies--

Sadly, when a leader sins it always causes some of the people to break loose. The only thing left to Moses was to kill them and get the rest of the people restrained again. The same danger exists any time an elder sins. Both the world and the members must be protected from the terrible message sent out when an elder sins and only a strong rebuke will stop it. This is exactly what and will lead others to “fear - *that which strikes terror, reverence, respect.*” This will break the normal outcome. Instead of an elder’s sins causing a congregation to grow worse, by rebuking them publicly, it will cause a greater fear and terror of doing wrong.

21 I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice

The Spirit selects a term with a broad sense that appeals to man’s honor and integrity.

“diamarturomai... often in Grk. writ. to call gods and men to witness... 1. to testify, i.e. earnestly, religiously to charge... 2. to attest, testify to, solemnly affirm... to give solemn testimony to one...” (Thayer, p. 139-140; 1263)

This is a term designed to put the hearer under a strong obligation. It is an earnest charge offering

solemn testimony in the “sight” of God, Jesus, and the elect angels!

“enopion...before, in the sight of any one.... of occupied place: in that place which is before, or over against, opposite, any one and towards which another turns his eyes... 2. before one’s eyes; in one’s presence and sight or hearing...” (Thayer, p. 219-220; 1799)

Timothy (and all evangelists) are to conduct themselves in this matter with a view to the fact that they are doing this in the sight of God, Christ and the elect angels. This is something for all to ponder. Paul has already spoken of the angels witnessing the apostles.

For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. I Cor. 4:9

Jesus mentions angels witnessing saints.

Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven. Mt. 18:10

Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.” Luke. 15:10.

So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. Luke 16:22

It appears from these passages that Paul’s words to Timothy force all evangelists and all others who are placed into such positions that it be recognized that the inner workings of the congregation are very important to God and are constantly under the attention of God, Jesus Christ, and at least some if not all the angels. The Holy Spirit wants it clearly understood that this is a part of the motivation behind keeping the following command These things are to be “observed - *to guard or watch, have an eye upon.*” Timothy is to consider his responsibilities as an evangelist much in the same way as a guard does someone he is striving to protect. He is to be vitally concerned about this and fulfill it to the letter. Paul tells him that in keeping and guarding these obligations, he is also to be very concerned that all this be done “*without - separately, apart. having no association with, apart from, aloof from*” prejudice.

“prokrima... (pro and krima), an opinion formed before the facts are known, a pre-judgement, a prejudice,...” (Thayer, p 540; 4299)

Prejudice is “*an opinion formed before the facts are known.*” An evangelist must have no prejudices. He must evaluate each person and each circumstance independently and solely upon the basis of the facts. To have a prejudice for or against someone or something will quickly poison an environment. Timothy must fulfill all his obligations according to truth and righteous.

doing nothing with partiality.

To emphasize the importance of not forming pre-judgments, he adds the things he does must have nothing to do with “partiality.”

“prosklisis... an inclination or proclivity of mind, a joining the party of one,...partiality...” (Thayer, p. 547; 4346)

“prosklisis... a leaning upon or towards a thing; met. a leaning towards any one, inclination of mind towards, partiality,...” (Analytical Greek Lexicon. p 350)

From the root idea of leaning upon or towards something, this term came to mean an emotional or intellectual leaning toward something, separate and apart from facts or what is right. When someone leans toward another person without any good reason except for natural feelings then they are showing partiality. This can occur with the wealthy, the beautiful, the powerful or the charismatic. It can also occur toward the poor and downtrodden. There often tends to be a leaning toward certain types or classes of people. Paul has solemnly testified that in the sight of God, Jesus and the elect angels Timothy must keep such leanings out of his heart. He must be a righteous judge of men’s character and be certain that any respect or rebuking is don only on the basis of truth. All sermons, classes, church discipline, and any other interaction with members or elders must be free from “partiality.”

Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; ye shall hear the small and the great alike; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God’s: and the cause that is too hard for you ye shall bring unto me, and I will hear it. Deut 1:17

Thou shalt not take up a false report: put not thy hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. 2 Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to turn aside after a multitude to wrest (justice): 3 neither shalt thou favor a poor man in his cause. Exod 23:1-3

It is not good to show partiality to the wicked, or to overthrow the righteous in judgment. Pr. 18:5

To show partiality is not good, because for a piece of bread a man will transgress. Pr. 28:21

For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge, and people should seek the law from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. 8 But you have departed from the way; you have caused many to stumble at the law. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi," says the LORD of hosts. 9 "Therefore I also have made you contemptible and base before all the people, because you have not kept My ways but have shown partiality in the law." Mal. 2:7-9

22 Do not lay hands on anyone hastily,

The "laying on of hands" is called one of the first principles of Christian teaching.

Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. Heb 6:1-2

There are several important things that the laying of hands involved. After pondering them, we will seek to conclude which one is under consideration here. The term itself has two basic meanings, one positive and one negative.

"epitithemi...1. Active: a. to put or lay upon... b. to add to... 2. Middle a. to have put on, bid to be laid on... b. to lay or throw one's self upon; with dat. of pers. to attack one, to make an assault on one..." (Thayer, p. 244-245; 2007).

The idea of putting or laying hands on someone is set forth many times. Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles hands the Holy Spirit as given.

And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, Acts 8:18

Since Timothy was not an apostle, it is not this type of laying on of hands that Paul speaks of here, but there are other positive ways that those in the first century laid hands on another. From the very beginning, hands were laid on others when they embarked on a great spiritual work. They laid hands on the seven men appointed to help the apostles by serving tables, they were laid on Paul and Barnabas to send them on the first missionary journey. Timothy himself had hands laid upon him when he was appointed to help Paul.

whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. Acts 6:5-6

As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away. 4 So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. Acts 14:2-4

Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. 1 Tim. 4:14

Since Paul had been speaking about elders, the majority believe that this laying on of hands refers to the appointment to an office, but it could just as easily refer to the rebuking of elders or pursuing church discipline.

And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. Acts 4:3

And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him, Acts 21:27

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Heb 10:31

Paul had both in mind, for it would certainly be a disaster if either were done "hastily."

"tacheos... quickly, shortly ... " (Thayer, p. 616; 5030)

Patience and great care must be give to either of these. It is foolish to move too quickly.

nor share in other people's sins;

The term "share" is the common word for fellowship or participation.

“koinoneo,... a. to come into communion or fellowship, to become a sharer, be made a partner... b. to enter into fellowship, join one’s self as an associate, make one’s self a sharer or partner...” (Thayer, p. 351-352; 2841).

Paul does not want any of the sins that other men might commit to involve Timothy in any what that would lead to a communion or fellowship. This could occur without him ever sinning himself simply by ignoring or not properly dealing them. When sin occurs, it must be dealt with, if the evangelist does not deal with it, then he becomes a silent and inactive participant in that sin. This must never happen. He is not to move too quickly, but he is not to wait so long that he actually becomes a participant in it.

keep yourself pure.

This too is part of the solemn testimony above. Evangelists must do everything within their power to “keep - *to attend to carefully, to guard, to hold firmly*” their purity. This must be a very high priority. It must be attended to carefully, guarded, and held firm. Evangelists must take care of this part of their life with the greatest interest and scrutiny. The reason of course is obvious. Like the eldership, there is nothing worse for the cause of Jesus Christ than an evangelist who sullies his reputation with impurity. No matter what his abilities and experience, how long he has lived in an area, how much potential for good he might have, and no matter how many other important interests he may have, nothing can compare to the importance of this one thing. He must keep himself pure or all else is destroyed. He will be of no value to God or his fellow man if he is caught up in impurity. How many times Satan has destroyed years of work toil and preparation on the part of a preacher by lulling him in this realm and causing him to become completely useless to the Lord because he did not guard his heart and keep himself “pure.”

“hagnos, ... 1. exciting reverence, venerable, sacred ... 2. pure ... a. pure from carnality, chaste, modest,... b. pure from every fault, immaculate ...” (Thayer, p. 8; 53).

Timothy is to give careful attention and concern to being pure, chaste and modest in all his dealings with his fellow man. In realms such as sexuality, finances, honesty, and impartiality, he must be pure and clean in the sight of all men. It is must be a constant concern to him that all areas of his life be carefully defended here.

23 No longer drink only water,

One might wonder why this personal note just to Timothy has been placed here. The obvious reference to purity leads Paul to caution Timothy not to carry this too far. Romans 14 and I Corinthians 8-10 make it very clear that there are things in this life that God does not care about, and if they do not cause a brother to stumble have no impact on ones personal purity. Up to this point in Timothy’s life he had been a “water drinker.”

“hudropoteo... to drink water, [be a drinker of water]...” (Thayer, p. 634; 5202)

This is a compound word made up of “water” and “drink.” Timothy was a man who only drank water. Paul uses an imperative(command) to force Timothy into a different set of circumstances. The term “no longer” is defined:

“meketi...(fr. me and eti), adv., no longer; no more; not hereafter...” (Thayer, p. 412; 3371)

Paul does not want Timothy doing this any longer. From here on, Paul wants Timothy to change his conduct and begin to do something other than drinking only water.

but use a little wine for your stomach’s sake and your frequent infirmities.

Once Timothy has stopped being a water drinker, what is he to become? Paul wants him to “use” a little wine.

“chraomai... 2. to take for one’s use; to use... to make use of a thing... (Thayer, p. 670; 5530)

This is also an imperative(command). Paul commands Timothy to use a little wine. He wants Timothy to take a little wine and make use of it. There have been many interpretations of this passage of Scripture. It is interesting what it does and does not say. First, in a day an age where wine was freely used as a beverage Paul had to command Timothy to use it. If wine was the simple

drink many today claim, why wasn't Timothy using it? When the command itself is examined it is important to see exactly what Paul states. First, he demands that it be a "little" wine.

"oligos... little, small, few, of number, multitude, quantity, or size: joined to nouns... of time, short: ... of degree or intensity, light, slight... in brief, briefly..." (Thayer, p. 443; 3641)

The quantity of wine that Paul commands Timothy to use is a very small amount. Second, it is "for - (of the means or instrument by which anything is effected; the reason for which a thing is done)" your stomach's sake. The reason Timothy is to become a drinker of a little wine is for his stomach's sake. Timothy is to drink small amounts of wine for purely medicinal reasons. He had two problems one had to do with his stomach and the other his "frequent - *often recurring*" - infirmities *weakness; feebleness of health; sickness*"

It is evident that Timothy had frequent bouts of a bodily illness, and the use of a little wine would help him. It is also clear that Timothy had determined that he would not use wine even though it would help him. The truth is clearly revealed that a little wine for medicinal purposes is not evil and would not hurt his purity.

Note though that the passage does not allow social drinking or the use of alcohol for other purposes than medicinal ones. Anyone using this passage to justify more than a little wine for medicinal purposes is twisting the Scriptures to their own destruction.

24 Some men's sins are clearly evident,

For the third time in the last few verses(see 5:20,22) Paul again brings up the sins of others. This time to discuss the manner in which they come to light and how they ought to be dealt with. Some sins are "clearly evident."

"prodelos... openly evident, known to all, manifest..." (Thayer, p. 538).

There are some sins that are so obvious, so openly evident that they are known to all. Even before the judgment day, it is often clear that sin has occurred. These are the easiest to deal with because they are known to all and consequently cannot be denied. They must be repented of or the congregation must discipline. Such a situation is easily dealt with.

preceding them to judgment,

Obvious sins "precede - *go before...*" these people into judgment. When someone commits a blatant and obvious sin there is no need for witnesses. The sin goes before them. When dealing with church discipline or the judgement day, there is no need to reveal the secret things of the heart. It is obvious and clear that such people have sinned. There is little chance for prejudice, for laying hands too hastily, or for any other difficulty in such circumstances.

but those of some men follow later.

The other type of sinner is much more difficult to deal with. Their sins "follow later - *follow after*" them. Such sins are not discovered until later or after. Sometimes in spite of vigilance and the greatest efforts, no one finds out until great damage has already been wrought. There are times when one suspects, and other times where they have no idea. Some men are adept at covering their sins. These are the wolves in sheep's clothing. These are the hypocrites who pretend. Obviously they are much more difficult to deal with. It is not possible to rebuke a sinner when they have hidden their sins. This is no prejudice or partiality, it is ignorance or possibly merciful love. Some will not even come out to the judgment day. There is nothing to be done about this except to acknowledge its reality. The church will have people in it who are unworthy, but there is no way to know some tares until the harvest.

There are several important considerations to ponder. First, no one is guilty when fellowship with a member who has so hidden his sins that they are unknown finally comes out. The church is not required to become a detective. There is no need for a members of a local congregation to acts as private investigators to dig up all they can on the members. All members are to be trusted and treated at face value until there is a reason to consider it otherwise. Third, just because a person

stays within a local church from the time of their conversion until the time of their death is no guarantee that they are righteous or even saved. If there are sins that follow after them into judgment, then God has not forgiven or cleansed them. They are in a dreadful condition.

25 Likewise, the good works of some are clearly evident,

It works exactly the same way (*likewise - in like manner*) with good works. There are good works that are clearly evident. They are openly manifest before the eyes of all. A (good work - *business, employment, that with which anyone is occupied; an act, deed, thing done*) is any deed or activity that could be classified as being good in God's word. Some good works like these are clearly known prior to the day of judgment.

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. Mt. 5:14-16

Christians must let their light shine. They must act in such a way that others see and glorify God. These types of good works such as preaching to the lost, public teaching and preaching, and being a good example cannot be hidden.

and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden.

Just like some evil works are hidden, so also some of the good works are "otherwise" than being evident.

"allos... adv. (allos) ... otherwise: 1 Tim. 5:25 (ta allos exonta, which are of a different sort...)" (Thayer, p. 29; 247)

Some good works are not clearly seen, we try to do them in secret.

Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 "that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly. Mt. 6:1-3

But so often they still come out, without any effort on our part.

Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. . . . 39 And Peter arose and went with them. And when he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them. Acts 9:36, 39

Good works cannot be hidden. They come out in the character of the man. Men may do good deeds in secret, but generally it is obvious they are being done because of the fruit.

For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. 44 "For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. 45 "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. Luke 6:43-46

You just can't find a man who has so ordered his life that there are no good works to find. He cannot hide them all.

"dunamai... to be able, have power, whether by virtue of one's own ability and resources, or of a state of mind, or through favorable circumstances, or by permission of law or custom... to be able to do something... to be able, capable, strong, powerful..." (Thayer, p. 158-159; 1410)

It is simply not able to be done. You cannot hide all good works. The term "hidden" is defined:

"krupto... to hide, conceal... a. prop... to be hid, escape notice, ... b. metaph. to conceal (that it may not become known..." (Thayer, p. 362-363; 2928)

They cannot be concealed or hidden.

This would obviously give comfort to Timothy as well as all evangelists and elders. great No one need fear laying hands hastily on any one for the purpose of condemning them because if it is not clearly evident and manifest then the man is to be left alone and these sins can follow him to his

judgment by God. If he desires to lay hands on a man to appoint him to the office of an elder then again he need not fear, the good works of a man are so evident that they cannot be hidden and if they are not manifest it is because they are not there.