

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Well, first Timothy five is Remarkable to me because of what it talks about and to whom and that, what time as we've been hearing, we've not worked through the entire book, but we have done enough, especially in the first three chapters. Uh, to note that first Timothy is written to Uh, to the lead pastor, if you will Uh, paul's protegee in Ephesus at a time when the church needed reformation There had been the chaos of unauthorized.

Uh, teachers teaching. Their own reading their own ideas into the bible and even teaching things that are not necessarily from the bible at all. And not only had. Had this taken, hold of the minds of much of the congregation, but obviously, if you don't No and believe the truth about who God is, who christ is, who we are?

Uh, what we are? Like how we got to be that way, the only solution for that. All those things. And especially, because The lord uses his word to unite us to christ through faith and apply christ to us. So, with the Unauthorized teaching and the incorrect teaching. Uh, came.

Ungodliness into the church. None of us will ever. Makes progress in our sanctification apart from union with christ. And that union would cry and that progress through union with Christ as spirit works in us, especially by His word. And so we come to chapter 5 and we have these instructions.

For. With us who have lived this life. Of persevering godliness selflessness. In the home over decades, by which the Lord has trained into them. They contentedness with god, In which? They are not left alone because they have prayer. And, It's just, it's an it's an amazing thing. A that even in the midst of all that had been done in the broader church.

The lord may have already preserved, some of them. But also, The the giving of these instructions along with the rest of the book of first, Timothy Uh, a way by which the holy spirit would give Uh, timothy hope that the Reformations that he has been instructed to institute will be used by the spirit.

Will take hold that. There will be women like this. Uh, to put on this role. And what an encouragement we often say, when we're in the psalms or some other place, where we find passages about suffering or repentance from having fallen into disastrous sin, That it encourages us, when we come into suffering because Uh, we know the lord has anticipated that for us.

And not that we would be encouraged about disastrous sin, but we take heart to to repent. Because the lord has prepared even for the repentance of those who have fallen into Um, A spectacular sin. Uh, david of course. Then god's providence and david's own sin, but in god's merciful providence to The church throughout the ages.

Having been an example of that. Well, it's also comforting, isn't it? That the lord gives us instruction for what to do, when your church. Experiences. A reformation enough that you have these godly people. And what you're supposed to do with them? These godly ladies and what you're supposed to do with them, praise god.

And, and may he Uh, grant a Reformation in our day. So that rather than living in a culture that idolizes youth with people in their 40s and 50s, you know, still always dressing and acting casual, and superficial and indulging in worldly entertainment and being busy, with all sorts of stuff.

That will not matter what when they come to die. Uh, we would live in a culture that esteems those in whom god has worked over decades and and be able to look at the elderly and say, that is what it looks like when brace has laid hold of and worked on someone.

For decades, may god's grace be operating in me now. And In these decades before me. And bring me there. So it's, it's a very encouraging section. We just have a couple more things that we're going to deal with. Really, we could keep going in terms of, The necessity of.

Uh, charitable works deeds of Of mercy. Particularly to our brothers but also to our neighbors. Uh, there's there's much on that in. Um, Well, there's some on that in the application section in the book of hebrews. There's much of that in james, there's much on that in first john, And even in the Butters to the churches in revelation.

Uh, the lord jesus pays attention. Uh, to the charitable works of Of his people to the good works. That has that his people are doing. Uh but we're going to conclude with the spiritual care of widows and Um, And i put slash orphans on the outline just to remind us.

Of. The necessity of taking care of those. Who in god's providence? He has put among us with need and that goes back even to our old testament study. The the fatherless, the widow, the stranger But also james 127. Combines those things. Uh, but the spiritual care of widows the spiritual care of Elders, who rule?

Well, especially those, whose labor is in preaching and teaching. And, The, the special care of the rich. Uh, that there are spiritual challenges for those who are wealthy and comfortable in this world and part of the deaconal ministry. Is continuing to give them good counsel. For how to view and how to employ.

Their wealth. Lest it becomes spiritually. Harmful To them. It's not really. Uh, something that we think about Very often. I i think in our Kind of fleshly aged that doesn't care about souls as much as we ought to. But there's great danger, you know, when a wealthy man comes to the church, you know, there are There's a temptation on the part of maybe elders and deacons and remaining flesh to like get the cartoon dollar signs in their eyes and say oh we can get this guy and we can do all those projects that we've just been waiting on the funds for Uh, but when a wealthy man comes to the church, Uh, elders and deacons Uh, should see someone who has.

Uh, specific spiritual dangers. And an assignment for a particular. Uh ministry. Uh, to then. So those are the the three whom we. Uh, we hope to treat and hope to think about a little bit. First, the The widows. In first, Timothy 5 verse 3, through 16 Then the The taken care of the ministry.

You know, praise god, yes, miss you. The bible is an orphan. Considered someone who doesn't have parents, or just doesn't have a father. Is there a different tree?

I'm trying to think. Of a case. Most of the passages that are immediately coming to to mine. Uh, use the term fatherless. Um,

But i just my knowledge isn't comprehensive enough to answer that off. The Off the cuff. Thank you for For asking. Um,

Yeah, so we'll uh, so we'll consider the The widows and first Timothy 5 through 3 through 16. And then the the elders who rule well, particularly in the preachers and teachers versus 17 through 25, Uh, it's very Uh, It's one of the parts of the glory of christ over against the shadow, glory of the tabernacle and the temple.

Uh, that The public worship and all of the All of the parts of it are so portable and so affordable. Uh, you need nothing. But a Bible loaf of bread, a flask of wine. And hopefully some water on a good lord's day. Um, And, And you can have the public worship.

But the one, Item. That's needed. For. For a ministry that Uh you want to have according to Christ's appointment is the preacher and the teacher who's labor is in preaching and teaching. That's the The one high ticket item. That is left in the worship of god. The. Although paul was by a vocational, he argued against it in his letters, And, Uh the indication from the new testament is the church should have preachers and teachers who give their life to this.

Uh, the way the The way the apostles indicated, they needed to give themselves entirely Uh, to prayer and to the ministry of the word. Uh which of course occasion the deaconate. And then, Uh, just at the clothes, then of the letter first, Timothy 6 verse 17 through 19, which we haven't expanded yet on your outline.

The special care. Of the rich. So we think about widows There are widows and then there are true. Widows is not maligning or speaking ill of Those who are not in the category of true widows. He's not speaking ill of their widowhood or saying, Uh, you know, they're not really bereaved.

But he's speaking specifically of A role a roster. Of widows in the church who are going to be. Supported by the church full time. And, you know, we'll get to things like An actual minimum age that they They would need to be 60 years old. Uh, There is, of course, yakima care.

And oversight by the deacons. A funds for appropriate, helping of anybody who's in any need in the church. And the widow who does not make the role of true widows. When the first Timothy 5 would still be eligible as anyone else in the church, in, in a time of need and Of course.

And in that case, the first and best way, Is for those. Uh not just who are of her household. Like we're going to see in the passage but those who are who are near to her and acquainted with her circumstances to take care. Of her privately as much as they can.

Uh, but if If that is not something that is available, then, Certainly the the corporate giving of the church for the sake of the poor. In the church. Uh, would be used for them. So when we say, honor widows who are really widows The the idea of honor here.

Is. Not just what we mean when we say, like, give wait to them and their heart. In your heart esteem them. Highly But the word honor actually has a Uh, financial Uh, Element to it in and its use sometimes. And we can see that that That is. Part of the use.

If you look at the conclusion to the section, In verse 16. If any believing man or woman has widows let them. Let them relieve them and do not. Let the church be burdened that, it may relieve those who are. And again you have this truly widows. Um, And, That's just recognizing that a church's funds are going to be finite.

And that one of the hopes is that you will have. A roster of these 60 year old widows who Uh, who give themselves to prayer night and day? Uh, they may not have the means Anymore for

the service of the saints. But they are. By a lifetime of Serving not only their own family but the saints when they had the means they are skilled in it.

And so the church hires these women to take to take time off of praying. Uh, to be part of The ministry of the church. Um, And, of course, their subsidizing, they're being able to pray. Uh, day and night and so forth, but it's really Uh, a view of the domestic life and a woman's the ark of a woman's life, over the whole course of her life that is almost foreign in the churches, these days.

Where you don't have. Little girls who are eager to become wife and mom one day. And to spend the bulk of their, Of their strength in this world. Uh on being a help to a godly man and bearing and rearing godly children. And part of the, the godliness of that.

Rearing being one of the things that mom and daughters and mom and sons. Um, Are always about just figuring out whom in the church. They can go serve together. Uh, who needs a meal? Who is visiting from another church or fleeing persecution. Uh, from another place that may be lodged.

As. In order to to show hospitality, you know, strangers who aren't actually strangers. You know, that wonderful hospitality we're lover of stranger. Um, but They're not a stranger in christ and so Opening the home together and so this Um, The, this life. Of good works that weans the heart off of Earthly pleasures.

Um, You know what? I think. We'll Wait until we get to those verses so there's there's the there's this idea of a roster of true widows and the church is funds are are finite and so it's important to recognize who really should be on that roster. So that, as as Much as possible.

The, the funds that are necessary. To take care of them would be available. So the, the true widow is Is someone not only who? Um, As we as we're going to hear later, and i've already been mentioning Is a living example, of the fact that the home is the first place where Where we show our piety but a widow who belongs to a family Where she has children or grandchildren that have means, Is not yet to be put on the roster.

Uh, first of all, she has the children and the grandchildren to take care of, but second of all, It's not just her piety that must be first shown in the home, their piety. Must first be shown in the home. And so that's what he says in verse 4. If any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents.

For this is good and acceptable. Before God. So as we were studying wealth and the use of wealth, one of the things that we noticed is that a godly man wants to leave An inheritance to his children. He wants to. Uh, Not accumulate wealth for its own sake. But as he As he.

Is. Uh, frugal towards himself and generous towards others. Uh one of those with whom he is really thinking about being generous toward our his future his children and their future families. Giving them the ability to pursue the same. Godliness and and generosity. Uh, when they come. In into their adulthood.

But now we see that it's not just godly parents who hope to leave much for their children. It's godly children who are hoping to find ways to repay their parents. Uh, which is really quite impossible. You You can't fully repay. The one who gave you life to begin with and then sacrificed their life.

For the sake of nurturing yours. For decades. And so in, In a proper sense of of loving one, another and especially, Responding to god's grace and generosity through people through

others to you. A child should be. Looking for how he or she can repay his mom and dad and you might not have great opportunities to do that financially.

Uh, but Again, honor is more than than money, although it definitely. Can and the word. And we have, you know, an english word that recognizes the same thing. When you hear the word, honorarium, Uh, Right, it definitely can't indicate those things, but things like making sure that your parents.

Are never emotionally or spiritually. Alone, that they who bore children and their children are still in this world are not without those who rejoice with their rejoicing and mourn with their morning. That you Um,

I think we, we need to We need to, you know, where that's going. Fifth commandment doesn't have an expiration date. Honor your father and mother. But if uh, if a widow has children and grandchildren, that is a provincial assigned opportunity. Here is a way. That they can. Uh, that they can.

Uh, yeah. Cut into that debt a little bit. If you, if you will, Um, Not that we should want our parents to be. Destitute financially or injured or have medical issues. You know, we've had in our own congregation Of course, good examples of the lord providentially assigning. Uh, opportunity to take care.

Of parents. Uh, but piety is first shown. At home and repaying, our parents as a goal. Uh, that the that the godly should have. Yeah, you can't think like an american You can't have in your heart and mind. The kind of house that you want to be able to afford, the kind of vacations that you want to be able to afford, you know, the boat the vehicle that You know.

That is going to be of all the style and luxury that you want and just have the big long list of all the things that if i had enough money. I were i would do. No that's not the purpose. Of money. And if the lord gives you an opportunity to take care of your parents, who want to be able to Um, you know, money is for the growth of your, the kingdom.

From the care of your wife, the care of your children. Generosity in the church. Uh, generosity to to neighbors. And there is no one nearer in the church or or neighbor to you. Then your parents. And if your parents aren't believers. Than all the more necessary that you would consider them your nearest and most deserving neighbors both, because of the debt that you already owe them in your life and because you are hoping that the lord will save them.

And you want the aroma of christ to be strong on you and not just on your breath. Uh, they should smell it on your hands. And in your wallet. Um, So, versus Five through 10. Not only did the piety begin at home for the true widow. Uh, but It continues at home.

So, she, who is truly a widow and left alone trusts in god and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. Uh, well. You don't suddenly become. Content and delighted with continual communion with god and prayer. When your husband dies. Um, There are widows who Uh, In addition to their Uh, their grief.

Uh, feel liberated, not now i can. Now i can pray night and day. The, the husband with whom i used to worship, god is taken from me, but the god, whom i worshiped with him is not taken from me. And i can continue night and day in prayer. That is what a widow is now.

For you to do. If she's if she's younger though, she has to get married as we're going to hear in verse 14. Um, And yes, i mean it to sound almost As obligatory as that because it is almost as

obligatory As that in the text. Um, Providence may hinder but what the lord says we should pursue We should pursue.

Uh, so she who's really a widow left alone. Trust in god continues and supplications and prayers night and day but she who lives in pleasure. Is dead while she lives. Here she is. He had a decades in to professing Christ. And being a member of the visible church. And her husband You know, the lord takes her husband.

And she's still sewing to the flesh. Living for earthly comfort living for entertainment. Living for For temporal pleasures. God forbid. And you know verse 7 these things command that they may be blameless. So there's an indication here That even if she is of the right age, if she's not of the right character.

Then. Putting her on the roster. Uh, is actually going to harm her in two ways. Uh, one you're not subsidizing her. Her ability to be in prayer night and day. And, To, you are giving her A financial honor that comes with a spiritual honor that does not belong to her.

And this is a That is a sensitive thing. To have to be able to discern and address. You see the great need for the for the godliness of the deacons. If they are going to be men of such character to, to say to, A 60 year old. Yeah. We want to help you as we can, we'll help you with basic sustenance.

But we can't put you on the roster of those who are paid and actual wage. In order to continue in prayer and good works. So you know, we'll take care of you, like you would take care of for lack of a better term. A beggar, like someone who's destitute will make sure you have food and drink.

We'll take care of you that way. But there's this other roster. Of these 60 year old and up praying night and day employed by the church in good works women that is conceived of in first Timothy five. Whose wage is. Like a living wage. So that she can be able.

To. To continue her ministry. A good works to others. Uh, but a woman who's uh, worldly and living in pleasure, Can't go on that roster. Um, It would harm her spiritually. To give her the impression that she is really doing well and mature. You know, one of the most difficult things, For me in the ministry, just because of the pain.

Of doing it. And how is sometimes responded to Is evangelizing older people in the church. But they are coming to eternity. And if there is, if there is no hunger for the lord hunger, for his word enjoyment, and contentment in prayer, Concern for the saints, all of these things that that grows and builds over time in those who are converted.

Yeah. Is it possible that they are being saved as one barely escaping through the fire? Yes, that's possible. But you're an irresponsible minister If you don't hold christ before then and urge them unto what christ actually does in those whom Those whom he saves. Um, Yeah. How dreadful would it be not that i think will be able to have this sort of interaction of the judgment?

But how dreadful would it be to be at the judgment and to have been the minister of an elderly person in the church, who Yeah. Nominal Nominal christian. And for them to find out. Yeah, i really thought you needed. More, you know, personal gospel. Uh evangelism. Uh, but i was afraid i'd hurt your feelings.

Course. I was afraid. You wouldn't like me. Or i was afraid. No, we have to care about the conditions of people's souls. Um, and that's, uh, that's that's especially Uh, what verse 6 is

about, but we're not just caring about the condition of The widow's soul. Uh but there may be those who would otherwise be on the roster but they don't need to be on the roster because they have these believing children and grandchildren and we have to care about their souls as well.

And so you see that in verses 7 and 8. These things command that well, that For the for the what we see it in verse 8, but if anyone does not provide for his own and especially for those of his household, He has denied the faith. And is worse than an unbeliever.

Those. Are extremely strong words. And so it is important that the deaconate of a church. When they have the, the care of of a widow before them, that they come to the children and the grandchildren. And say, if we take care Of your mom or your grandma instead of you.

We are going to harm your soul. Because the scripture says, Letting us do it. Instead of you doing it. Means that you're denying the faith and conducting yourself as worse than an unbeliever. Um, so that's something that That are the actor needs to needs to do. That's By the way, the only reason i'm not still a pastor in In.

Yeah, southwest of jackson, mississippi. Is because At one point. Yes, we continue to have children and it was a tiny little church literally in the middle of nowhere. And, You know, gas was expensive for us. So i would ride miles on my bike to do door to door evangelism, because it was miles between houses where we live.

And then my dad. Uh, Who God be praised to come to the conclusion that i should not do anything else with my time. I had gone by vocational for a while. He said, no. You just give yourself to the ministry like you're doing and i'll fill in the gaps financially.

So, You have friend who had gone to seminary calls. And, And he asked how things are going. I said you wouldn't believe what my dad said when i got to seminary, my dad was still said that i wasn't going to be A medical physician. Um, Not upset. He thought i'd lost my mind.

Those are two different things. Um, As are you wouldn't believe what happened? This is how it's going at the church and the ministry's going really well. But the Lord just doesn't adding To us and i was going to go, i did go by vocational, but my dad is so convinced now that i am just called to the ministry, he's filling in the gaps for our family financially.

So that i can give give myself and Said, james. You've denied the faith and you're worse than an unbeliever.

He said. I know you don't believe in applying. Uh, for pastoral jobs at Presbyteries are supposed to know. You know, where ministers are needed and who the ministers are that are good fits but that's just not the way it happens. You have to at least fill out your your data form and send it into the denomination.

And, Anyway, he had, he had sufficiently scared me. Because i had the ability by my ministry in the labor of preaching and teaching. To provide for my family, but i was letting someone else. Fill in the gap for me financially. And that was a, that was a serious enough consideration for morality before god.

That i was willing to give up what was and still is to this day. A treasured church to me. They are. Well, they're deer like you are Um, You know, one of the men from that church still prays for an hour for my family every morning. Um, But, It is a very serious moral consideration.

On the part of the children and the grandchildren. That the, the accident needs to be able to come to them and say, We are ready to take care of your mom and grandmother. But if you let us do it. You will deny the faith and be worse than unbeliever, and we are concerned not to do spiritual harm to you.

Uh, Dave. This is not quite exactly the same, but I would say this that When I was member of the acted. We would have people coming to us. I mean we were literally spending all Any resources, we had extra for people because somebody always had something that was going on.

It was just widow, whatever. And then we sort of like you said, we began read what the Bible said. And we started telling people from the talked to us. Have you got your family first? Whether they believe or not. Have you gone to your family first? Because this is an opportunity for them to Minister of you.

And I would say that. Did that? After the people that, That come to us for eight. They didn't need anything or just just ended. Awkward and and I one comment that I heard, On multiple things, you've always sort of shocked. Me, was when we would say that to them.

They would say we can't do that. And I remember asking for, why can't you be coming to Austin asking us? For health. And why can't you go to the individuals that God has placed in your life to help you?

You know, it never really came up with an answer. But anyway, that was sort of a practical Application. Yeah, I appreciate how our Dave, in particular and our session. That's been really working. Both offices, and that's very less than ideal. And we all Uh, can't wait to have a Uh, proper separate deaconate.

But appreciate how. Uh, How Dave has done that? And at least one situation that I know of not just sent the the widow back, like he's talking about, the Uh, the church in Memphis having done. But in the, in the role of a deacon going to the children, And saying.

Uh, here's a spiritual consideration for you. As the children and the grandchildren. That is affecting. What we're considering doing for your mom or your grandma. Um, That's something that the act and it needs to be able to do. And in particular, if they are unbelievers, this is another reason.

Why as we saw in the the qualifications for the deacon, they have to have sound doctrine. And, Uh, you know, one of the things that the, the acne can do is actually explain. The doctrine behind it. Uh, to the children and the grandchildren and it becomes an opportunity, not just for material ministry, possibly to the widow.

Uh, but for spiritual ministry. Uh, to the to the offspring. Um, So, I mean, There's, there's a lot that can be done. You're deaconnect could Could you know come up with a paper or ask the minister to help write a paper? That would guide them through how to talk to someone about this.

And, Yeah. God help us. The way the church is in the bible is so different. That many of our experience and we are Praying for a reformation. Is one of the reasons children, I hope you are sticking with us and all of this instruction and day by day in the home and week by week in the assembly.

Because the kinds of things that we are hoping that god will do, are not the kinds of things that will be suddenly answered when we have a good slight of deacons. This is a multi-generational project where you guys are going to stand on a foundation that many of us.

Myself included. I grew up in a Christian home godly parents church. Wasn't super horrible. Um, But how i would long for my children, and for all of you who are my children of other families, Uh, to have a multi-decade foundation. That is so much. Greater Uh, then then what i had Uh, but may the lord continue to bless our study.

Let's pray for that. Our father in heaven. How we long? Uh, so to love you. So to be weaned off of our selfishness. That that we would indeed be content. With a life of attending to you night and day and just taking breaks that we might attend to serving others.

Um, grant to us. Uh, such a Um, A thoughtfulness about christ and And you are trying God and pleasure in you communion with you. Uh, sympathy with all of your purposes in the world, concern for your church concern, for our neighbors, that indeed, Uh, we would have the sort of mind and heart that would work this way.

Not Not just the the women who might be left in a widowhood of that sort lord. But we pray that all of us might have maturity in the spirit to be conformed to the mind of christ. But we do ask for your blessing. Upon our church and these coming weeks.

And and maybe months when we'll be looking to you, to provide us Uh, with a new deaconate. But lord, as we've just been, Thinking about also we look to you to provide over the coming years. Uh, those godly children who Uh, will grow up and who will be of such faith that with Hebrews 11 about others.

We might say of them. With honesty that they were those of whom the world was not worthy. Grant than the work of your spirit unto this end. We ask in jesus name, amen.