

January 17, 2021 - I Timothy 5: 11-16 - “Instructions for the Younger Women”

### Introduction:

Losing ones’ husbands early in life was a much more normal occurrence during the first century due to sickness, warfare and persecution. The older widows had a place of service, and the younger ones were supposed to marry and contribute to the church from a more domestic viewpoint. Tertullian who was an important early Christian theologian, worked as a jurist in Rome, converted to Christianity after his return to Carthage, and became a leader of the African Church. Writing in the third century he states “In this time... the registered widows gave themselves to prayer, nursed the sick, cared for the orphans, visited Christians in prison, evangelized pagan women, and taught female converts in preparation for baptism.” So we see that dealing with widows as scripture mandate was a practice even in the third century. However, our text is not just about widows it is also about serving in the church as a family, as a body, using our gifts to further the kingdom. Paul continues his edicts about widows with...

### I. Instructions for the younger widows to remarry (5:11-12)

1. Younger widows were not to be put on the church list for caregiving. The essence of verses 11 to 15 is really a very simple principle. Young women who have lost their husbands are to remarry; that obvious to see. In verse 11, he mentions the younger widows. So, that would mean those less than 60 years of age. Please note verse 14, “I will” this is a strong word in Koine Greek – *bouloma*, (**bull la mi**) it has the force of a command, literally this reads, “I desire or “I command” “they are to marry.” We know what younger ones he’s talking about...

2. So, the obligation of the church, then, with those younger widows, is to encourage them toward remarriage. The church could put widows on a list, if they were over 60; younger widows were encouraged to remarry. “What is the issue here?” It refers to the problem in verse 13. For when they have begun to become” - or grow wanton that is to say “to feel the impulses of sexual desire that will overpower their devotion against Christ, they will wish to marry.” They will desire to marry - the verb stresses “desire”.

3. When she begins to feel desire that a normal woman would have toward a man, this creates a problem. The verb is used only here in the New Testament; outside the Scripture, it’s used of an ox trying to escape from the yoke. She is responsible to the vow according to scripture. She’s supposed to be the model of spiritual virtue. In Numbers chapter 30 it talks about the fact that when a woman makes a vow to God and is widowed, she has to keep that vow. God put a high premium on integrity of speech, and didn’t want people making covenants to Him they weren’t intending to keep. Beware of making a vow and not keeping it. **Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.** – Ecc. 5:5

4. In verse 12, it says, “carrying about with them condemnation” - or judgment. A woman in this position, who is trying to fulfill a vow that she is resistance to and hostile to, is carrying around a spiritual burden. The sentence of God upon her broken covenant, she knows is going to be judged by the Lord.

## II. The Consequence of failing these Instructions (5:13-15)

1. Paul warns Timothy in verse 13 what can happen when one becomes idle. Remember idle hands are the devil's workshop and he usually begins by getting the tongue busy. When people have nothing else to do they generally set their tongues to working overtime. You may wonder why she going house to house. Paul says it takes a serious-minded, mature, godly woman to minister to homes and families, to be a help with their needs, their problems, their secrets, and not abuse that opportunity. For these reasons, young women, then, are not to be put on the list, so that they don't become a reproach. Scripture is not certainly saying that every woman who has lost her husband is a sensual woman looking for trouble and that every woman who has lost her husband is a talebearer and a gossip. But that tends to be a problem with of immaturity.

2. At the end of verse 13, if in ministering she begins spreading stories around she shouldn't say. This is sin and it is damaging to the church and the people involve. Let's be honest about human behavior it takes a person of high moral stature to keep silence for the sake and edification of others. We have forgotten today that gossip and being a busybody is sinful and harmful.

3. To understand why gossip is so dangerous we must understand what gossip is. The King James Version uses the word "whisperings or "whisperers" to translate the word that we usually think of as "gossip." There is another Greek term that usually comes to us in Scripture as the word "slander," and it carried the idea of hurting someone openly. Sometimes, we hear it as a "backbiter, talebearer." The idea is that we are tearing down someone's character out in the open. Gossip isn't something we are proud of but something people are caught up in.

Sometimes people through gossip can create serious problems that can cause hurt and do injuries to others.

There are too many stories that validate this truth... "A senior in high school said that she was the subject of an online rumor that she had slept with the football team. She said, "I think it was started by the ex-girlfriend of a boy on the team. It didn't matter where it came from. People wanted to believe it. There was no way to refute it. I wanted to kill myself." That's the pain and the devastation that can come from gossip.

4. Solomon warned us about gossip in the Old Testament Proverbs: It's like a fire. **Proverbs 26:20- Where no wood is, *there* the fire goeth out: so where *there is* no talebearer, the strife ceaseth. Proverbs 11:13 -A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.** We have solid confirmation in the New Testament on this issue from the instruction of James. It was James who coin the "expression - **The tongue is an unruly evil full of deadly poison.** By far the most common sin among Christians involves the use of our tongues.

5. Paul has a better idea, in verse 14, for young women. "I will" or "I command "that the younger marry." Now, this is exactly what the Scripture says. A younger woman who has lost her husband is to remarry. Jewish custom gave honor to remarriage, and that is Paul's command. This is not a concession, this is a command. In verse 14, bearing children is one of

God's purposes for a woman, to "guide the house" – *oikodespotein* - that includes managing the household. Raising the children comes in at that point. The idea is the man provides, he goes out and gets the resources, brings them in, she dispenses them, manages them, cares for them on behalf of the family.

6. Sadly, he says, in verse 15, "Some are already turned aside after Satan." Paul says, "I regret to say that in your church assembly, some have already gone off." Some have already turned from their vow to Christ. Some are out following false teachers. Some are following their own lusts. Some are swerving from the path of virtue. Some may be the "silly women laden down with lusts" that he mentions in 2 Timothy, chapter 3. Some have already spread lies. Some have already been busy with other people's affairs. Some have given their ears to seducing spirits, believing doctrine of demons. A final point, in verse 16 emphasis responsibly and...

### III. Instructions to all believers. (5:16)

1. Paul now wrap up his argument and bring it full circle to where he started, he says the church has an obligation to make sure capable women who have believing family are not left to the care of the church. Verse 16 reads, "If any believing man or woman that has widows let them assist them." This as it were is the third line of responsibility. First, children and grandchildren secondly, a man in the family to provide and thirdly, a woman to provide.

2. There were women who had the resources. Some of them might have been widowed women. Some of them might have been women married to an unbeliever, who were given the management of their household, and could take some of what they had, and give it to other women who had need. It didn't always have to be money; it could be meals, it could be lodging, it could be many things - clothing.

3. So, not only were men who believed to provide for their extended household even women were to do that as well. Let them assist note at the end of verse 16, "let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed." In other words, don't even get down to the responsibility for the church to care for a person until all these other possibilities have been exhausted.

### Conclusion:

The church is the one place where we must edify one another with our service to others that includes widows. Are you serving in the church as a family, within the body, using your gifts to further Gods' kingdom? Is your tongue under control or is it being used as a tool in Satan's workshop. Jesus gave stern warning in Matthew 12: 36 -- **But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.**