

conduct. Of such persons the apostle remarks **She that liveth in pleasure** (“wanton pleasure,” NASB) **is dead while she liveth** (6). The implication is that the church is under no obligation to assume the support of any such worldly-minded widow.

These, then, are the guidelines Timothy must follow in determining the policy of the church in dispensing charity. **These things give in charge** (“command,” RSV), **that they may be blameless** (7). The pronoun **they** obviously refers to the widows who are maintained by the church. It is important that the church’s support be reserved for those truly worthy of it.¹

Before leaving the subject of family responsibility, Paul is constrained to add one further observation calculated to stigmatize anyone who neglects this fundamental duty. **But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel** (8) ... because even pagans, who do not know the Commandments or the law of Christ, recognize and set store by the obligations of children to parents.”

CONCERNING ELDER WIDOWS (I Timothy 5:9,10)

1. Name reasons why a widow would not be put on the “relief roll” or supported by the church?

1. Beacon Bible Commentary, volume 9, p. 605.

FIFTH STUDY

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

YOUTH SHOULD RESPECT AGE (I Timothy 5:1-2)

With the opening of c. 5, Paul launches into instructions of a more specific nature addressed particularly to Timothy as the pastor and leader of the entire church at Ephesus. Especially is the apostle concerned that Timothy get on happily and in a manner above reproach with all the age-groups under his charge. **Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father** (1). The church then as now was made up of men and women, both older and younger. The success of Timothy’s ministry and the well being of the church rested in large part upon the skill which he displayed in dealing with each of these classes. This was particularly important for a young pastor such as Timothy when problems arose involving senior members of the congregation. The admonition, **Rebuke not an elder**, does not relate to an ordained minister in the church, “not to ‘elders’ in the ecclesiastical (church) sense, but to the older men in the Christian community.”¹

The word rendered **rebuke** is a stronger one than this rather mild translation would suggest. The NEB renders it: “Never be harsh with an elder.” This is not to suggest that correction and

1. Beacon Bible Commentary, volume 9, p. 602.

discipline have no place in the work of a pastor.

It is this writer's opinion, that if the younger would listen to some of the elders in the church, at times it might be benefit to the youth. In a documentary, there was a discoverer in a country where are the glaciers. This reporter was asking one of the elders in that area what was the biggest problem she thought was in their country, and she said, "The youth do not listen to the elderly." It seems this is a problem in every country all over the world. The youth are taught to believe they have all the answers to the world's problems, but they fail to realize, the elders have the experience.

1. How does Paul say Timothy should entreat

(plead with or ask of):

(a) An elder man? (I Timothy 5:1) _____

(b) Elder women? (I Timothy 5:2) _____

(c) The younger women? (I Timothy 5:2) _____

In speaking of Timothy's relationship to the younger women, the apostle adds the significant phrase **with all purity**. Scott observes appropriately that the most delicate of all the revelations in which...[Timothy] was placed, as a spiritual adviser, is exquisitely touched on in a single word, which says everything." How many men over the centuries have ended their ministry in shame and

remorse because of their failure to heed this word!

¹
RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD DEPENDENT WIDOWS (I Timothy 5:3-16)

In the days of this writing, there was a great problem for the widows who had no family to care for them. Under the Roman rule the Christian widows has little opportunity for employment. Also there were no government social programs to care for those were to elderly to work.

The Church was to care for those widows who had no family members left to care for them.

The apostle recognizes that there are qualitative differences between persons in the category of **widow**, differences which bear on the church's obligation. **Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate** (one completely alone in the world), **trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day** (5). Here is described one who, not only because of her desolate widowhood, but because of her consistent and genuine devotion to Christ and His Church, is deserving of every consideration the church can bestow. But the apostle recognizes that not all widows are thus deserving. He acknowledges that there may be among some of the church's widows some who, far from setting their hopes upon Christ, are self-indulgent and even sensual in their attitudes and

1. Beacon Bible Commentary, volume 9, p. 603.