

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 293 – October 20th – 1 Timothy 5:1-25

Works frequently referenced in these notes on 1 & 2 Timothy

Mounce, William D

Word Biblical Commentary Vol 46: Pastoral Epistles, Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 2000

Verse 1

Πρεσβυτέρω μὴ ἐπιπλήξῃς, ἀλλὰ παρακάλει
ὡς πατέρα, νεωτέρους ὡς ἀδελφούς,

πρεσβυτερος, α, ον elder, old man/woman
ἐπιπλήξῃς Verb, aor act subj, 2 s ἐπιπλησσω
reprimand, rebuke

A strong term, occurring here only in the NT. Timothy's ministry is not to be characterised by harsh criticism or demand but by gentle yet persuasive encouragement. Mounce says that the instruction, 'do not rebuke but encourage' governs the whole of these two verses.

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge
πατηρ, πατρος m father

"The imagery of fellow believers as father, mother, brother and sister goes back to 1 Tim 3:15 where the church is described as a family." Mounce

νεωτερος, α, ον younger, young

I.e. younger than the older men. The age is not relative to Timothy. Paul writes concerning all categories of person within the church.

Verse 2

πρεσβυτέρας ὡς μητέρας, νεωτέρας ὡς
ἀδελφὰς ἐν πάσῃ ἀγνείᾳ.

μητέρας Noun, acc pl μητηρ
ἀδελφῆ, ης f sister, female believer
ἀγνεία, ας f moral purity, chastity

"To treat the younger women as sisters requires a careful examination of one's attitudes and a close watch on one's conduct as an example of ministerial integrity (cf. 1 Tim 4:12b)... Paul tells Titus that the day-to-day instruction of younger women should be carried out by the older women and not, it is implied, by Titus himself as a male minister (Titus 2:4)." Mounce.

Verse 3-16

"The implication of this passage is that the Ephesian church had committed itself to support some younger widows who, because of their age, idleness, and the Ephesian heresy, had turned against Christ and the church, were leaving the Christian faith, and were bringing reproach upon the church. To respond to this specific historical situation Paul tells Timothy that the church should enrol only those widows who meet two qualifications. (1) They must be truly alone, without any family for support. This includes being at least sixty years old and not contemplating remarriage. (2) They must be godly women. They must be the type of women who are committed to the Lord, having set their hope on him and constantly praying to him. Their past lives must show that they are faithful in marriage and busy at home."

Mounce.

The qualifications should not be seen as a rigid checklist – i.e. no support for 59 year olds – but as characteristics of the type of widow who should be supported. Moreover, it should be remembered that these strictures relate not to *ad hoc* care for those in immediate need but to entering into a commitment for long term support.

Verse 3

Χήρας τίμα τὰς ὄντως χήρας.

χήρα, ας f widow

"Care for widows plays an important role throughout the OT (Exod 22:22; Deut 10:18; 24:17, 19-21, 29; 24:17-21; 26:12-13; 27:19; Job 24:3; 29:13; Pss 68:5; 94:6; 146:9; Prov 15:25; Isa 1:17; Jer 7:6; 22:3; Mal 3:5; including levirate marriage [Deut 25:5-10]) and in early Christianity as reflected in the NT (Luke 2:37; Acts 6:1-6; 9:36,39,41; Jas 1:27)." Mounce

τιμαω honour, acknowledge the status of,
give financial aid to

Cf. v.17.

ὄντως really, certainly, indeed

"There is here a play upon words, for in the original the word *widow* means the one *bereaved, deprived* (of her husband; hence often without means of support). Hence, what the apostle is saying amounts to this, "As *deprived* ones, honour those who are really *deprived*" (or "As *destitute*, honour those who are really *destitute*")." Hendriksen

Verse 4

εἰ δὲ τις χήρα τέκνα ἢ ἔκγονα ἔχει,
μανθανέτωσαν πρῶτον τὸν ἴδιον οἶκον
εὐσεβεῖν καὶ ἀμοιβὰς ἀποδιδόναι τοῖς
προγόνοις, τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶν ἀπόδεκτον ἐνώπιον
τοῦ θεοῦ.

"The repeated δε, 'but' (vv 4,6,8,11), separates the widows into two groups: those widows for whom the church should care and those who should rely on other resources." Mounce.

τέκνον, ου n child; pl descendants
ἢ or
ἐκγονον, ου n grandchild
μανθάνω learn, find out
πρῶτον first, in the first place, first of
ἴδιος, α, ου one's own
οἶκος, ου m house, household, family
εὐσεβέω worship; τὸν ἴδιον οἶκον εὐ. carry
out one's religious duties towards one's
family

Christian conduct is to be exercised first in the home.

ἀμοιβή, ης f repayment
ἀποδιδόναι Verb, pres act infin ἀποδιδῶμι
give, give back, repay
προγονος, ου m or f parent, forefather
ἀποδεκτος, ου pleasing
ἐνώπιον prep with gen before, in the
presence of

Verse 5

ἡ δὲ ὄντως χήρα καὶ μεμονωμένη ἤλπιεν ἐπὶ
θεὸν καὶ προσμένει ταῖς δεήσεσιν καὶ ταῖς
προσευχαῖς νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας·

ὄντως see v.3
μεμονωμένη Verb, perf pass ptc, f nom s
μονοομαι be left alone

The perfect emphasises a permanent state.

ἐλπίζω hope, hope for, hope in

Again, the perfect describes a settled characteristic.

προσμένω remain faithful to, continue in
δεησις, εως f prayer, plea
προσευχη, ης f prayer
νύξ, νυκτος f night

Cf. the description of Anna in Lk 2:37.

Those destitute, whose only hope is in God's provision, are to receive that provision at the hands of the people of God.

Verse 6

ἡ δὲ σπαταλῶσα ζῶσα τέθνηκεν.

σπαταλαω live in self-indulgence, live in
luxury

Only here and in Jas 5:5 in NT. The idea here cannot be riches (since the widows in question are seeking support from the church). The meaning is a life of self-indulgence.

ζαω live, be alive
τέθνηκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s θνησκω
die; perf be dead

"These widows have lived not for God but for pleasure (σπαταλωσα is a constative aorist), and even though they are alive (ζωσα is a concessive participle), they in fact have died and continue in the finality of that state (τεθνηκεν is in the perfect tense). The perfect-tense τεθνηκεν, 'has died,' parallels the two perfect-tense verbs μεμονωμενη, 'has been left alone,' and ἠλπιεν, 'has hoped,' in the preceding verses, strengthening the contrast between the two types of widows." Mounce.

Verse 7

καὶ ταῦτα παράγγελλε, ἵνα ἀνεπίλημπτοι ᾦσιν·
παραγγελλω command, instruct
ἀνεπιλημπτος, ου above reproach

The teaching of the Christian minister is not to be confined to a narrow 'gospel' but is to include instruction on every aspect of godly living.

Guthrie thinks that the ᾦσιν includes both widows and families.

Verse 8

εἰ δὲ τις τῶν ἰδίων καὶ μάλιστα οικείων οὐ
προνοεῖ, τὴν πίστιν ἤρνηται καὶ ἔστιν ἀπίστου
χειρῶν.

μαλιστα especially
οικειος, ου m member of the household
προνοεω care for, take care of
πιστις, εως f faith, the Christian faith
ἤρνηται Verb, perf midd dep indic, 3 s
ἄρνεομαι deny, disown, renounce

You cannot follow Christ and live a life of self-interest. A lack of care for others, particularly one's own family, is a denial of the faith. Cf. Jesus' condemnation of those using the Jewish law of Corban (Mk 7:9-13) to avoid caring for parents.

ἀπιστος, ου unfaithful, unbelieving
χειρῶν, ου gen ονος worse

Even non-Christians generally acknowledge an obligation to look after their own.

Verse 9

Χήρα καταλεγέσθω μὴ ἔλαττον ἐτῶν ἐξήκοντα γεγонуῖα, ἐνὸς ἀνδρὸς γυνή.

χήρα, ας f see v.3

καταλεγέσθω Verb, pres pass imperat, 3 s
καταλεγω enroll, place on the list (for financial aid by the church)

ἐλαττον Adjective, nom/acc n s (variant spelling) ἔλασσων, ον (comp of μικρος) lesser, inferior, younger, less (than)

ἐτος, ος n year

ἐξήκοντα sixty

γεγонуῖα Verb, perf act ptc, f nom s γινομαι
εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one, single
ἀνηρ, ἀνδρος m man, husband
γυνή, αικος f woman, wife

The phrase here exactly corresponds with that used of the overseers in 3:2, as do some of the other phrases that follow. It is partly this comparison that has led some to see this enrolment as enlistment into service rather than simply agreement to offer financial support. Mounce resists this suggestion saying that "The central purpose of vv 3-16 is to differentiate between the widows who should be cared for and those who should not, rather than to specify duties."

Verse 10

ἐν ἔργοις καλοῖς μαρτυρουμένη, εἰ ἐτεκνοτρόφησεν, εἰ ἐξενδοδόχησεν, εἰ ἀγίων πόδας ἐνιψεν, εἰ θλιβομένοις ἐπήκεσεν, εἰ παντὶ ἔργῳ ἀγαθῷ ἐπηκολούθησεν.

καλος, η, ον good, right, proper, fine
μαρτυρεω bear witness; pass be well spoken of

"These good deeds are not duties that an enrolled widow must perform in the church but are the types of things that she must have done in the past that currently testify that she is a godly person. One would expect, however, that an enrolled widow would continue doing the same activities she had always done but now in direct service to the church." Mounce.

εἰ introduces examples.

τεκνοτροφεω bring up children
ξενοδοχεω show hospitality

Cf. 3:2.

ἀγιος, α, ον; οἱ ἅγιοι God's people
πόδας Noun, acc pl πους, ποδος m foot
νιπτω wash
θλιβω press hard; pass experience
difficulty/trouble
ἐπαρκεω assist, help, support

ἀγαθος, η, ον good, useful, fitting
ἐπακολουθεω follow; devote oneself to

Verse 11

νεωτέρας δὲ χήρας παραιτοῦ· ὅταν γὰρ καταστρηνιάσωσιν τοῦ Χριστοῦ, γαμεῖν θέλουσιν,

νεωτερος, α, ον younger, young
παραιτεομαι do not include

Hendriksen argues that it is difficult to reconcile this verse with the view that Paul's concern is only for a list of *supported* widows rather than those who will also carry out some work within the life of the church – the church would hardly refuse to support destitute young widows with small children. But Mounce says, "This does not mean that the church cannot aid younger widows; it means that they must not be enrolled into a formal, ongoing financial relationship with the church."

ὅταν when, whenever, as often as
καταστρηνιάσωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl
καταστρηνιαω be drawn away by one's own sensuous impulses
γαμεω marry
θελω wish, will

Verse 12

ἔχουσαι κρίμα ὅτι τὴν πρώτην πίστιν ἠθέτησαν·

ἔχουσαι Verb, pres act ptc, f nom pl ἔχω
κρίμα, τος n judgement, condemnation
πρωτος, η, ον first, leading, foremost, prominent, earlier
πιστις, εως f faith
ἠθέτησαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἄθετεω
reject, set aside

Some, such as Hendriksen, see the verse as speaking of widows who have made a special vow to remain single and to devote themselves to the work of the church. Mounce thinks this anachronistic (he includes an excursus on 'Widows in the Postapostolic Church'). He argues, "The most likely interpretation is that the widows were giving in to their sensual desires, turning against Christ, marrying non-Christians (... cf. 1 Cor 7:39), and abandoning their former faith, the Christian faith they had before they remarried... This interpretation alone explains the strong language of the verse. Simply wanting to remarry, even within the faith, or living a self-centred lifestyle, would not warrant the extreme language."

Verse 13

ἅμα δὲ καὶ ἀργαὶ μανθάνουσιν, περιερχόμεναι τὰς οἰκίας, οὐ μόνον δὲ ἀργαὶ ἀλλὰ καὶ φλύαροι καὶ περιέργοι, λαλοῦσαι τὰ μὴ δέοντα.

ἅμα at the same time, also
ἀργος, η, ον idle, unemployed
μανθανω learn, find out

A sarcastic use of μανθάνειν

περιερχομαι travel about (ptc itinerant)
οἰκία, ας f house, home, household
μονον adv. only, alone
φλυαρος, ον gossip
περιεργος, ον m busybody
λαλω speak, talk
δει impersonal verb should, ought

"The widows were not only discussing nonsense; they were talking about things that should not be discussed." Mounce.

Verses 14-16

Verses 14-16 conclude and reiterate Paul's argument.

Verse 14

βούλομαι οὖν νεωτέρας γαμεῖν, τεκνογονεῖν, οἰκοδεσποτεῖν, μηδεμίαν ἀφορμὴν διδόναι τῷ ἀντικειμένῳ λοιδορίας χάριν·

βουλομαι want, desire, wish
νεωτερος, α, ον see v.11
γαμew see v.11

There is an implicit condemnation of the Ephesian heresy that forbade marriage, cf. 4:3.

τεκνογονew have (bear) children
οἰκοδεσποτεw run the household

I.e. to be busy.

μηδεις, μηδεμια, μηδεν no one, nothing
ἀφορμη, ης f occasion, opportunity
ἀντικειμαι oppose, be against

The singular may suggest that Satan is intended.

λοιδορια, ας f cursing or speaking evil (of someone)

χαριν prep with gen for the sake of, reason (for)

Evidently the behaviour of some of the young widows was bringing reproach upon the church. "The picture it paints is of the enemy gaining a toehold in the church because of the widows' misconduct, and from this toehold making an attack upon the church." Mounce.

Verse 15

ἤδη γάρ τινες ἐξετράπησαν ὀπίσω τοῦ Σατανᾶ.
ἤδη adv now, already

ἐξετράπησαν Verb, aor pass dep indic, 3 pl
ἐκτρεπομαι wander, go astray
ὀπισω after, behind, follow
Σατανας, α the Adversary, Satan

Spicq thinks that the reference is to immoral conduct. Others suggest that it is a euphemism for acceptance of the demonic Ephesian heresy.

Verse 16

εἴ τις πιστὴ ἔχει χήρας, ἐπαρκείτω αὐταῖς, καὶ μὴ βαρεῖσθω ἢ ἐκκλησία, ἵνα ταῖς ὄντως χήραις ἐπαρκέσῃ.

πιστος, η, ον faithful, believing

πιστη has the superior attestation, being supported by κ A C F G P 048 *et al.* The words πιστος ἢ are inserted before it in D Ψ TR *et al.* Some MSS, mainly western texts, read simply πιστος.

Believing *women* who have a relative or friend who is a widow should seek to help them by offering a home, work or financial support as they are able.

χηρα, ας f widow

ἐπαρκεw assist, help, support

Cf. v.10.

βαρεῖσθω Verb, pres pass imperat, 3 s βαρεw
burden, weigh down
ὄντως χηραις see v.3

Verses 17-25

Mounce argues that the whole of this section is concerned with how Timothy deals with elders.

Verse 17

Οἱ καλῶς προεστῶτες πρεσβύτεροι διπλῆς τιμῆς ἀξιούσθωσαν, μάλιστα οἱ κοπιῶντες ἐν λόγῳ καὶ διδασκαλίᾳ·

προεστῶτες Verb, perf act ptc, m nom pl
προῖστημι be a leader, manage; care for

πρεσβυτερος, α, ον elder

διπλους, η, ουν double

τιμη, ης f honour, respect, price

They are not only worthy of respect they should *also* be paid for their work – hence 'double honour.' Cf. 1 Cor 9:4-6; Rom 13:7. There is considerable debate as to whether, in the context of the first century church, the reference is to a salary or an honorarium.

ἀξιούσθωσαν Verb, pres pass imperat, 3 pl
ἀξιωw consider worthy, make worthy
μαλιστα especially

Mounce says that it is possible to translate **μαλιστα** here as 'namely' so that the second phrase clarifies the first.

κοπιαω work, work hard, labour
διδασκαλια, ας f teaching, doctrine;
instruction

Verse 18

λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή· Βοῦν ἀλοῶντα οὐ φιμώσεις, καί· Ἄξιός ἐ ἐργάτης τοῦ μισθοῦ αὐτοῦ.

γραφη, ης f writing, Scripture
βους, βοος m ox
ἀλοαω thresh
φιμοω silence, put to silence, muzzle

Cf. Deut 25:4; 1 Cor 9:8-12. "In other words, it is part of God's design that Christian workers be paid for their work. While much of the problem in Ephesus has to do with the love of money, that does not negate the right of Christian workers to be paid." Mounce.

ἄξιος, α, ον worthy, deserving, fitting
ἐργατης, ου m labourer, workman
μισθος, ου m pay, wages, reward

Cf. Luke 10:7; Matt 10:10.

Verse 19

κατὰ πρεσβυτέρου κατηγορίαν μὴ παραδέχου, ἔκτος εἰ μὴ ἐπὶ δύο ἢ τριῶν μαρτύρων·

κατηγορια, ας charge, accusation
παραδεχομαι accept, receive, welcome
ἐκτος except; ii) conj ἔκτος εἰ μὴ **except, unless**

δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυσιν two
ἢ οἱ
τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three
μαρτυς, μαρτυρος dat pl μαρτυσιν m
witness

Cf. Deut 19:15; Matt 18:16; Jn 8:16; 2 Cor 13:1; Heb 10:28. This refers only to the normal practice concerning accusations against anyone. Paul mentions this case in particular because elders were more exposed to false criticism than other members of the congregation.

Verse 20

τοὺς ἀμαρτάνοντας ἐνώπιον πάντων ἔλεγγε, ἵνα καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ φόβον ἔχωσιν.

ἀμαρτανω sin, commit sin

Mounce translates 'confront those who persist in sinning ...'

ἐνωπιον prep with gen before, in the presence of
ἐλεγχω show (someone his) fault, rebuke

"The linear aspect of **ἐλεγγε**, 'confront,' parallels the linear aspect of **ἀμαρτανοντας**: Be in the habit of confronting those in the habit of sinning." Mounce. The word means "to show someone his sin and to summon him to repentance... It implies educative discipline." TDNT

λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining, other
φοβος, ου m fear

A public rebuke which will warn the other elders that they are accountable to the church as well as to God. "Paul is suggesting a twofold confrontation process. The first step is to accept an accusation only if there are two or three first-hand witnesses. This would supposedly be in private and include confrontation with the elder. If the accusation is valid and the sinning persists, then the elders should be confronted in public before the whole church so that the rest of the elders may fear, realising that they will be held accountable for their own actions by the church and God, and presumably so that the sinning elder will repent." Mounce.

Verse 21

διαμαρτύρομαι ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν ἀγγέλων, ἵνα ταῦτα φυλάξης χωρὶς προκρίματος, μηδὲν ποιῶν κατὰ πρόσκλησιν.

διαμαρτυρομαι declare solemnly and emphatically, charge
ἐνωπιον prep with gen before, in the presence of
ἐκλεκτος, η, ον chosen

"He wants Timothy *to obey* the all-important charge concerning the discipline of elders: that is, he wants him to resemble the angels *in obedience*." Hendriksen. Mounce says, "He may be calling to mind the final judgment and Timothy's accountability to God at that time."

φυλάξης Verb, aor act subj, 2 s **φυλασσω**
keep, guard, defend
χωρις without, apart from
προκριμα, τος n prejudice

A legal term for making up one's mind before hearing the facts.

μηδεις, μηδεμα, μηδεν see v.14
προσκλησις, εως f favoritism, partiality

Verse 22

χεῖρας ταχέως μηδενὶ ἐπιτίθει, μηδὲ κοινώνει ἀμαρτίαις ἀλλοτρίαις· σεαυτὸν ἀγνὸν τίθει.

χειρ, χειρος f hand, power

Cf. 4:14.

ταχεως adv. quickly, at once
ἐπιτιθημι place on, place, put

μηδε negative particle nor, and not, neither
κοινωνεω share, take part, contribute
ἀμαρτια, ας f sin
ἄλλοτριος, α, ον belonging to another

"Timothy should be slow to commission new elders because the sins of some take time to surface while others' good character may not be immediately obvious. Timothy should therefore be cautious in commissioning elders lest he become culpable for their later sins (cf. 2 John 11 for a similar idea of sharing another's sins)." Mounce.

σεαυτου, ης reflexive pronoun yourself
ἄγνος, η, ον pure, holy, innocent
τηρεω keep, observe, maintain

"Since there is some overlap between this verse and v 21, the notion of purity here is more the idea of keeping pure of any accusation of discrimination or partiality." Mounce.

Verse 23

μηκέτι ὑδροπότει, ἀλλὰ οἶνω ὀλίγω χρῶ δια
τὸν στόμαχον καὶ τὰς πυκνάς σου ἀσθενείας.

μηκετι no longer
ὑδροποτεω drink water
οἶνος, ου m wine
ὀλιγος, η, ον little, small
χρῶ Verb, pres midd/pass dep imperat, 2 s
χραομαι use, make use of
στομαχος, ου m stomach
πυκνος, η, ον frequent
ἀσθενεια, ας f weakness, illness

"Many recognise that it is a parenthetical, personal remark that Timothy is not to understand Paul's previous call to purity as an endorsement of Timothy's apparent decision to abstain totally from alcohol... Paul's opponents were drunkards, and to dissociate himself totally from them and their teaching, Timothy apparently had chosen to abstain to the point that it was hurting him physically. His abstinence was an example of not exercising his Christian liberty when it might damage another's faith (cf. 1 Cor 8:13; Rom 14:15, 21). While this was admirable, Paul did not want Timothy to think that the preceding statement was an endorsement of his decision to abstain, and in fact Paul thought that Timothy should change his habit and use a little wine because of his physical problems." Mounce.

Verse 24

Τινῶν ἀνθρώπων αἱ ἀμαρτίαι πρόδηλοί εἰσιν,
προάγουσαι εἰς κρίσιν, τισὶν δὲ καὶ
ἐπακολουθοῦσιν·

ἀμαρτια, ας f sin
προδηλος, ον very obvious or evident

προάγουσαι Verb, pres act ptc, f nom pl
προαγω intrans go before or ahead of

"The picture Paul creates is that of a person's sins as if they were a herald (Bernard's term...), going before and proclaiming a person to be a sinner and ineligible for the office of elder. εἰς, 'into,' indicates the result of the sins, that they lead to Timothy's and inevitably God's judgment." Mounce.

κρισις, εως f judgement, condemnation
ἐπακολουθεω follow, appear or come later

Timothy must be careful not to judge simply by external appearance or by first impressions. This is particularly true when it comes to the selection of those suitable for leadership in the church. The phrase "act in haste, repent at leisure" is apt and has been the sorry experience of many congregations.

Verse 25

ὡσαύτως καὶ τὰ ἔργα τὰ καλὰ πρόδηλα, καὶ τὰ
ἄλλως ἔχοντα κρυβῆναι οὐ δύνανται.

ὡσαντως adv in the same way, likewise
καλος, η, ον good, right, proper, fine
ἄλλως adv otherwise

τὰ ἄλλως ἔχοντα lit. 'the things having otherwise,' means 'those that are not.' Paul is speaking about good deeds that are not immediately visible yet which, like the sins mentioned in the previous verse, cannot remain hidden.

κρυβῆναι Verb, 2 aor pass infin κρυπτω
hide, conceal, cover
δυναμαι can, be capable of