

The Christian Widow

1 Timothy 5:3-16

Introduction:

In 1 Timothy is a description of a Christian woman who might be called the virtuous woman of the New Testament. Although this is the most complete description of a Christian woman found in Scriptures, we have overlooked her because we think of her only as a widow.

1. **The Widow's Lot** 5:3-4, 7-8, 16
 - a. Many good works accomplished before she was a widow.
 - b. Many not now single will probably be one day.
 - c. Widows in Biblical times faced a great desolation.
 - d. Caring for widows is a religious and moral duty-- ch.5
2. **The Widow's Friend** 5:5; Luke 2:36-38; 18:1-8
 - a. Loss of mate, companionship, security, confidence--
 - b. Her faith-- "set her hope on God" Alone but not forgotten.
 - c. Note prayers recorded by people "all alone" in Bible.
 - d. God made special provisions for widows under the old covenant -- Ex. 22:22-23; Deut. 14:28-29; 24:17-19.
 - e. Note New Testament concern: Acts 6:1; James 1:27
3. **The Widow's Life** 5:9-10; 2 Kings 4:1-7
 - a. "Added to the list" of those cared for by the church and who rendered special service for the church.
 - b. Her reputation had to be spotless, based on her morality and her good deeds. (2 Kings, Luke 2)
4. **The Widow's Love** 5:10; Ruth 1-4
 - a. Commended for having brought up children-- v.10b
 - b. Motherhood-- 1 Timothy 2:15; Proverbs 29:15
 - c. Parents don't expect to outlive their children--Gen.37:3
 - d. Rearing children (foster children -- Matthew 18:5)
5. **The Widow's Home** 5:10; Luke 4:25-26
 - a. Known for hospitality-- v.10c; 1 Peter 4:9
 - b. To accept and to give-- (Gen.18; Lk 10:1-12; 1 Cor.10:27)
6. **The Widow's Hands** 5:10; Ruth 1-4
 - a. Like virtuous woman of Proverbs 31 the Christian woman has busy hands-- v.10d; Acts 9:36-39
 - b. Not too proud for a menial task -- humble (not a religious rite, but done a hospitable service rendered in the home.)
 - c. Jesus corrected a Pharisee in this matter-- Luke 7:44.
7. **The Widow's Way** 5:10; 2 Sam. 21:1-13
 - a. "Relieved afflicted" --compassionate, caring -- Rom. 12:15;
 - b. Rizpah's love and action -- 2 Samuel 21
8. **The Widow's Walk** 5:10; Mark 12:41-44
 - a. Note her character was formed long before "widowhood."See: Christian Woman Magazine, Jan / Feb 1988



Walking Thru The Bible

1 TIMOTHY

AUTHOR:

In addition to all the letters in the New Testament that Paul wrote to various churches he wrote four to individuals. Two of these were written to Timothy, one to Titus, and one to Philemon.

First and Second Timothy and Titus are often referred to by denominational scholars as the **Pastoral Epistles** due to a common misconception of what a Pastor is. The denominational concept is that a Pastor is the preacher "in charge of the affairs of the local church." The New Testament does not teach this. In Acts 20:17-28 we learn that *bishops*, *elders*, and *pastors* are three different terms referring to the same group of men in the local church doing the same work. The preacher is not the pastor or shepherd of the flock, but the bishops (or elders) are. In New Testament days that was no distinction between bishops, elders and pastors.

Timothy and Titus were fellow-laborers with Paul in the work of preaching. Paul is now an aged, mature, experienced, apostle of Jesus Christ and he writes to these two young preachers to encourage and instruct them for the work they would need to continue to do.

DATE:

First Timothy was written after the events recorded in Acts took place. Following Paul's two year imprisonment at Rome mentioned in the last chapter of Acts it is believed that Paul was set free and enjoyed liberty for two or three years before being reimprisoned and finally executed about 66 or 67 AD.

The facts of these personal epistles of Paul indicate that Paul traveled to Crete and left Titus there (Titus 1:3), and left Timothy in Ephesus to carry on the work there. Paul traveled on to Miletus and Troas and into Macedonia.

In the course of this travel Paul wrote First Timothy from some place in Macedonia. He is subsequently arrested again, probably in Nicopolis. Conditions were changing rapidly. The Jews in Palestine were rebelling against Rome; Nero was laying the blame for the burning of Rome on the Christians; and persecution under Nero grew more sever each day.

During his imprisonment Paul was not allowed the freedom of a "house arrest" like his first imprisonment described in Acts 28. This time he was

confined to the Maritime dungeon, according to tradition, and after spending a lonely winter suffering from the cold he was beheaded upon the order of Nero. It was during this imprisonment he wrote 2 Timothy.

TIMOTHY:

Timothy was born in Lystra of a Greek father and a Jewish mother. He was reared in the Jewish faith and was taught the Scriptures by his mother and grandmother from early childhood (2 Tim. 3:15; 2 Tim. 1:5). Paul discovered him at Lystra (Acts 16:1-3). At this point in Paul's second missionary journey Timothy joined Paul and shared in his labors throughout the rest of his life.

Timothy was with Paul in his first imprisonment at Rome (Col. 1:1; Philemon 1). After Paul's release he evidently traveled with Paul as far as Ephesus and was left there to administer to the needs of the Church. While there, he received these two epistles from Paul that bear his name. Although Timothy is referred to as a young man, he is probably about 30 years old at the time he receives this epistle.

Whether Timothy was able to reach Rome in time to see Paul before his death is unknown. But in Paul's second letter to him he requests him to come and to bring his cloak and parchments (2 Timothy 4:11-21).

THE LETTER:

Paul had left Timothy at Ephesus. The church was faced with threat from various false doctrines. Paul had warned the elders of Ephesus of coming problems in Acts 20 several years earlier.

1. Paul warns Timothy and the church of a failure of faith and charges the young preacher to instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines (1:3). Some had made shipwreck of the faith, such as "Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan" says Paul (1:18-20).

2. How Christians ought to conduct themselves in the work and worship of the church is a second underlying thought in Second Timothy. He deals with congregational prayer and worship and how Christian women are to dress and behave themselves.

3. The earliest elders and deacons in the church had been appointed directly by men inspired by the Holy Spirit (Acts 14:23; 6:3,6; Acts 20:28) but now by inspiration of the Holy Spirit Paul gives written guidelines for the appointment of elders and deacons in chapter three.

4. Another general theme of the book is especially applicable to all who preach the Gospel and is found in First Timothy 3:16: "Take heed to thyself and to thy teaching." Paul exhorts Timothy concerning his attitude toward his work and his personal example. He was charged to "rebuke them that sin..." and flee any desire to be rich and "keep that which is committed to thy trust" (4:6-16; 5:20-22; 6:6-11,20).

An Outline of First Timothy

Introduction 1:1-2

I. SOUND DOCTRINE 1:3-20

1. Danger to sound doctrine 1:3-11

2. Example of sound doctrine 1:12-17

3. The preacher and sound doctrine 1:18-20

II. PUBLIC WORSHIP 2:1-15

1. Prayer 2:1-7

2. Men and women in worship 2:8-15

III. CHURCH OFFICERS 3:1-16

1. The elder 3:1-7

2. The deacon 3:8-13

3. Importance of instructions 3:14-16

IV. FALSE TEACHERS 4:1-16

1. Their coming 4:1-5

2. The preacher and false teachers 4:6-10

3. The true service of God 4:11-16

V. CARE OF MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH 5:1 - 6:2

1. Care of young and old 5:1-2

2. Care of widows 5:3-16

3. Care of elders 5:17-25

4. Care of slaves 6:1-2

VI. THE MINISTER HIMSELF 6:3-21a

1. Motives 6:3-10

2. Proper walk 6:11-16

3. Faithful ministry 6:17-21a

Conclusion 6:21b