

The Living Dead

“But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.”
I Timothy 5:6

Introduction:

1. If God sent His dear Son to fully secure everlasting life for us, surely we can live all-out for Him.
2. We live in the perilous times of the last days when most Christians think pleasure first, God second.
3. The Christian norm should not be set by carnal and compromising Christians but by God’s word.

THE CONTEXT (I Timothy 5:3-16)

- A. Let us take a very superficial review of these verses to gather our context for a lesson.
- 5:3 Widows indeed, those meeting Paul’s qualifications, are supported by the church.
 - 5:4 Widows with saved family are supported by them no matter her qualifications.
 - 5:5 A widow indeed has no family, trusts God, and serves like Anna (Luke 2:36-37).
 - 5:6 A widow that uses her single state for ease and pleasure is dead while she lives.
 - 5:7 Paul told Timothy to charge churches and widows to keep them from any blame.
 - 5:8 If a family refuses her support, they deny Christianity and are worse than pagans.
 - 5:9 The qualifications begin with age, for younger widows can marry or work jobs.
 - 5:10 The qualifications are various good works that prove her exceptional character.
 - 5:11 Widows under 60 should not be supported by the church for marriage will call.
 - 5:12 The damnation here is judgment for starting service to Christ and then quitting.
 - 5:13 Such young widows lacking the maturity of age will use church support for sins.
 - 5:14 The solution for young widows is to remarry and get busy with another family.
 - 5:15 Some young widows supported by the church had so left service for pleasures.
 - 5:16 A restatement of 5:4 to protect the church from supporting those with families.
- B. A few additional thoughts about widows will help the understanding of sober saints.
1. In the early, Spirit-filled church widows were supported by the church (Act 6:1-7).
 2. The widows in this number were expected to serve a church by continual prayer.
 3. Widows without family have a Judge and Keeper far better (Ps 68:5; Jer 49:11).
 4. A godly widow without cares of a husband or family can pray more (I Cor 7:34).
 5. Charity misapplied can be a great hindrance to true charity by consuming it evilly.
 6. God expects families to take care of their own, with widows being the objects here.
 7. God’s welfare rules are strict, because not everyone that wants charity deserves it.
 8. God’s welfare rules are wise to reward the exceptional and to protect the gospel.
 9. If Paul thought it better to be like him at 20, how much more at 60 (I Cor 7:6-9)!
 10. The church of Rome’s abominable doctrine does the very opposite of this passage.
 11. Idleness is a great curse and leads to other sins allowing reproach by adversaries.
 12. The severe language in these verses is the Spirit’s indictment of carnal Christians.
- C. Though there is much value in each verse, widows are not the topic for this sermon.

THE TEXT (I Timothy 5:6)

- A. The Holy Spirit by the sober apostle compares widows indeed with wanton widows.
1. A wanton widow is opposite her that dedicates herself to supplications and prayers.
 2. This is a widow whose desires are ease and pleasure, making her worthless to all.
 3. She uses her single status to be indolent and pursuing her comfort and enjoyment.
 4. This is not a criminal or sinful widow engaged in unlawful activities for her sex.
 5. This widow made a commitment of service and then reneged on it (5:6,11-13,15).
 6. God said: *“liveth in pleasure,” “dead while she liveth,” “wax wanton,” “against Christ,” “having damnation,” “cast off first faith,” “turn aside after Satan.”*
 7. Character is measureable by works. It does not matter what you think of yourself.
 8. A widow indeed’s character is humble service, faith, constant wrestling with God.
 9. Paul’s fear was about widows starting out to serve Christ and then seek the flesh.
 10. Waxing wanton and casting off first faith is reneging on a full-time commitment.
 11. You may see turning aside after Satan as visiting the witch of Endor, but it is less.
 12. You may think this language far too extreme and condemning, but it fits scripture.
- B. The language of “dead while she liveth” is what we must understand and measure by.
1. The prodigal’s father described his living son as having been dead (Luk 15:24,32).
 2. A brother that wanders into error is the death of a soul (James 5:19-20; Pro 21:16).
 3. Jesus rebuked the church in Sardis for presuming life while being dead (Rev 3:1).
 4. If baptized, you are risen with Christ, so your life should be heavenly (Col 3:1-4).
 5. Belly worshippers are living dead and enemies of the cross of Christ, and they are defined as those who mind earthly things (Phil 3:17-21). This is equally severe!
 6. Being carnally or spiritually minded shows condition, now and future (Rom 8:5-9).
 7. Was Paul dead or alive in the sense of fully committed to Christ (II Cor 5:13-15)?
 8. Was there any apostle that could approach this zealot in his service (I Cor 15:10)?
 9. Our religion, two duties, allows little else and brings great reward (Mark 8:34-37).
 10. A sold-out life for Christ is the only goal (Rom 12:1-2; I Cor 6:19-20; Tit 2:11-14).

THE APPLICATION

- A. Perilous times are when Christians are lovers of pleasures more than God (II Tim 3:4).
- B. Perilous times are Christians with a form of godliness without power (II Timothy 3:5).
- C. What should you do (Eph 5:14)? Awake thou that sleepest! Arise from the dead!
- D. We easily default to lethargy, slothfulness, forgetfulness, distraction, routine, and ruts.
1. Marriage shows this by the great passion of dating and less passionate thereafter.
 2. Business shows this by constant slipping of focus, organization, repair, zeal, etc.
 3. You cannot be content with spiritual condition or you are unlike Paul (Phil 3:8-15).
 4. What do you talk about? Job? Health? Politics? Weather? Why not Jesus Christ?
 5. How is your attendance? In actual count? In spirit? In preparation and prayer?
 6. How is your participation? How often do you volunteer for ways you can serve?

7. How is your zeal? Not zeal for health, exercise, school, or work? For Jesus Christ?
 8. How much do you love God by love for others (John 13:34-35; I John 4:12,20)?
 9. How are your vital signs of life? Love? Joy? Peace? Longsuffering? Gentleness?
 10. What are you using life for? If living for pleasure, you are the living dead to God.
 11. Will you make light of God's invitation to the marriage of His Son (Matt 22:5)?
 12. God has saved us; we must live different than the world (I The 5:4-11; I Pet 4:1-5).
- E. Jesus taught plainly to Ephesus ... remember ... repent ... do the first works (Re 2:5).
1. Recall haunting words to the wanton widow – damnation for casting off first faith!
 2. What is remembering (II Pet 1:9; Psalm 42:4; II Corinthians 13:5; Ps 139:23-24)?
 3. What is repentance (II Co 7:10-11)? It includes confessing (Job 34:31-32; I Jn 1:9).
 4. What are first works? (I Thes 1:9-10; Mat 6:33,24; 22:37-38; Jas 4:4; I Jn 2:15-17).
- F. Humble yourself to God, cast your care on Him, resist Satan (I Pet 5:6-9; Jas 4:6-10).
- G. Seek the Lord like Asa, with fervent purpose and zeal to find Him (II Chr 15:2,8-17).
- H. Beg God to turn you (Psalm 80:18-19; 119:25,37; 143:10-11; Jer 31:18; Lam 5:21).
- I. Make no provision for the flesh for sin (Rom 13:14; Matthew 5:29-30; I Cor 15:33).

For Further Study:

1. The sermon outline, "Belly Worshipers," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermons/practical/belly-worshippers-2/sermon.php>.
5. The sermon outline, "Spiritually Minded," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/spiritually-minded.pdf>.
4. The sermon outline, "He Deserves Better," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/he-deserves-better-than-that.pdf>.
2. The sermon outline, "Playing with Sin," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/playing-with-sin.pdf>.
6. The sermon outline, "Awake Thou Sleeper," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/awake-thou-that-sleepest.pdf>.
7. The sermon outline, "To Live Is Christ," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/to-live-is-christ.pdf>.
3. The sermon outline, "Sin Will Find You Out," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/be-sure-your-sin4.pdf>.