

Mother's Day Bucket List Of Things To Do

by James Jennings

This sermon focuses on the importance of living out God's design for women, emphasizing the roles of motherhood, hospitality, service to the church, care for those in distress, wise speech, support for relatives, and dedication to every good work. The speaker highlights the need for women to imitate Christ in their actions and to seek to honor God in all aspects of their lives.

Scripture: 1 Timothy 5:10, 1 Timothy 5:16, Proverbs 14:1, 1 Timothy 4:16, 1 Timothy 2:15, 1 Timothy 5:8, Titus 2:5, Amos 5:14

Topics: "God's Design for Women", "Imitating Christ in Daily Life"

Description

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Transcript

Go ahead, turn in your Bibles to 1 Timothy chapter 5. And I was again thinking on the way here, here, not here, but today is Mother's Day. And as you will see, my sermon hits on this topic. But I was thinking that, you know, Mother's Day is a time that many of you are grateful for the mother you have.

But some are sorrowing for the mother they've lost through death. Others are grieving for the mother they've yet to become, right? Infertility, that can be a hard trial. Then others are mourning for the mother they never even really got to know and they had no relationship with.

And so, it's important even on days like this, you know, when you're in the midst of joy and rejoicing for some personal blessing in your own life, to be reminded of others who are maybe in a more sensitive spot and suffering or grieving because of something that has happened in their own life. And so, just wanted to give that thought and let me pray. And then we'll look at 1 Timothy 5. So, let's pray.

Father, Lord, thank You for the love with which You've loved us. And Lord, we're thankful that we do have a Heavenly Father who's never failed us. Lord, in spite of all the trials we have in our earthly relationships, Lord, You've never failed.

And Lord, I thank You for sustaining different brethren in this church through the trials they've gone through. Lord, those who are widows, who You've sustained. Lord, You've been sustaining Connie for all

these years.

And Christina, Lord, You've sustained her. Father, You've sustained our brother Bob through the loss of his wife. And Lord Scott, Lord, is one of those here today.

Lord, who Mother's Day, Father, strengthen our brother. Lord, strengthen others. Lord, this can be a reminder of a person who's no longer there.

And Lord, we look to You to give us the comfort that You alone can give. And Lord, we're just reminded this is such a brief, brief life that we're living in. And it's all going to be said and done.

We're going to look back and all these pains, these relational pains, these losses. Lord, it's real right now. Lord, it really is.

But one day, all tears are going to be wiped away. And so we thank You for Your love for us. Pray that You'd use this sermon now to help, Lord, especially the sisters.

Pray this in Christ's name, Amen. 1 Timothy 5, let's start verse 3. 1 Timothy 5 verse 3, Honor widows who are truly widows, meaning they're genuinely a widow. They have no one they can look to.

But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household, to make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God. She who is truly a widow, left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. But she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives.

Verse 7, Command these things as well, so that they may be without reproach. But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than 60 years of age, having been the wife of one husband, and having a reputation for good works.

And we're going to look at specifically verse 10. If she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work. But refuse to enroll younger widows, for when their passions draw them away from Christ, they desire to marry.

And so incur condemnation for have abandoned their former faith or pledge. We can see from the context is what he's speaking about. Beside that, they learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not.

So I would have the younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander. For some have strayed away, some have already strayed after Satan. If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them.

Let the church not be burdened, so that it may care for those who are truly widows. Amen. Well, we're going to consider some of what Paul is dealing with in this section.

And we see that in the midst of dealing with what was some of the issues that were happening with younger widows. You see that in verse 13 and 14. There were some problems happening here at Ephesus.

They weren't keeping their commitment. They were being idle. They were saying things that they should not say.

Paul brings up characteristics for Timothy to look for in older widows when considering supporting them as a church. He gives these characteristics. What to look for in them? Qualifications.

So Paul believes Timothy should look for these categories of good works that we see right there in verse 10, to have been clearly exemplified, embodied, displayed throughout and over the life of a woman leading into her being a widow. He's saying you could look back prior to her being a widow and you see this, she displayed it in her life. And so Paul giving these qualifications to look for in women who are 60 years of age or older.

To me, this suggests that young women should presently seek after having the same reputation and conduct right now in the present that Paul believes they should have when they're 60. Right? I think that's a safe conclusion. So Paul is looking to a time in your life before you're 60 to see are these works evident in the woman? Are these qualities, these are all qualities you want to be said are true of you by the time you turn 60, just to use the age that Paul puts.

Do I have such a reputation? And these are qualifications you could say to have on your resume so that if you became a genuine widow, Paul would look at you and say, enroll that woman. Enroll her in this list to be supported by the church. He brings in qualifications right here.

This letter is full of qualifications, right? Elder qualifications, deacon qualifications. This isn't something we should shy away from. And so, my Mother's Day sermon to you sisters is one of calling you, whether married, whether young, I'm calling you to a way of life.

And it is a life, using Paul's words, devoted to good works. That's what he says right here at the end of verse 10. She has devoted herself to every good work.

He thinks about these women as women who are devoted to every good work and he gives specific works. And so, I've got seven categories of works to look at that Paul says are to be true of these women who they are going to support on this role. And so you could, here are two possible titles if you wanted to title this.

You could title it, the first one's a little rough, but it does drive home a point. You could title it this. Will the church at Ephesus enroll you when you turn 60? Right? I mean, you could gather that from the text, right? Now, you could also say it this way.

Bucket list of things for women to do on their way to 60. Right? The world says, I've got a bucket list. I want to get all these things done.

Are the things right here listed in verse 10, are they on your bucket list, sisters? For these things to be true, that you have a reputation of these realities in your life. And so if they're not, I hope afterwards they will all be right there on the bucket list that you have. And so, first, just a little on the context before we look at these seven things.

What makes someone a true, genuine widow? And if you look at the passage, I think it's just clear they have no children or grandchildren. They're really in need and they have no means of support. Right? Verse 4, if a woman has children or grandchildren, well, that implies she's not truly a widow.

There's something to do. But here you basically have people in a situation, women who are in a vulnerable situation, and they've got no one to genuinely care for them. And Paul expects who gets involved in caring for these women? The church.

The sauce. Paul expects that here. And in context, was there a welfare system happening back then? Did they have Social Security? Were they taking in some money after their husband had died from the Roman government? The church had to step up and support these women.

And we gather that from verse 16. He says, if any believing woman has relatives or widows, let her care for them. Let the church not be burdened.

Well, reverse that. There are people the church should be burdened for. And that to not have a burden for those individuals, true widows and true orphans, that is a sinful response from us if we are not burdened for them.

So we can assume here in 1 Timothy 5 that enrolling a woman on this list is her choosing to remain as a widow and serve the Lord in a specific way. And maybe her time, it was devoted to orphans, widows, the sick, teaching the younger women, right? We see in Titus 2, older women teach the younger women. Maybe these women, that was something they would give themselves to do.

But for Paul, it matters to consider their character, right? Did that already matter in chapter 3 for elders and deacons? Yeah, it did. It certainly matters who you're endorsing to sit on the couch of a younger sister and influence her. It certainly matters who you're endorsing to be in a pulpit and teaching the Word of God, right? Paul looks at positions that we put people in and he makes a big deal out of qualifications.

And he does that for widows who are going to be enrolled in a list to in some way be supported by and serve the church. You see how Paul thinks here. This is important to Paul.

It should be to us as well. So we also glean from this, Paul does not shy away from making judgments about people's character and their gifts. Paul says to honor true widows.

He even says this at the very next verse we didn't read. He mentions, let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor. I mean, he's using this term, they're showing this honor.

And one might cringe at the idea of certain honor being shown to one widow and not another. Or think of this. This seems to imply there were widows who even after 60 and had no one to care for them, they wouldn't have what happened to them.

Paul wouldn't say enroll them on the list. Ouch! I mean, actually, that category exists, right? And so you might cringe at that idea. But remember, in both situations, this is about helping the church prosper.

Even if the church does not add a widow to its list, by doing so, they're faithful to the women by showing them the importance of walking in Christian character. And they're protecting people by not putting unqualified individuals in positions they should not be in. And Paul is concerned about women, influencing women in the context of the church.

And he's saying these things, right? That's so we think about the context here of these words that Paul is stating. Now, I should state this, this passage in 1 Timothy 5, this is not some ecclesiastical order of nuns that is living in a monastery. Some would want to take this passage to teach that.

But if you stretch that to mean that, you miss the fact these women, first off, they were married, right? They're actually married. And secondly, they're serving in the context of a remote mountain in Tibet or in the local church in the midst of Ephesus, right? They're serving in the context of a church. Now, one other thought here in my introduction.

I'd also state this. If you plan throughout my sermon to condemn yourselves for how much you fail and are not living out verse 10, I want to give you one comfort right at the beginning because I realize in bringing out what Paul is bringing out, which does create introspection, all introspection is not wrong. All examining of self is not to be totally avoided, right? But I think Paul expects it takes time to grow into this type of woman, right? It's not just something that happens overnight.

And I get that because he even says here to refuse to enroll younger widows. And then he mentions some specific sins and things these women would tend to have problems. Burning with passion, desiring to be married, even after they made a vow to not be married.

Their speech, right? Idleness. Paul seems to have the idea that the older woman gets, the better control she has over the use of her time, the better control she has over the use of her speech. And the less the sexual and emotional desires for marriage are burning and creating a distraction in her life.

So there's something this woman is growing into these realities. And one of the failures in the young women is they reverse the pledge they made, right? Look at verse 12. He's saying in verse 11, refuse to enroll them and then they have this desire to marry and then they incur a condemnation for having abandoned their former faith.

This isn't, I don't believe this is meaning they abandoned the Christian faith, but they had a, they had in good faith, they made a pledge to remain as a widow and now they've gone back on that. And Paul looks at that, that's serious. And so Timothy appears to be told by Paul not to put young women on such a list because their passions for emotional and physical intimacy will tend to pull the younger widows away.

And it must have happened enough times to realize this is unwise. It was proving too difficult for them to keep this vow of widowhood. So conversely, you could say women 60 years and older to Paul didn't seem to experience this issue to the same degree.

They grew, the younger women are growing into this stability in their life. So for Paul, it's a big deal to not get someone to make a commitment that they don't follow through on, right? They incur condemnation for breaking the vow, not keeping their word. This is really strong language.

You don't want to see a sister get put in that spot. That was happening apparently. And so Paul is trying to protect these sisters from entering into something prematurely where they're just not at right now to be enrolled on this list.

And that's why, you know, the age, is it a literal age of 60? And would it take it, you know, down, you know, is that the idea? Or is it just generally there's this idea of a certain age where these characteristics are in the woman? So now I would make this comment now. This is still my introduction. I make this comment because what I could have just done by my statements is lower the bar, right? Well, there's time to grow, and that's true.

But in view of my comments, I would say this about whatever vulnerabilities you have, whatever vulnerabilities I've got, I would take us back right here above on my page to verse 12 of chapter 4, where

Paul says to the youth, what does he say to the youth? No one despises you for your youth, right? Whether you're a young man, whether you're a young woman, we should give no reason for people to look down on us. And so we should set big goals and high expectations, not just have a plan where, well, I'm going to see these characteristics by the time I get to a certain age. No, Lord, I want You to work in me right now, right here at my age and make these things a reality in my life.

So we should set higher standards for ourselves even in a young age. But the point I'm trying to make, I think Paul understands things take time for growth, right? There's a category of older women and then the younger women, and he keeps bringing out issues even in Titus 2 that the younger women are struggling with, that the older women need to teach them. So that implies there's a need for growth in their life.

So, don't be cast down. All right, so here my main thrust is these seven categories. She has a reputation for good works that we see in v. 10.

And if you look there, he says in v. 10, having a reputation for good works, and then right after that, the first one of these works is she has brought up children. And that starts a series of conditional clauses, requirements to the end of the verse, and it's bookended, if you look at the end of v. 10, by the statement, she has devoted herself to every good work. So, these statements provide specific examples and categories for her good works.

And I'm also going to include on my list two other items from the surrounding context, okay? So that's where we're at right now. We're thinking about mothers, and I'm calling mothers to a standard that the Bible calls mothers to. And that's what we're going to examine.

So, let me just briefly mention these seven things, and then we'll go on and consider them. So, number one, these seven categories. The first category, she has good works in the home.

We see that. She raised children. Number two, good works to the stranger.

We see that in that she practiced hospitality. We're going to look at that Greek word. It specifically targets strangers.

Three, good works to the church. She washed the feet of the saints. Fourth, the woman is to have good works to those who are in a trial.

She helped those in distress and difficult circumstances, right? We see that in v. 10. Number five, good works with her speech. 5.13, it says, young women were saying what they shouldn't say.

Well, this implies older women should say what should be said, right? They should use their speech to build up. Number six, good works towards older relatives. Verse 16, it talks about believing a woman who has relatives who are widows and her conduct towards them.

And number seven, she is to have good works to whoever, whenever, and whatever. And I get that from the phrase, she has devoted herself to every good work. She's not to be nitpicky about who to serve, when to serve, and how to serve, but every good work she is to be devoted to.

So good works in the home, towards the stranger, the church, to those in a trial, good works for their speech, good works towards their older relatives, and good works to whoever, whenever, whatever. So I see all that right there in v. 10, and in v. 9, and in v. 16. And again, I'm just explaining here what Paul is

setting forward.

And I think that's important because you could, again, you look at qualifications, it can feel a little burdensome, and you could almost feel like your eyes are getting off the Lord to some degree. But we've got to say what the Scriptures say. So Paul expects these seven areas of good works are to some degree true of the older women.

Because he says to look at their lives and say, did they have these realities in their life? If they did, enroll that sister over here. Support her as a church. Has she embodied, has she displayed this over her lifetime as a woman leading up to being a widow? Is that what we can say of her? Now, what's missing from the list here in v. 10? What's missing from the list? Let me mention at least two items.

Number one, good works to herself. That's missing from the list. It's interesting here, Paul, everything here deals with doing works to serve who? Others.

Now, that shouldn't surprise you when we're imitating the person of the Lord Jesus Christ who came to do what? To be served? No, to serve and to give His life is a ransom for many. That shouldn't surprise us when we get into the mind of Christ in Philippians 2 and He says, well, each of us look not only to his own interest, but also to the interest of others. So we shouldn't be shocked by that.

Now, I'm not saying abandon your Mother's Day plans to go to the hair salon and treat yourself and husbands. I don't mean now you've got to call off what you're going to cook for your wife tonight and you're going to shove her in front of the stove. That's not my point.

The point is, for men and women and all Christians, our lives are lived in the service of others. Romans 2, for those who are self-seeking, there will be wrath and fury. Well, the Christian is not a self-seeking person.

They're concerned about others' interests. Second thing missing from the list, it doesn't say supernatural works of the Spirit. Miraculous miracles.

It doesn't have that on the list. Isn't that kind of a bummer? I mean, you're looking at the widows they're going to enroll. Wouldn't you want to find one of the things in a woman's life is she raised the dead or she saw multiple healings? Well, everything on the list is honestly pretty commonplace.

There's so much linked to a woman's domestic duties. Now, I would take comfort in that. I would take great comfort in that for you sisters.

And as Ravenhill's wife said when asked if she prayed 10 hours a day like her husband, she said, someone's got to do the dishes, right? And so sisters, do not despise what the world or your relatives might say is commonplace. It's precious in God's eyes. It can't count how many sisters they've abandoned some... the world says this whole career, that's your main thing.

And then they start having children and they start pouring into those children. And the family just says, look, you wasted all this money. You wasted all this time.

Is that Paul's attitude here? Does he call that a waste? He looks at this woman by the time she's 16. He says, she raised children. And so, we must not give in to the carnal thinking of the world.

And so, Paul puts a great emphasis on living a life devoted to every good work. And when you think of Ephesians 2.10, the well-known verse that we are created in Christ Jesus beforehand with works He has prepared for us to do, well, what are those works? We see some of those works here in chapter 10. If your wife gets to the point where she says, I don't know what the will of God for my life is, honey.

I'm just struggling to know what God's will for my life is. Oh, well, you know, you want to have a good reputation. You want to bring up the children, show hospitality, wash the feet of the saints, care for the afflicted, devote yourself to every good work.

No, honey, I want something greater than that. I don't know. That seems pretty incredible right here, honey.

And you know, when I'm dead and maybe all the kids die and you're 60 and the church is looking to support you, this is what they're looking at. They're not looking at all these other things. So honey, don't minimize these things.

It's commonplace. They're not. So, is this part of my life? Do I have a reputation for this? I mean, he says that.

She used to have a reputation. We should worry about what is my reputation? What am I known for? What's my track record? Right, sisters? I mean, that is a concern. And I realize you can totally derail all of this and be like Martha and Luke 10 and you're just anxious and troubled and your motives are wrong and your heart's wrong.

And I would just make that statement here. Notice, none of these items necessarily focus on the fruits of the Spirit, but the very fruits of the Spirit that Craig has dealt with have to be present in the midst of you living out any of these works. Right? You're not going to have a good work of hospitality if the Spirit's power isn't helping you to overcome grumbling and you're grumbling there.

It's no longer a good work. Right? And if all you're doing as a parent is provoking your children by not keeping your word and following through and they just have no clear standard about what they can or can't do, that's not a good work because you're impatient. You're sinning towards those children.

It's only those led by the Spirit who are walking near to the Lord, not grieving Him, who will naturally do all the works that are hereby listed. Right? In one way, you don't have to put this list before a woman. These are great and helpful reminders.

In another way, you put Christ before the sister and she loves the Lord Jesus Christ and she sees Christ doing all of these things, and guess what she does? She goes and imitates her Savior. So, this is very much about looking to Christ even though it's not exactly what Paul says here, but it is. Look at verse 11.

For when their passions draw them away from Christ. That's an interesting verse. You'd say that in the midst of this.

They made this commitment to the Lord to be a widow, and now they've gone back on that, and he looks at that as being drawn away from Christ. You know what that tells me? This is all about a woman living for the Lord Jesus Christ. And so, Paul gives this list.

He calls Timothy to look for this to be true of these widows, and so we should also do the same and try to be more intentional in areas that we are lacking in. It doesn't matter your personality, your upbringing, what might not come naturally to you. These are things you want to say, Lord, help me to live these out.

And one other comment before we look at all seven. What about the man? Husband, what if you and I died and left our wife a widow? We'll say there's no children, or the children have died. Are these areas something we're seeking to lead her into and cultivate in her life? Or am I as the husband, hindering my wife from living out these characteristics and serving the saints in these ways because of some selfishness and laziness that I have as a husband? So that's something us men should ask ourselves.

Alright, let's look at these seven categories. Okay, we've got 10, 28. So, number one, good works in the home, raising children, loving her husband.

And verse 9 mentions she was the wife of one husband. That's why I add in there loving the husband. That clearly is a good work in the wife's life.

But then he goes on, he has that list right there. The first thing on the list is if she has brought up children. It's the first thing he puts on this list.

If she has brought up children. Now, a whole sermon could be dealt on this. And this is going to be my longest point here.

And hopefully it's not too long. I don't have time for the other points, so we better stop talking and get going here. But, so Paul says that she brought up children.

Now, first here notice this. Mothers bringing up children, Paul calls you doing that what? It's in a list describing what? Good works. Do you ever think about your parenting like that? It's a good work.

You think about someone evangelizing. Are they doing a good work? They're doing a good work. Guess what you're doing as a mother? A good work.

It's not just you're doing your duty. You're doing works that are pleasing to God. You understand? I think first that could be a helpful thing to think about here.

Now, what does Paul specifically mean? One lexicon says this phrase means to raise a child to maturity by providing for physical and emotional needs. To raise, to rear, to bring up. They're saying that's what this phrase is.

She's brought up children means. It's not just she had a child, but she's involved in the child's life to this point of maturity. And you see that with the elder qualifications, right? How does he manage his household? What's happening there? It's not just they have children, but what is the conduct of those children? And so most likely it seems this refers to her bringing up her own children.

But it could be a widow who could not even bear a child. And maybe they had experience in bringing up children like orphans, for example. Maybe that's part of it.

I honestly would want to ask Paul for a negative example. I'd want to say, Paul, what would a woman who did not bring up children look like? Give me that, Paul. What does that even look like? Does that mean they didn't even have children or they had children, but they didn't bring them up? Someone else brought them up? They weren't involved in the children's lives? Or does it mean they never even really matured?

And you're looking at the conduct of the children? So there's a lot of, to me, unanswered questions right here.

But what about widows who couldn't even bear children? And thus they don't have any children to provide for them in old age, yet one of the requirements to get on the list is that she had to have children to raise children. And now one of the very women who could really need to be supported because she could never have children at all and her husband died, is supposedly now she can't even be on the list? I don't think we want to take the list, though Paul mentions all of these things. And this could be wrong of me to assert this, but I'm going to try to prove this.

But I get the sense Paul's point here isn't to narrowly look at every one of these things in such a specific way, but he's looking at something broader in view of what is in the entire letter here. And so, you know, is Paul belittling those who suffer the trial of being childless or especially back then? I mean, obviously a lot of children died early on in childbirth. A lot of women died in childbirth.

But Paul expects most women, not all, 1 Corinthians 7, Paul talks about people not marrying, but most women will get married, have children, and then be directly involved in raising those children to the point of maturity. I think it's at least safe enough to say Paul has that expectation on women. That's going to happen for these widows that would have happened in their life.

So what's Paul getting at? In view of other statements Paul makes in this letter, I think the bigger issue he is getting at is Timothy enrolling a woman whose heart longs for God's standard of a model woman. And Paul's main way to illustrate, understandably, this standard is through motherhood. So he keeps bringing out this issue of motherhood.

Since most women, not all, but for most, this will be a true reality in their life. So he's obviously looking at it in a broader perspective here. Now, some are going to remain single.

Some will be childless. But he's not dealing with the exceptions. I think he's dealing with the majority rule.

I think that's what Paul is doing here. Okay, now where do I partly get this? What other verse comes to your mind from the same letter when you read this statement right here that we just did? If she's brought up children. What verse drops to your mind? Yeah, 1 Timothy 2.12. Look at this.

1 Timothy 2.11 Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. So that deals with conduct. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man.

Rather, she is to remain quiet. And then he goes on to appeal to creation. Not culture at Ephesus, but he appeals to creation for why he just stated what he did about women not exercising authority over men in the context of the church.

But then look at verse 15. Yet she will be saved through childbearing if they continue in faith, love, holiness, and self-control. She'll be saved through motherhood.

I mean, how do you take that and then take what we just read right here in this chapter? We've got these similar phrases. Childbearing and brought up children. Both referring to this idea of motherhood.

And we have this right here in the same letter. Now, I think there's one verse that's helped me to understand what Paul means. And I think if you read the verse, you might right away get it.

Right? And I'm going to try to explain this as clearly as I can. Hopefully you get it. I'm hoping you get it.

Because this has really helped me. Go to chapter 4. Again, he's getting at the majority rule here. He's looking at this area of motherhood.

You're going to be saved through childbearing. And you're looking for widows who have raised children. He says something similar about another class of people.

He talks about another class of people who will be saved if they maintain their role of their class. Right? They've got a role. If they maintain the role, they will be saved.

The woman has a role. If she maintains the role, she will be saved. Ultimately saved.

Ultimately persevere. And we find this in 1 Timothy 4.16. This class is not women. He's not saying women are going to be saved through childbearing.

He's actually taking a small class within Ephesus, that of preachers and teachers. Keep a close watch on yourselves and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by doing so, you will what? You will save both yourself and your hearers.

So I think the simple idea, Timothy, you have a role. If you don't persist in this, and you abandon sound doctrine, and you go into error, you will not ultimately be saved. It will lead you to your apostasy.

Women, you have a role. Continue in it. The role is not exercising authority over a man.

It is not teaching over the man. It is childbearing. And he summarizes it in this way by saying she'll be saved through childbearing if she continues in faith, love, holiness, and self-control.

She will be saved. You see, there's a continuing. Right? Each one of us in whatever sphere of life we're in as a Christian have certain things that the Bible, as a majority rule, there's going to be exceptions to the rule, but as a majority rule, the Lord's calling me to certain things.

He's calling the mother to certain things. And if they abandon that, and they give in to some distortion that's being taught from false teaching, Paul's saying that's going to lead them to somewhere they don't want to go. It's going to lead them to actually abandon the Lord ultimately in the end.

Because again, Jesus talks about those who endure to the end will be saved. Right? His point here is not past salvation. It's the final salvation.

Getting to the end. So if a woman abandons God's design, she won't endure. That is God's model role for a woman.

If you distort it with false teaching, Paul's saying, I'm afraid you're not going to make it. And so are men saved by sound doctrine? Yes and no. I mean, you abandon sound doctrine, that's not going to lead to your salvation.

But am I saved? Does the doctrine itself save me? No, it's Christ who saves me. Without the doctrine of the Christ, I will not be saved. Are women saved by having children? Must you have a child in order to be saved? No.

But if you reject the clear teaching of the Lord and what He's calling a woman to, and you say, you know what? These false teachers at Ephesus were on to something pretty good. Let's just reverse all our roles. Let's ignore what happened to Eve in the garden.

And I can go down this path, and there's going to be no consequence to it. I could ignore the model role of a woman, and I'm not going to be affected at all by it. And Paul says, no.

No, no, if you don't continue in faith and holiness, if you don't continue in striving after this model woman and not giving in to a distorted view, he says, you're not going to be saved. You're not going to make it. And so women who abandon this, and they become teachers over men, and some preachers who abandon good doctrine, Paul is saying they're both choosing to distort God's design, to distort good doctrine, and that path leads to a deadly, deadly end.

And if you remember the context of what false teaching was happening at Ephesus, 1 Timothy 4, 3, there were people there who were forbidding marriage. Forbidding marriage. And here Paul says a woman is saved through childbearing.

Something that happens in the context of marriage. But the false teachers are forbidding marriage. So what does that do? It pushes women from being in the realm they should be in to being in an outside realm with a wrong, distorted idea about what God's majority rule and what will most likely happen to the majority of women is.

It pushes them out of that. And as I've said from 1 Timothy 2, 12, it seems the false teachers were putting women in teaching roles over men. They weren't encouraging them in the primary role of motherhood.

They're saying you go teach over those men. Let's get women elders in the church. And this is taking the women away from her primary teaching and authority opportunity, which is being over her children in the home.

She goes from that primary authority and teaching opportunity over to here. So that's a big picture of what was happening at Ephesus, and I think that's what he's getting at here. In verse 10, this first good word, she's brought up children.

I think the more specific idea is you look and you see a woman who longed for God's design and what the majority rule is going to be for most women. They're going to be married and they're going to have children and they're going to love their husband and they're going to be faithful to serve the saints in this way. But at Ephesus, the picture of an ideal woman was being distorted.

And that was leading younger women astray. And the consequences of being led astray, he's saying ultimately can end in greater distortions of other things and lead to going to hell. Right? This is more major than I think we would even want to recognize.

And the same thing is happening in our culture today. And so Paul links here together that the women who fall away and abandon the faith, first, willfully abandon, despise, and turn from a God-given role. Just as I as a preacher can turn from my God-given role and I don't rightly divide the Word of God, I don't keep a close watch on my teaching.

And he says here, I won't be saved. Doesn't mean I lose my salvation. That means I get into greater and greater errors and I ultimately deny the faith I once said I believed and I proved to be false.

And 1 John 2.19 says, I go out because I was never of to begin. So does this teacher woman only experience His ultimate salvation as she has children? No. His point is childbearing is in the general scope of activities in which most Christian women should be involved.

And as they are involved in such, they remain faithful to the Lord. And all of this leads as they continue on it with self-control and holiness, all this leads to final salvation. In contrast to the women at Ephesus who abandoned and rejected the ideal model woman and they chose to abandon Christian values, just like the false teachers who did the same.

And Paul says those groups of people, they're drifting away into apostasy. Does that make sense? You guys get what I'm getting at here? You've got two different classes. A woman and a teacher.

Both can distort the truth of God. And he says in both cases, the man who gives up on the good doctrine, he's not going to be saved. Says the woman who gives up on this model role of a woman, that's the majority rule for the majority of women, abandons that.

That's not going to be well for her in the end. These are stark warnings not to distort God's design and doctrine and God's design in our roles as women and men. And our culture is full-on attacking this.

They're trying to encourage women to pursue everything apart from what we actually find in the Word of God. And obviously, there are exceptions to all of this. That's why I'm stressing this model thing.

But one thing to ask yourself, sisters, I mean, when you go to God's Word, can you actually say these very things? Yes, I've longed for these things. I mean, you look in the Old Testament even, and I realize they're trying to have a physical line for the Messiah. And there's this expectation all these women had that maybe the very child they had would come to become that very child.

But women were greatly longing for children. So, this is the first category of works. I think it's a broader idea than just she's raising children and bearing children, but she's seeking to exemplify motherhood as a desirable life commitment.

Did her children call her blessed? Did they reach maturity through her endeavors? Because if you're going to support that woman and she's going to be involved in other women in the church, that's exactly the idea you want her conveying to those women. The value of these things that God has designed. And so, happy Mother's Day for you mothers.

Being a mother is a glorious privilege. You're being devoted to good work. It's good.

And you're doing that which a lot of the world is not promoting. You're going against the flow. Praise God for that.

Don't be discouraged. Don't look at being a mother as some commonplace thing. It's not.

What God designs is not commonplace. If I get a position at a company and the CEO gives me a position, and I might think, well, this is a lame position. Why'd He put me here? The CEO here is God.

It's not Elon Musk. It's the Lord. And He says, this is a beautiful thing.

This is a great thing. This is a good thing. And so we've got to fight against a world that is totally opposing these realities.

Alright, what do we got? Okay, ten minutes. Let's ram through the rest of these. Second, good works to the stranger.

Practiced hospitality. In the NAS, it renders it if she's shown hospitality to strangers. This is the only time that Greek word is used.

And when it gives it as an elder qualification, I think the emphasis is on us elders having you all over the body. Obviously, strangers too. But here, it's specifically rendered she shows hospitality to strangers.

The emphasis is the wife is ready to engage in serving strangers through hospitality. You know, there's new people in the church. She's not just hanging out with this group that she's comfortable with, but she's engaging with people she has no idea who they are, no idea how the kids are going to wreck the house, or maybe the kids are going to build something in your backyard that your kids are going to love for the next 20 years.

I mean, you don't know what's going to happen, but you're not concerned about that. You're seeking to love the stranger because Christ has loved the stranger. And it seems here from what Paul says here that she has shown hospitality seems to indicate that the woman was involved in coordinating and initiating all of this to happen.

Seems like that's part of what he's saying here. And so, women, are you seeking to share what you value most? Family, home, finances, food, privacy as Alexander Strauch said. To do so with strangers.

That's a good thing in God's eyes. A third category of works for a woman to seek to have in her life is good works towards the church. He says right here in verse 10, she's washed the feet of who? The saints.

That's just a Christian. It's the set-apart ones. And I think literally, he's hitting on what it meant back then.

You'd wash the feet of the saints. But when you literally washed the feet of the saints, what type of act was the woman doing? She was doing a very humble thing. Very humble thing.

She wasn't too proud or full of herself to even render the most humble services to the saints. Because she saw, as much as I do to that person, I'm doing unto Christ. And Christ shed His blood to die for that person.

She just gets on the ground and cleans the person's feet off. And you're thinking, oh, don't do that. You're 50 years old and you've got all these children.

You shouldn't be doing such a humble act. And Paul says, no, that is good for her to be doing that. That's imitating Christ.

The kids and I were watching a construction video the other day, and this company was at some million-dollar company's offices, and they're shooting a video, and behind them, a guy was on the ground cleaning the floor for some competition they're about to have. And they found out the guy was the CEO of the company. And the one guy made a comment to his boss.

He said, yeah, man, you should really learn something from that guy over there. Well, yeah, we should really learn something from the King of Glory who's seated on His throne and how He lived His life. Amen.

We should. Am I willing to serve? Even in the most humble of ways. You don't get any idea here of some... Even if the woman is rich.

Because there are those who are rich who are to be rich in good works. But you get the idea, even in the midst of all her riches, she's willing to do the most humble of tasks. It's not this movie character of the rich, snobby person who's just stepping on everyone else's toes.

Fourth, good works to those in a trial. We see that here. She helped those who were afflicted.

She cared for the afflicted. She cared for those who are in distress. Might have been financial means.

Might have been encouraging them. Might have been praying for them as verse 5 says. That widow is praying for God.

But this woman has the discernment to recognize people in the church who are in a distress. And her goal to get in the conversation with them is to help to encourage them. And she's got the self-control while encouraging them to not engage in any gossip or being a busybody.

She's able to refrain from asking certain things that she realizes wouldn't be appropriate to ask and are none of her business. And at the same time, she's able to approach it in a crafty way. Not a crafty way, a strategic way to encourage the woman.

So that's the fourth thing. Good works to those in a trial. Women are looking for that.

Looking for those in a distress. Seeking to care for them. It's not just about me and my distress.

I'm looking for others. That was number four. Number five, good works with their speech.

And we saw that in 5.13. The young women were saying what shouldn't be said. That implies the godly woman should say what should be said. And also mentions they didn't manage their time well.

Sisters, we all know it. I mean, it's been said multiple times. Your speech can greatly help build up, but where gossip exists or slander exists, it will absolutely destroy.

So we need the Lord's help there. Proverbs 14.1 The wisest of women builds her house, but folly with her own hands tears it down. And you think of the house, the home.

That's true. The same thing could be applied in the church, right? Any of us could be... We want to be the wise people seeking to build up the body, but we don't want to be the one who with folly, with our own hands, actually tears down the body. And Paul, clearly that could happen right here.

He talks about the women being gossip, busybodies saying what they should not say. And even in Titus 2, he says, older women are not to be slanderers. And so women, that's an area to pray.

Lord, guard the door of my lips. Lord, help me to grow in this area with my tongue. 6. Good works towards older relatives.

This believing woman has relatives who are widows. And verse 4 even mentions making a return to their parents. But here, just notice this.

We don't have a lot of time, but notice a connection I never saw. Verse 16, If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them. Let the church not be burdened.

So you've got a believing woman who has relatives who are widows, and the woman is to seek to care for them. But you know what? I often never thought of that. Guess what other verse is in context here? It's verse 8. If anyone does not provide for his, and if you look at the his and relatives, oh, he's talking to the men alone, especially from members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse off than an unbeliever.

So we tend to just look at that and say, oh, he must be talking about men. Well, in context here, he's dealing with the widows. He's dealing with the women here.

And so, if you look at verse 16, if any believing woman has relatives who are widows, pure and undefiled religion is to love the widow and the orphan, and she refuses to love the widow, I would say you could take her to verse 8 and say, sister, if you do not provide for your relatives here, you're denying the faith and you're worse off than an unbeliever. You tend to think of that as men who don't provide for their families. Brethren, in context here, this could also be applied to a woman who is refusing to show help towards even here specifically widows.

Specifically widows. And so, Paul's saying look for women who have actually had care for their own relatives and then the church is willing to step up and care for them. Number seven, good works to whoever, whenever, whatever.

And my point was that's at the end of verse 10 when he says she has devoted herself to every good work. Every. Meaning this list he gives here, it's not some exhaustive list.

Is there anyone who you're not willing because who they were? You're not willing to serve them because who they were. Is there any when? Well, it just isn't the right time. Is there any what? Well, I know that's what you wanted me to do.

I think I'll pass. Is that the idea you get about the woman here? You get the idea the woman is devoted to every good work. She's willing to wash people's feet.

She's willing to care for the relatives. She's willing to pour her guts out for all these people. Her wallet out.

Her finances out. So brethren, I think these are really seven commendable realities that you sisters should continue to pray, Lord, make this real in my life. Make this true of me that my reputation is these things in my life.

That I have good works in the home to raising my children. I have good works to the stranger. I have good works to the church washing the feet of the saints.

I have good works to those in distress. I have good works with my speech. I have good works towards the relatives.

I have good works to whoever, whenever, whatever. And you're not just focusing on, like Martha, doing. Your eyes are on Christ because every one of these things is simply imitating the Savior.

Just imitating Christ. And there is a lot at stake here because verse 14, he says, we could give the adversary occasion to slander us if these things aren't true in our lives. Same thing in Titus 2. If women do

not submit to their own husbands, it says the Word of God ends up being reviled.

So a couple of final thoughts because we've got a couple more minutes. That was one of the final thoughts. What's at stake here? The second, Paul wants us to invest our time and care for those who truly need it.

We see that in 5.16. The church should not be burdened, right? Except for those who are truly in need. What this means is it's possible to be burdened by something you should not be. And so I would say, husbands, maybe your wife is being truly taken advantage of in some area where there's not truly a need and you need to get her to stop investing her time in that.

Or maybe it's the opposite and she's wasting time in another area where there is someone that could be served in a specific way. A third thing here. A final thought.

Verse 4 is really for all of us in some way. But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household. To make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God.

Is that something? Jeff brought this up multiple times in the last few years. Some of the times he feels like people don't honor their parents. And maybe I've not seen all of that and how it manifests itself.

But brethren, we realize the Bible says you'll hate your own father and mother and yes, even your own life or you can't be my disciple. But the Bible also says honor your father and mother. And that might be an area we more lack in in the midst of radically following the Lord Jesus Christ.

Husbands, are you helping guide and lead your wife to blossom in these areas? Are you giving an encouraging word to her or tearing her down? Are you being nitpicky and critical on these seven things? Are you seeking to build her up and give her opportunity to flourish and encouraging her when she says, hey, that person's afflicted and they're suffering. Can I go over and visit them? Yeah, honey, I think that's a good idea. You can say that or you can say, honey, man, I've been at work all day and I really just want you to stay and watch multiple movies with me or I don't know.

It's probably an exaggeration. But you get the point. There's a time the husband's got to die to sell for the woman to go serve someone else in the church.

And there's a time the woman needs to say no to the service to not neglect her own family. I leave you to figure out which one it is in each situation you face. To the widows, remember, you're not left all alone.

He says in 5.5, set your hope on God and continue on. And lastly, to the church, even though there is a social security and there are welfare programs like never before, don't forget God's heart is for us to love the widow and the orphan. And Bill Mounce mentioned his wife and him attended Simpson College in San Francisco.

When they decided to move their campus to Reading, a Chinese church purchased their property. They purchased a Bible college. I was surprised to see a church buy buildings with so many dorm rooms.

Then I learned that they wanted to actually obey 1 Timothy 5 and care for their widows who were godly and truly alone. Isn't that something? And I know even Steve Helms mentioned to me years ago, his own burden for missionaries who labor on the field for decades, then they come home. What happens to them?

I mean, there's a place for a church to buy an apartment complex, to put widows in there, to put missionaries who come off the field and they don't have some social security coming in.

They've been serving over there and sacrificing for the kingdom. Are we caring for those sort of individuals? And so this Chinese church was willing to buy a Bible college and create dorm rooms for widows to support them, to live them out. This again is one of the things, loving the widow.

I think in our culture where so many people have social security and all these things coming in, you feel like we have no responsibility. But brethren, there might be more responsibility than we realize. Alright, well, sisters, I hope this was encouraging and challenging to you.

But may the Lord give you strength. The only way you will live out any of these, the only way I as a husband will help my wife continue to seek to manifest these things in her own life is by the power of the Spirit of God. And that goes all the way back to the messages we've been hearing from Craig lately.

You know, it says there, save through childbearing if she continues in holiness. And it says self-control. Well, how do we have self-control? These are characteristics of God.

Just like everything in this list is manifesting who Christ is. It's showing who Christ is to the world. And then when they slander us, it can't stick, because they see these people are living out their religion.

Father, Lord, thank You for our time. And I thank You for all the mothers. And Lord, as I mentioned right at the start, Father, there are some here today, Lord, they're rejoicing in the mother they have.

There's others who are sorrowing for the mother they've lost. There's others who are in sorrow for the mother they have not yet become. And there are others who are sorrowing for the mother they never really got to know.

And Lord, I just pray You'd comfort each and every one of these people where they're at. And Father, I pray You'd keep us as a church in these areas. Lord, help the sisters to excel in these general categories we looked at.

Father, they're right here in the Word. Lord, at times we just so, I don't know, Father, afraid of maybe even a list like this here and examining our life. But Lord, Paul got to a point where they're saying, is this your reputation? And so, Lord, we want to even do that today.

Lord, how can we grow in certain areas and have a greater reputation for certain works as individuals, as a church? And Lord, do help us to be those who love the widow. Lord, what a person who's in maybe the most helpless situation or apart from a young child and an orphan. And we just pray, give us the grace to love as Christ is loved.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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