

The Spiritual Powerhouses Of The Church

1 Timothy 5:5-10

Introduction:

1. You hear about the virtuous woman of Proverbs 31 all the time. But how often have you heard about the virtuous woman of 1 Timothy 5? Probably not very often!
2. Yet, the passage before us does an incredible job of laying out a wonderful description of the actions and priorities of a godly woman in this time period of grace today.
3. This passage is written in the context of Paul's discussion with Timothy about how widows in the church should be cared for.
4. Their children should provide for them in their golden years. vs. 4, 8
5. If their children will not do this, and they have no other family to provide for them, the church should step in and help to provide those basic necessities of life. vs. 3
6. Paul sets a basic parameter of 60 years old as a minimum, if a widow is to be considered for help from the church. vs. 9
7. But Paul also clearly states that age and need is not the only prerequisite. A woman's spiritual character is also of utmost importance, if the church is to help financially.
8. It is in this context that Paul reveals to us (under inspiration of the Holy Spirit) the actions and attitudes of a godly senior lady saint.
9. Without a doubt, godly senior lady saints (specifically widows) are the spiritual powerhouses of the church. Many times they give themselves completely over to the Lord, and they become the spiritual backbone of the church. Why is this? They have the time, wisdom, and desire to serve the Lord by serving others.
10. Let's lay out a biblical profile of this type of woman. Every lady (no matter what age or marital status) should seek to exemplify these spiritual characteristics. That way, when you get to be a senior saint, you can have this godly testimony.

First, she seeks the Lord more than personal pleasure. vs. 5-6

1. Notice verse 5. Many times, some of the most powerful prayer ministries in the church will come from your widows. They remind me of the widow lady, Anna. Luke 2:36-37
2. They are intercessory prayer warriors. A godly senior lady is such a blessing to the local church, but an ungodly senior lady can be a great problem, by demanding attention, complaining about the younger people, spreading gossip throughout the church, etc.
3. Did you notice the contrast between verses 5-6? One lives to seek God (vs. 5); the other lives to please herself (vs. 6). She lives for personal pleasure. A woman who is stuck on herself is like a porcupine. She is prickly and rather difficult to be around.

4. When a lady's spouse dies, there is no guarantee that she will automatically draw closer to God. Some will get angry with God and pull away from Him. Others try to fill that void of personal loss with worldly pleasure, rather than godly things.
5. But, oh, the blessing of the "*widow indeed*" in verse 5. She is praying night and day for her church, her pastors, the people she knows, etc. She is a spiritual powerhouse for the Lord!

Second, she is faithful in her commitments. vs. 9

1. Notice that Paul instructed the church to help desolate widows, provided they had been faithful in their marriage commitments. When she was married, she demonstrated herself to be a faithful wife to one man – her husband.
2. Faithfulness is so crucial in the Christian life. 1 Corinthians 4:2
3. Today, the world makes light of the word "commitment." If you aren't "happy" in your marriage, dispose of it. The world says to a widowed or divorced person, "You are free! Enjoy your freedom. Live it up. Have fun. Live for fleshly pleasure."
4. But a godly lady has the exact opposite attitude. Her commitments to marriage, family, church, and the Lord are extremely serious to her. Thank God for senior lady saints who desire to finish strong for the Lord!

Third, she has a testimony of good works. vs. 10a

1. In verse 10, "*Well reported of*" means "to be a witness."
2. This godly senior lady saint has quite a testimony. She is known for her good works. **Illustration:** Dorcas (Acts 9:36-41)
3. Notice how her good works are mentioned at the beginning and end of this verse. At the end it says, "*...if she have diligently followed every good work.*"
 - The idea is that her life is consumed with serving God. It isn't that she doesn't do other things, but she is preoccupied with the things of God.
4. The Bible has so much to say about good works. Good works certainly cannot save your soul from eternal judgment. Only Christ can save sinners and give them life. No amount of good works you do can ever bring you eternal life.
5. But after a person is saved, good works should follow. Ephesians 2:8-10
6. Before salvation, we did works that brought forth fruit unto shame and death (Romans 6:21). Once saved, God desires that we be fruitful unto good works.
7. A virtuous woman is full of good works, and it is such a testimony. Proverbs 31:31 exclaims about the virtuous woman, "*Give her of the **fruit** of her hands, and let her own **works** praise her in the gates.*"

Fourth, she demonstrates a true love for people. vs. 10

1. In verse 10, Paul lists some of the good works of godly widows. But again, ladies, how did they get this testimony? A testimony doesn't occur overnight. A testimony is built up over time. So these widow ladies had been known for these attributes all their lives.

- “...*brought up children*” – This could mean her own children, but the text seems to indicate that the widows being discussed did not have their own flesh-and-blood children. Most likely, this is speaking of kids that she took in that had no parents.
 - “...*lodged strangers... washed the saint’s feet...*” – Both of these speak of hospitality. She is a gracious, kind, humble, hospitable woman. She doesn’t live to make her life easier; she lives to meet the needs of others.
 - “...*relieved the afflicted...*” – This could cover many different kinds of ministries to needy people: feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, encouraging those who are in bereavement, etc.
2. Notice that all of these things revolve around others and helping others. This lady that Paul is describing definitely understands the proper priorities of the Christian life: God first, others second, self last. This is a life that has high impact.

In Conclusion:

1. Every pastor gives thanks for women in the church who serve and help to meet the physical and spiritual needs of other believers in the flock of God.
2. There is no way to place a value on these godly, senior lady saints who faithfully pray and bombard God’s throne in intercessions. They serve and are constantly caring for people by visiting, writing cards of encouragement, serving in ministries, etc.
3. Do you know what they are? They are the spiritual powerhouses of God’s church. They are the church’s secret weapon against Satan and his evil plans. They typically aren’t in the limelight, and they aren’t flamboyant, but they are faithful and they are powerful.
4. What would the church be without them?