

Let Not The Church Be Burdened

1 Timothy 5:3-16

Let Not The Church Be Burdened

- The church belongs to the Lord who purchased it with his blood – **Acts 20:28**
- The church has been planned by God before times eternal and displays His divine wisdom. **Ephesians 3:8-12**
 - The wisdom of God is to be seen through the church in its' mission, purpose, design and duration.
 - Can man alter the simple plan God has always had for the church?

Let Not The Church Be Burdened

- **The fact is – The Scriptures teach that the Lord's church can be burdened.**
 - **1 Timothy 5:16**; *"If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, let her assist them, and **let not the church be burdened**, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed."*
 - **"Burden" is from a Greek word which meant "to weigh down."**
See 2 Corinthians 1:8

1 Timothy 5:16

- What **this passage teaches us is:**
 - **First:**
 - Regarding "assistance" for widows, there is a **divinely drawn line of responsibility for the Lord's church**, that is, the collective group of God's saints who regularly assemble in a given location.

1 Timothy 5:16

- Those widows for whom **"the church" is responsible**, are those who:
 - **Do not have family who bear the responsibility** – (verse 5)
 - Have their **"fixed hope on God"** and are **devoted in prayer** (verse 5)
 - Not given to **"wanton pleasure"** (verse 6)
 - **60 years old & the "wife of one man"** (verse 9)

1 Timothy 5:16

- Those widows for whom **"the church" is responsible**, are those who:
 - "having a reputation for **good works**; and if she has **brought up children**, if she has shown **hospitality to strangers**, if she has **washed the saints' feet**, if she has **assisted those in distress**, and if she has **devoted herself to every good work"** (verse 10)

1 Timothy 5:16

- What **this passage teaches** us is:
 - Second:
 - Charging the Lord's church with the burden of assisting those who are NOT "widows indeed" will hinder it's ability to fulfill the work it is charged with doing.
 - "...let not the church be burdened, **so that it may assist those who are widows indeed.**"

1 Timothy 5:16

The principal here is that **when the church undertakes more than God directed, it takes away from its' ability & effectiveness** to do the work God said it should do.

1 Timothy 5:16

- What **this passage teaches** us is:
 - **Third:**
 - To burden the church is to **shirk personal obligations we individually bear.**

Verses 4, 16 – Families are 1st responsible
Verse 8 – We are to provide for our own

Consider Galatians 6:5; James 1:27

1 Timothy 5:16

- What **this passage teaches** us is:
 - Fourth:
 - **The purity and glory of the Church** is compromised when man burdens the bride of Christ with work that the Head of the Church and the Savior of the body did not place upon her. **Ephesians 5:25-26**
 - **Purity of the church must be maintained in regards to:**
 - Work, organization, standards

What is the work of the church?

- **Preaching the gospel** –
 - **1 Thessalonians 1:6-8**; "... the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you ..."
 - **Acts 11:21-24**; "... the church at Jerusalem...sent Barnabas off to Antioch ..."
 - **Philippians 1:5-7; 4:15**; "... in view of your participation in the gospel ..." "... at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone ..."

What is the work of the church?

- **Edify the saints** –
 - **1 Corinthians 14:26**; "... let all things be done for edification ..."
 - Edification will not come from fleshly pursuits but rather by a focus on a diet of the word of God. **Acts 20:29-32**
 - The church is described as "**the pillar and support of truth**" (**1 Timothy 3:15**)
 - **Ephesians 4:11-12**; "... the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ ..."

What is the work of the church?

- **Relief of needy saints-**
 - **1 Corinthians 16:1-2** – “Now concerning the collection for the saints...On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper,”
 - **2 Corinthians 8 & 9** – “to the saints” (**8:4; 9:1; 9:12; Romans 15:25, 26, 31**)
 - Our originating text of **1 Timothy 5:16**

What is the organization of the church?

- The scriptures simply speak of Christ as THE head of THE church. Ephesians 1:22; 5:23
- Within the local church, all the scriptures speak of are “overseers (elders), deacons and saints” **Philippians 1:1**
 - **Elders or overseers** - responsibility to “shepherd” & “exercise oversight” to those brethren which are “among you.”
 - **1 Peter 5:2**

What is the organization of the church?

- What about?
 - Missionary societies
 - Sponsoring churches
 - Boards and counsels
 - Hierarchical structures

All of these burden the Lord’s church and restrict its’ ability to fulfill its’ pure and simple mission.

Are there other good works?

Absolutely, the question is, who is responsible to do them?

- General benevolence
- Social opportunities for young people
- Social occasions and common meals
- Care for orphans and widows
- Social and political causes
- Personal “self-help” topics

- When we have the church undertake those responsibilities that we individually are responsible for, we not only are neglecting our own duties but negatively impacting the impact the church is to have.
- Recognize the temptation to have the church do for us what we are personally responsible for.

- So, take issue not only with those who burden the church beyond what God directed for it, but with ourselves if we fail in our individual responsibilities.
- Focus on the God given mission of the church to save souls through the spreading of the gospel to the lost, spiritually building up those who are in the church, and making sure that fundamental human needs of it’s members are being met.