

# “A Living Testimony”

1 Timothy 5:17–6:2

01/16/21

---

## OUTLINE

### WELCOME:

(1 min)

### INTRO:

(2 mins)

- **Illustration:** High School Unsung Hero Award
  - **Q:** Have you ever met an unsung hero or think you may know someone that deserves the title?
  - My H.S. basketball teammate awarded the “Unsung Hero Award”
    - He always passed the ball
    - He always had a great attitude
    - **\*\***He always focused on the team and not himself
  - I had never heard or thought of the term before
  - Unsung Hero = *“A person who has achieved great things or committed acts of bravery or self-sacrifice, yet is not celebrated or recognized.”*
  - **\*\*WHY I SHARE THIS** → B/c Paul begins this passage by telling Timothy & the church that good Overseers/Elders are **NOT** to be treated like unsung heroes, but are *“worthy of double honor”*

## RECAP & CONTEXT:

(2 min)

- **Where we started:** Timothy to lead Church of Ephesus
  - Called to **PROCLAIM** the Gospel
  - Called to **GUARD** the Gospel
  - Called to **CELEBRATE** the Gospel
  - Called to **FIGHT** for the Gospel
- **Where we are going** (purpose for letter): Book Overview
  - Addressing different groups w/in the church
  - Reminder to live on guard b/c of false doctrine
  - A final exhortation to “fight the good fight”
  - **\*\*Reminder the Church is called to represent Jesus\*\***
- **Where we are now:** Current Situation
  - Paul presents instruction to Timothy & church on how to treat Overseers
  - Paul presents instruction to Timothy & church on how Overseers are to be held accountable
  - Paul presents instructions to slaves—the least of these—on how to treat their masters
  - **\*\*CONCLUSION → ALL this instruction points to importance of a person’s witness**
    - (regardless of their position or status)
- **Sermon Title:** “A Living Testimony”

## BIG IDEA:

(1 min)

- **Big Idea:** Protect your witness for the glory of God

- **WHAT** the church (Timothy) is to do
- **HOW** the church (Timothy) is to do it
- **WHY** church members (Everyone) must be aware

**PRAY:**

(1 min)

**READ:**

(1 min)

- Text: **1 Timothy 5:17 - 6:2**

*<sup>17</sup> The elders who are **good leaders** are to be considered worthy of double honor, **especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching**. <sup>18</sup> For the Scripture says: “Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain,” and, “The worker is worthy of his wages.”*

*<sup>19</sup> [So] Don't accept an accusation against an elder unless it is supported by two or three witnesses. <sup>20</sup> Publicly rebuke those who sin, so that the rest will be afraid. <sup>21</sup> I solemnly charge you before God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels to observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing out of favoritism. <sup>22</sup> Don't be too quick to appoint<sup>[e]</sup> anyone as an elder, and don't share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure. <sup>23</sup> Don't continue drinking only water, but use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses. <sup>24</sup> Some people's sins are obvious, preceding them to judgment, but the sins of others surface<sup>[f]</sup> later. <sup>25</sup> Likewise, good works are obvious, and those that are not obvious cannot remain hidden.*

### **CHAPTER 6:**

*<sup>1</sup>All who are under the yoke as slaves should regard their own masters as worthy of all respect, **so that God's name and his teaching will not be blasphemed**. <sup>2</sup> Let those who have believing masters not be disrespectful to them because they are brothers, but serve them even better, since those who benefit from their service are believers and dearly loved.*

## PREVIEW:

(1 min)

- Main Points:

- 1 – Leaders are to be honored (17-18)
- 2 – Leaders are held to a high standard (19-25)
- 3 – God's glory must always be our aim (6:1-2)

## PILLAR 1: Leaders are to be honored (v.17-18)

(10 mins)

(v.17)

- Paul points out 2 categories of elders:
  - “*Elders who are good leaders...*”
    - (1) “GOOD leaders”
    - (2) BAD leaders
    - \*\*The distinction between the two is subtle
    - **BUT** → the distinction is very important
  - **Q:** What makes an Elder a “GOOD leader”?
    - **A:** Qualifications for an Elder → 1 Timothy 3:2-7

*<sup>2</sup> An overseer, therefore, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, self-controlled, sensible, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup> not an excessive drinker, not a bully but gentle, not quarrelsome, not greedy. <sup>4</sup> He must manage his own household competently and have his*

*children under control with all dignity. <sup>5</sup> (If anyone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of God's church?) <sup>6</sup> He must not be a new convert, or he might become conceited and incur the same condemnation as the devil. <sup>7</sup> Furthermore, he must have a good reputation among outsiders, so that he does not fall into disgrace and the devil's trap.*

- The phrase “good leader” makes clear...
  - Elders *must* POSSESS these traits
  - Elders *should* LIVE OUT these traits
  - **IF NOT** → Elders are “bad leaders”
  - **\*\*Leader = an example setter**
  - **\*\*An elder is not immune to sin or downfall**
  - **WARNING: Luke 11:23** → “*Anyone who is not with me is against me, and anyone who does not gather with me scatters.*”
- **ILLUSTRATION:** Manager vs. Leader
  - Manager = Tells others what to do
    - Possess required credentials
  - Leader = Shows others how to do it
    - Possess & applies credentials
- Paul instructs how to treat “good leaders”
  - “*...are to be considered worthy of **double honor**...*”
  - **CONTEXT:** Honor Defined

- Honor / Shame culture
- Religious leaders highly respected
- **\*\*Honor = (1) Respect; (2) Money**
- Respect > money (culturally)
- **THEREFORE** → Overseers who are “good leaders” should be respected + provided for
- (v.17) “...*especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.*”
  - P&T is sacred duty
  - P&T requires reverence for God
  - Elders who P&T require certain qualities
    - 1 Tim. 3:2-7
  - **\*\*SHEPHERD + TEACH & PROCLAIM**
    - All elders shepherd
    - Those who also P&T deserve double honor

(v.18)

- Paul points to Scripture for *why* Elders deserve honor

(v.18) → *For the Scripture says: “Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain,” and, “The worker is worthy of his wages.”*

- Ox reference = Deut. 25:4
  - If you muzzle an ox, it cannot eat while it works
- Worker worthy of wages = Luke 10:7

- Jesus' words that work is good and a worker deserves pay
- 1 Cor. 9:1-18 → Paul states his right to receive payment from the church as an Apostle & Elder
- Makes clear that Scripture is ultimate authority → 2 Timothy 3:16
- **APPLICATION:**
  - Acknowledge honor that is due to church elders
  - Paul builds case that church should provide for elders b/c elders provide for church
  - Those who P&T deserve "double honor"
  - Called to raise up elders who are "good leaders"

**PILLAR 2: Leaders are held to a high standard** (19-25) (15 mins)  
(v.19)

- Handling accusations against an elder
  - Cannot be 1v1 accusation
  - Requires 2+ witnesses to accuse an elder
    - (v.19) "...unless supported by two or three witnesses."
  - Level of credibility given to an elder
    - Church affirmed man to have overseer qualifications
    - **ILLUSTRATION:** Benefit of the doubt
      - Go to doctor for surgery

- After surgery you feel ill
- First reaction: “my body isn’t handling this well.”
- We never first accuse doctor of malpractice
- Yes, we know doctors can/do make mistakes
- **BUT** → A doctor has proven themselves worthy, so we don’t *first* blame them w/o proof

(v.20)

- How to respond when an elder sins
  - When an elder sins → Confront him & bring sin to light
    - **PURPOSE:** That he will...
      - Repent
      - Be restored before God
      - Be restored before the church
  - 2 Translations (interpretations):
    - CSB Translation = <sup>20</sup> *Publicly rebuke those who sin, so that the rest will be afraid.*
      - An elder’s sin should be made public before church b/c he holds a public position

- ESV Translation = <sup>20</sup> ***As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear.***
  - An elder's sin should be made public *if* he does **NOT** repent and/or continues sinning
- **\*\*Both translations agree → ADDRESS SIN!**
- **BUT** → they state message differently...
  - CSB points to the WHY
  - ESV points to the WHEN
- **\*\*Leaders do NOT** receive a get-out-of-jail-free card
  - **\*\*Elders are held to a high standard**
  - Elders are held accountable before whole church
  - Builds on **Matthew 18:17** (church discipline)
  - **ILLUSTRATION:** No one's above the law
    - America was founded on the principle that "no one is above the law"
    - God's directions state the same for His people
- **\*\*Why are Elders held to such high standards?**
  - (1) Elders are publicly recognized leaders
  - (2) Elders hold authority in the church
  - (3) Elders are accountable to the church
  - (4) Elders set example for the church

- Example to divert from sinning
- (v.20) → “...so that the rest will be afraid.”

▪ **\*\*ATTENTION:** Sin will kill you!!!

(v.21)

- **NO** special treatment for Elders
  - **\*\*Again, Elders are held to a high standard**
  - No “good ‘ol boys club” allowed
  - Paul tells them...
    - (1) Address sin w/o “*prejudice*”
    - (2) Do not allow “*favoritism*” to impact handling
  - **ILLUSTRATION:** Spider Man Quote
    - “With great power comes great responsibility.” — Uncle Ben

(v.22)

- Warning of weightiness & importance
  - This is why Paul warns Timothy **NOT** to appoint elders prematurely
    - Points to 1 Timothy 3:2-7
    - **\*\***An elder *must* possess qualifications
  - Paul also warns Timothy **NOT** to indulge in other’s sins
    - Remember → **SIN KILLS!**
    - Do **NOT** rationalize sin **OR** fade into sinning
    - John 14:15 → “If you love me, you will keep my commandments”

- **Matthew 7:21** → “*Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who **does** the will of my Father in heaven.*”

○ **(v.22) THEREFORE** → “**...KEEP YOURSELF PURE!**”

- Can only be lived out if taken seriously
- **\*\*Requires eyes & heart focused on Jesus!**
  - Results in faithful obedience

**(v.23)**

○ **CHANGE-UP:** Paul addresses Timothy’s health

*<sup>23</sup> Don’t continue drinking only water, but use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.*

- **Q:** Why did Paul insert this info here after exhorting Timothy to “*keep [himself] pure*”?
- **CONTEXT:** **Ascetism**
  - Definition = self-deprivation
  - People abstained from foods to gain holiness
  - Ascetism was an issue w/in Ephesus
  - **ALSO** → Most water had bacteria in it
- **A:** Timothy may have abstained from wine to avoid misleading others toward drunkenness

- Paul instructs Timothy to drink what he needs to be healthy
- **\*\*Paul mentions instruction here to make clear Timothy is NOT sinning or lacking “purity” by drinking the wine**
  - He’s to avoid ascetism & legalism
  - **BUT** → Paul’s instruction is **NOT** a license to get drunk

(v.24-25)

- Final reminder about sins & good works

*<sup>24</sup> Some people’s sins are obvious, preceding them to judgment, **but** the sins of others surface later. <sup>25</sup> Likewise, good works are obvious, and those that are not obvious cannot remain hidden.*

- **(1) Sins** → Paul reminds Timothy...
  - Some sins are obvious
  - All sins are visible → *(God knows)*
- **(2) Good Works** → Paul reminds Timothy...
  - Some good works are obvious
  - All good works are visible → *(to God)*
- This wisdom is a warning **AND** encouragement
- **APPLICATION:**
  - **\*\***Reminder to keep an eternal perspective
  - **\*\***Reminder God knows all things
  - **\*\***Reminder you will be held accountable
  - **\*\***Rest in giving God your best!

**PILLAR 3: God's glory must always be our aim** (v.1-2)

(10 mins)

(6:1)

*All who are under the **yoke as slaves** should regard their own masters as worthy of all respect, **so that God's name and his teaching will not be blasphemed.***

- Instructions for those enslaved
  - Paul addresses "ALL" who are enslaved
  - Reminds every Christian to protect their witness
    - **\*\*NO** caveat given to enslaved Christians
    - **TO CONTRARY** → Paul insists slaves strive to bring God glory
  - **ILLUSTRATION:** Customer Service
    - No matter what → Customer is always right
- Addressing slavery
  - Paul is **NOT** affirming slavery
    - Slavery is evil & a result of sin (**Genesis 3**)
  - **BUT** → Paul acknowledges slavery exists
    - Paul is dealing with reality (the situation)
    - **\*\*AND** → Pointing Christian slaves to Jesus

(6:2)

- No excuse for disrespect or bad witness

*<sup>2</sup> Let those who have believing masters not be disrespectful to them because they are brothers, **but serve them even better, since those who benefit from their service are believers and dearly loved.***

- Christians are always called to represent Christ well

- A slave's actions & responses speak to the world
    - Impacts the master (and family/peers)
    - Impacts other slaves (others w/o rights)
  - Slaves are to view Christian masters as brothers
    - Need to die to self & view world through Christ's eyes
    - **\*\***Requires a supernatural heart-change
- 

- **Why we connect ch.5 & ch.6:**

- **\*\*Section breaks in Bible are NOT divinely inspired**
- Reading Paul's letter continually (5:17-25 to 6:1-2) gives clarity of overarching theme (the "**BIG IDEA**")
  - **\*\***ALL Christians must "*Protect their witness for the glory of God*"

- **To recap everything covered...**

- Paul first addressed the church in *general*
- Paul then zoomed out & addressed 2 Christians groups on social spectrum:
  - (1) Elders = High Respect
  - (2) Slaves = No Respect
- **NEVERTHELESS** → Paul tells **ALL** Christians to guard their witness...
- Makes this clear by stating:
  - (1) Elders are to be good leaders
  - (2) Church is to honor Elders
  - (3) Christian slaves are to respect masters

- **APPLICATION:**

- **Q:** In hindsight, are you representing Christ well?
- **Q:** Are you harboring anger and bitterness that hinders your witness?
- **Q:** Have you made Jesus your highest priority & are you obedient to His directions here?
- **\*\*REMEMBER → ALL Christians can have an impact for God's Kingdom...**
  - You do **NOT** need to be an Overseer
- God calls us to love Jesus & live in faithful obedience by surrendering lordship of our lives...
  - **Romans 6:17-29;22-23**

***<sup>17</sup>But thank God that, although you **used to be slaves of sin**, you obeyed from the heart that pattern of teaching to which you were handed over, <sup>18</sup>and having been set free from sin, you became enslaved to righteousness. <sup>19</sup>I am using a human analogy because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you offered the parts of yourselves as slaves to impurity, and to greater and greater lawlessness, **so now offer them as slaves to righteousness, which results in sanctification...*****

***<sup>22</sup>But now, since you have been set free from sin and have become enslaved to God, you have your fruit, which results in sanctification—**and the outcome is eternal life!*****

***<sup>23</sup>For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

- **\*\*Q:** Christian, do you acknowledge you're a slave to Christ, and more importantly, are you living as such?

**CLOSE / PRAY:**

(2 mins)