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It's a Blessed dovetailing again. Uh, This time. Uh, approximately half of you. Have a good reason not to have. Gotten the, The instruction that corresponds to this morning, from yesterday morning at the men's breakfast. When we were, Uh, when we were on the text and Ephesians, Uh, Five. No man.

Page of himself. And learning that a sane. Biblical recognition of a man being made in god's image. Um, Makes him. Uh, caring for makes him to care for every member of his own body. And of course, there's The application forward to marriage for that. That there's If my wife is my own body, Then there's no aspect of her good and especially of her greatest.

Good. That she would be conformed to the lord jesus. And enjoy her union with him. Um, and anticipation of glory. Now there's no part of my wife's. Good. That i wouldn't attend to. Um, or care about And then, We made. Well, use mates and we followed application back then to the body of christ.

And bringing in that first corinthians 12, every member of the body, even the least. Honorable even though those who are weakest, especially those Who are? Um, in seasons of material need and spiritual need. That. That we would love them with the love. That belongs to loving christ. And we didn't mention it, we don't take time to mention it everything but Um, remembering john 13.

And jesus tying our loving one. Another as he has loved us. To the reality that he was leaving. And we wouldn't be able to follow. I think the apostles never got to reciprocate the washing of the feet. That had taken place earlier in that chapter. Um, But he, he gives us.

To love those who are united to him. As a, a training, a disciplining of our hearts. Uh, for loving him. And what we see as we come to verse 9 and 1st, Timothy 5. Is that this is something that takes time in god's. Uh, and god's wisdom and his work and sanctifying a redeemed sinner.

Uh, It takes time. And so, this roster of widows this role of widows who are Not just, Uh, Not just kept fed and clothed. Uh, but who are supported by the church. Is. Is a particular number in verse 9, verse 9, do not let a widow under 60 years old be taken into the number.

And so the church in ephesus. They were to have a list a roster. The number of those who are. Uh, supported as And, And ongoing. Um, Arrangement. Uh, by the church, not just those who are in particular needed a particular time or attended to for want to food and clothing.

At the time. That they are relieved of their Bereavement. In terms of earthly things. Um, they're relieved of their bereavement. By being put on the On the list of those, the roles of those. Who are supported by the church and what the apostle says is, do not let a widow under 60 be taken into that number He's given us.

Uh, the The. Uh, situational parameters. That she's really left alone that she doesn't have children or grandchildren. Who could take who are taking care of her. He's given us character parameters. Uh, what sort of woman she is Um, trusts in god and continues, and supplications

and prayers night. And, and today, and does not view this season of life as one in, which she can finally hear.

Let go a little bit and enjoy herself. But uh, but a season of life in which she is freed to enjoy god himself. More directly and more continually. And what a wonderful and glorious season, it is And yet many of us. Now, i include myself on the number. Who are young in the faith, not made it to 60 yet.

Um, And even many who make it to 60, don't make it to this yet. Uh, we find that when we attempt to Spend extended time and communion with god. Of the remaining fleshliness is just too much for us. We're easily distracted. He doesn't do as much for us. As we know that he should not that.

He doesn't am using the colloquial language like it, that doesn't do so much for me. We don't. Uh, we don't have that inner that contentment or satisfaction with them, be more specific with our vocabulary. And one of the reasons is, because God has so ordered in his wisdom. And it's part of keeping us humble.

It's part of us enjoying the persistence of his commitment to us despite the persistence of our remaining flesh. Right? So because it takes decades. We see the love and endurance. That is behind his. His will to sanctify us to conform us to christ. But, The apostle says, Don't let a widow under 60 years old be taken into the number It takes decades of seasoning, sanctification.

To produce the character. That is being. Uh, that is being described here. And then he gives A. Uh, a report. Of. What they have done. Up until the time, they are 60. Okay, so Uh, if she's growing in grace, she's a godly woman loves her, husband loves her children.

Uh, you know, the in god's other marvelous providence, to us today, being the day in which we have tightest two, three through five for our serial reading. And if you think that that that passage means there should be women's classes at church taught by by women. Invite you to just go ahead and listen to our family worship from this week.

Um if that's what the passage is saying, then it's actually required of every older woman in the church that she teach women's classes. Um, because And Titus. Two, three through five. Her conduct makes her a teacher, such that. Uh, she admonishes. Just to kind of give you the grammatical connection there.

Uh, yes, david. With the assumption being doesn't say well or being a man. Email. Uh, There is not a roster. Given to us. For older men to be. Perpetually supported in this way. Um, I, i don't know if that was just more rare. Or. The, the older men being Kind of patriarchs among the congregation.

And, You know, obviously they would be taking care of if they were destitute the way anyone else in the church. Would be taken care of. Um, If you, if he was destitute. Um,

Yes. Titus too. Before. Younger woman in the church gets to be and older woman in the church the way that is described in Titus to and the the way that is described here She has spent decades of training as someone who's identity is loving others. Now that's just a christian thing.

Okay. The christians identity, as we'll hear in god's you know continuing good providence to it. This coming wednesday evening, lord willing. The christian is identified as one who loves god.

And is called according to his purpose or as we see in the context of Romans as a whole, Christian, you know, one for whom all things work together for good, loves god.

Because we've been called according to his purpose because If you, if you've been following along in Romans, nobody loves god according to their own purpose, And nobody comes to be a lover of god, by their own calling. And so it's God's purpose and god's calling that produces lovers of god but a lot one who loves god.

That's shorthand. For someone who keeps the whole law. For someone for whom christ is already our righteousness. He's the one who has loved the lord, our god, with all his heart, soul, mind and strength. He's the one who loved his neighbors as himself, who even laid down his life for us and the demonstration of the love of god.

I have. And, you know, You could give that one. Phrase or clause summary of jesus as the one who loves god and as we're conformed to him. That becomes a one sentence summary of the christian one, who loves god. But in that Titus 2 passage, if you listen to it, you go back.

Uh, the The instruction for younger women that they love their husbands. That they love their children. There's actually one word and it's not a verb, it's a noun. That's the young woman is a husband lover. Is a compound word. Uh, a husband lover, a child lover. That for decades, her identity and loving the lord with all her heart.

So mind and strength, and her neighbor as herself and her brothers and sisters as christ has loved us. Remember, the new commandment that jesus gives us is actually in the form of the two great commandments. But now with special object of the one another that is in the church.

And not just love one another as we love ourselves but love one another, it's jesus. Has loved us. But for the christian wife and mother, She's been assigned by providence, a nearest neighbor. And a nearest brother. That is her husband. And then the second nearest neighbors and brothers and sisters, who are her children, And what's described here in first, Timothy 5, Is that?

The hope is, by the time she comes to the age of 60. God will have so trained, her Of being and being a lover of others. By this, this wonderful. Yeah, 45 or 40? 40 year boot camp. Of, of loving others with her whole life. You know, boot camp is only supposed to be weeks, right?

Um, But he will train have trained her to be one who loves outside of herself. Uh, that she comes to the edge of 60. And the lord takes off the training wheels. You know, training wheel one, the husband of training wheel to the children. And she finds. She can ride the bike.

She continues and supplication and prayer night and day. She pours herself out. Not only unto God. Who satisfies her and didn't she loves? But for his church, She's she's Uh, not just Uh, been the one woman one, man woman in verse 9. Uh, but her good works have been not just the bringing up of her children, verse 10.

But also lodging strangers, washing the saints' feet. Okay, this is Not saying. Um, that if one of you ladies, one of you girls, Who is hoping that god will work graciously in you for the next 50 to 55 years or so? Uh, but you get to the age of 60 and then The the deacons are going to have a discussion and say, well, you know what?

I don't think she's ever wiped toe fungus. Out of anybody else's feet in the congregation. So, She doesn't. She doesn't satisfy first Timothy 5. You know, she she missed the toe fungus test. Sorry if that's a little gross to you, but Who wanted to bring home to you. That's a reference to john 13.

That's a reference to that lifetime. Of loving the saints, for the sake of their being united to Christ. So that maybe she can't bend over anymore. Or stand for hours on end to fix meals anymore. But her love for the Lord is still expressed in her, love for the saints.

And as so as she enjoys her life of communion and prayer with God, Christ's body. All of those members, especially the most needy like we are thinking about yesterday at the men's brackets. As you mentioned already this morning, Has a great place in her prayers. This is so opposite.

Our flesh and the selfishness of it. And they culture. In which and, you know, there was a brother here yesterday morning Who pointed out very incisively in this reinvigoration of the idea of self-care. Right. That that takes proper stewardship of the body and of the mind into the, you know, all of those things that are a proper loving of oneself.

And instead of self-care for Christ's sake. Is self-care for my sake because I become my own God. And nobody else can have anything else. Until I take care of me. The minds that these women. These royal ladies on the who are of the number taken into the number, on the roster, on the roll in Ephesus.

Exactly the opposite of that. It's Christ is everything to me. And therefore, Whatever self-care she does do. Is for the sake of loving him and loving his church. And loving her neighbor who are made in God's image. But now, God has taken the, the nearest neighbor and the nearest brother.

Uh, out of this world. And, Um, she's left alone. But she still has still has the church. And so, she's Uh, she's lost strangers. Watched the saints beat? Relieved. The afflicted diligently followed every good work. Now a woman who's done this in this 55. The apostle says, nope, she can't be on there yet.

Isn't that amazing? That you could have a a woman who Isn't 60. And he he actually lays down a rule. For emphasis. And he's saying, That that this is a this is a seasoning work. That God has ordained to take time. So what are Uh, what our younger women to do.

And this is instructive. For our for our thinking about diagonal work, because It's not. Just the 60 and over. Of. Yes, royal ladies who this is this is a real crown of honor. To be put under this list, isn't it? Everyone in the church knows who they are. They've been identified recognized, it's not just a recognition of their current character, but of decades, Of labor.

It's a way by which the elders and deacons of the church are communicating To, to all of the younger, ladies of the church. Look at what God does not just for everyone else. Through you. And the ministry that you have in these decades, but look at what God does in you.

Through the ministry that you have in these decades. And why would you trade it? For the the rubbish. That every wave of feminism. For the last 170 years. Has offered instead. You know, becoming a a co-bred winner. Uh, becoming known and recognized. Uh, Out in. Out in the world.

Pursuing your own interest to separate identity. From your, from your husband or From your family. Uh, and all of that nonsense and God says no. In the church. Take those women. Who have not gone for the rubbish. But they have they've gone through God's training camp and he has done this work in them and make a numbered roster of them in the church.

So that all the younger ladies. We'll be able to see what god does. And to trust him to be doing that, because Um, As high as the calling is. So also hard is the calling Selflessness is not something that is comfortable. To have the lord chip away from you.

Um, that's for, that's for all of us, of course not. Not just for ladies. So what are the The deacons. To be encouraging all the husbands to do. But they themselves as husbands. Because a lot of the ministry and earthly things in the church that they're going to oversee is going to be done by women.

And is going to be done, especially by their own wives. We saw that in first Timothy 3, Uh, when we saw the let the women and in the next In the next verse. The deacon is supposed to be a one woman man and so it's appropriate there to translate the wives Uh, although it's not just the deacon's wives who are going to be Enlisted in this service under the beacons.

But what are they aiming at? And how important then? Because they're oversight of the ministry and earthly things of the saints become. God having Uh, god the spirit having just now given us this vision of Of what he trends a woman to be from the heart, through these through these decades.

And suddenly, you have kind of the, the ministry of the elders, right? In the public worship. Especially and then also from house to house, in overseeing words, sacrament and prayer in the public worship and discipling the heads of households to lead their, their family and family worship and especially husbands to to love their wives as christ.

Does the church with this washing of water by the word that the husband is supposed to be continually giving to his wife that's a minister of the elders but now we hear A big part of how the lord makes that, that means of grace ministry, fruitful in the life of a woman.

Is by giving her to love her husband. Well, to love her children. Well, to love strangers and wash the same speed and relieve the afflicted. And so, if the if the deacons aren't Overseeing a ministry of this in the church. A big part of god's plan for making these royal ladies who are testimonies monuments of god's grace and this roster of the true widows 60 and over in the church.

That's not going to happen. And what have we seen? In. The churches where the deaconate has declined. And there's not a commitment to this. But in the churches, That view of a woman's life and a woman's calling. And that experience. Where she gets to a season and In her older years.

And she's enjoying the sweetness of loving jesus, and loving the things. There's nothing need anything else. He doesn't need to live for pleasure. Yes, we're last time that she lives for pleasure. She's dead while she lives. How many of the older women? In the churches, have this. Many of them long for it.

But if it takes decades of a particular kind of ministry and you don't have a deaconate, that's committed. To a particular view of the household and committed to a particular view of marriage and committed to a particular view of child, rearing and committed to a particular view of caring for one another's needs.

Then this this necessary component that the lord even within his design says, we'll take decades is missing. And, Don't get me wrong. You know, god's decree is perfect and as goodness is perfect, and i know this phrase is used in a wrong way. Um, but the church is missing out on god's best.

Fight the design that he's given when he says i sat before you life and i set before you death. And that's not for justification. That's for sanctification. That was the Jesus problem, right? They took the do this and live of leuiticus eight, 18. And they made it about justification and so they pursued the righteousness.

Uh, of the law as if it were by works instead of by faith. But there is a do this and live in sanctification that continues to apply. Where we enjoy the life of Christ, more and more. As we use his means and follow his commands. That's how sanctification continues to work.

Not by our effort, not by our intention. But by the grace of Christ being worked out in us according to the design of God. And so, Uh what should the younger younger widows do? Um, Well. They shouldn't be put on the roster. Because it will be. Uh, not just humiliating but it will.

It will be spiritually, harmful to them. If they say, i want to be on this roster. Of younger widows lord took my husband. When i was, You know, say she's 50. And my my children are grown. Um, And i want to continue in prayer and supplication, day and night.

Jesus is going to be enough for me. And she tries and she makes a start in it. But then, She finds that she isn't seasoned. Like she had hoped, she was Can you see how crushing the disappointment would be if you made a commitment to that life? And you just couldn't sustain it.

And so he says, refuse the younger widows, don't let them be on the list. For when they had begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry. They they need the training wheels back. It's not that marriage is wrong. He's going to command that they marry in a couple verses, right?

But it's that. They hadn't reached a place of spiritual maturity yet. Where Christ would be enough having condemnation verse 12 because they cast off their first faith. And besides they learn to be idle. Wandering about from house to house. Not only idle but also gossips and dizzy bodies saying things which they ought not.

And that's something also, the the older widows themselves and tightest two from this week. Again, i encourage you to go back and listen to that. One of the things that they have to watch out against is becoming devils. And not just devils who intentionally slander and gossip. But those who are tools of the devil.

They passed around information that isn't but there's to pass around. And people take offense that they didn't need to take and they come to judgmental attitudes towards others, that they didn't need to have. This, because Uh, people who've had extra time used it for extra talking. And where words are many transgression is not absent.

However, well we intend. Okay. So there is a spiritual maturity. Uh, that is That is necessary. So verse 14, therefore i desire that the younger widow is marry their children manage the house. If that sounds familiar it's because it's right out of Titus, too as well. Give no opportunity for to the adversary to speak, approachally.

That also at the end of Titus 2 verse 5, you think about how important this view of Of womanhood and household of marriage is He concludes Titus 2 verse 5 by saying that the word of God not be blasphemed. Okay, so those are pretty high stakes, aren't they? For some have already turned aside.

After. Satan. If any believing man or woman has widows let them relieve them. It's it's better for the older, the older widow as well. Not just the younger to be part of a household. To be

brought into the house. Of. Um, of a son or a son-in-law in which she has family worship and And she is a model even in the home for the wife and for the children.

And she still has as it were nearest neighbors, and nearest brothers and sisters because there's a multi-generational household now, In which the lord continues to give her a a household of service that also ministers to her. Um, So in verse 16, it's even if she would qualify. For. The roster of the 60 year old true widow.

If god's providence hasn't brought her situationally. Into that season. Then. Then he sets her up as it were in that role, particularly to her household. And if the lord takes from her her household, Then the Lord points for her to be set up in that role to the household of god more generally and she goes on the roster.

Of 60 year olds. Okay. We know that that was Um, A little bit complex, but you do you see from two weeks ago and from this morning, Of what verses three through 16 are describing and do you see there for The great necessity of a deaconate that understands how the household is supposed to work, and god's way, especially of sanctifying Women, who are Wives.

And mothers. And therefore, do you see back into first Timothy 3? Giving a description for what the women who were employed in the service, under the deacons and especially the deacon's wives, but not only the deacons wives, How that is necessary to the description of how the office is to function, and even the qualifications of the deacons, whoever, see it part of it.

As they're having a, a proper. Desire for goal for what the women of the church are going to be doing. Under their ministry. And it's not. For the ordination of women. To the office of the deaconate. You know, there's some church history stuff there where There was Deaconess. Little d.

For the roster of widows in first Timothy 5 and you know, Calvin becomes abused. They just import him as Calvin. Female deacons And so forth. But the, the importance of this in chapter 5 is why. You have the, the verses on the book, the character of the women. In chapter 3.

All right, let's pray. Our father in heaven. How we thank you. Lord, your design is better than ours and it takes humility for us to say that. And we are not Humble of ourselves. Our flesh is proud and arrogant but oh lord. Uh, there is no one gentle and meek like christ to whom you can form by your spirit, everyone whom you are saving and so we pray that your spirit would keep conforming us to christ that we might have first, the humility to accept and rejoice over the perfection of your design.

The goodness of how you have given us, how you have commanded us and structured us to operate in our life and our household, and your church. And then lord give us the humility not just to accept and adopt the correctness of it. But give us the humility to abandon self-service.

As a way of life. Conform us to jesus. We pray. We do ask lord again, as we've been studying. To have. A deaconate according to your word. That you would be. So working, not just in those who are going to be the deacons who lead this ministry, but in all of us, That that what you do graciously among us.

Would much glorify christ in this congregation of his church, which we ask in his name, amen.