

Providing for Our Own

By Elder David Pyles

“But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” – 1Tim 5:8

According to the Census Bureau, as of 2011, 65% of all children in America were on some kind of Federal aid. This derived largely from the fact that over 40% of them were born out of wedlock, and less than half of them were living with once-married, biological parents. Such dismal statistics have been on the rise in this country for several decades. Clearly, many Americans have little knowledge or appreciation for the fact that some of the most condemning language in the word of God is directed against them.

Such is the case with the text in our introduction, which says that anyone who will not provide for his own has denied the faith. That is, he has disclaimed all right to call himself a Christian. Indeed, the text says he is worse than an infidel. Since the Bible elsewhere teaches that infidels stand eternally condemned before God, to be even worse is surely a frightening thought.

The accuracy of this interpretation is verified by considering:

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you. – 2Thess 3:6-8

Hence, this text commands that churches withdraw themselves from people who refuse to work and who live at the expense of others. This commandment is of course written in the same book that commands longsuffering, forbearance and forgiveness, yet it considers the error of lazy people to be so egregious that it commands that they be put out of the church. Indeed, the Bible goes even further in saying, *“For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat,”* (2Thess 3:10). So even if it takes hunger to move such people to repentance, the Bible says let it be so.

Given these sobering warnings, every American on government aid should be diligently seeking to get off of it. Indeed, he should

desperately seeking to get off of it. Rather than this, we are seeing ever-increasing numbers who are seeking to find new ways to game the system so as to seize even more. This gaming of the system includes voting for unscrupulous political candidates who promise to accommodate such corruption by raising taxes on those who earn so as to give even more to those who do not. Such legislated extortion and theft may stand under the laws of the land, but the day comes when all men will answer to God for it.