

## **Caring for the Widows**

1 Timothy 5:1-8

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**The church is to care for those who have no means to care for themselves.**

### **I. Show proper respect to the family of God. (v. 1-2)**

As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer... (1 Timothy 1:3)

Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:1-2)

Take special note of anyone who does not obey our instruction in this letter. Do not associate with them, in order that they may feel ashamed. Yet do not regard them as an enemy, but warn them as you would a brother. (2 Thessalonians 3:14-15)

### **II. The church is to provide for widows who are truly alone. (v. 3)**

“Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise— “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” (Ephesians 6:2-3)

Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him. (John 5:22-23)

When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf, do not go back to get it. Leave it for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. When you beat the olives from your trees, do not go over the branches a second time. Leave what remains for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow. When you harvest the grapes in your vineyard, do not go over the vines again. Leave what remains for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow. (Deuteronomy 24:19-21)

And the word of the LORD came again to Zechariah: “This is what the LORD Almighty said: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other.’ (Zechariah 7:8-9)

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. (Acts 6:1)

The church should care for any widow who has no one else to care for her. (v. 3 NLT)

**III. But if there are Family members, these have the first responsibility before God to provide for their widowed matriarchs. (v. 4)**

“Put their religion into practice” (Gr. Eusebeo, *yoo-seb-eh'-o*) 2x “To act piously or reverently”  
The same word is translated as “worship” in Acts 17:23.

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. (James 1:27)

**IV. The Church is to be the provision of God in answer to a true widow’s prayers. (v. 5)**

There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. (Luke 2:36-38)

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. (Galatians 6:10)

**V. Widows who do not demonstrate piety are not to be supported. (v. 6)**

Lives for pleasure/gives herself to wanton pleasure (NAS): (Gr. Spatalao, *spat-al-ah'-o*) 2x

You have lived indulgently and luxuriously on the earth. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. (James 5:5)

For her house sinks down to death and her tracks lead to the dead; none who go to her return again, nor do they reach the paths of life. (Proverbs 2:18-19)

Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God. (Romans 8:5-8)

**VI. God is exceedingly serious about this issue of familial support. (v.7-8)**

As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead. (James 2:26)

And he continued, “You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and mother,’ and, ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’ But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is Corban (that is, devoted to God)—

then you no longer let them do anything for their father or mother. Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.” (Mark 7:9-13)

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, “Woman, here is your son,” and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, this disciple took her into his home. (John 19:25-27)