

DISCERNING BENEVOLENT SUPPORT IN OUR CHURCH – 1 TIMOTHY 5:3-16

With all the division, corruption and evil going on in our world it may seem odd to preach a message on the proper care of _____... but if things get worse and our society as we know it breaks down, these instructions will prove invaluable. Back in the first century when the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, the issue of care for widows was very _____ as there were no social or governmental benefits available (Acts 6:1). In many places around the world today this is still true. As we work through the directions given in our text, let's also consider the broader perspective of having proper _____ for all things in general.

1. Identifying widows for ongoing care and financial support – 1 Timothy 5:3-10

a. Honouring a _____ indeed – verse 3

- Honour – 1 Ti. 5:17-18; Eph. 6:2-3

In regard to the _____ of something or someone; often used as in a financial grant, payment, or honorarium. So, in this context, it simply means to *financially support*

- Not all widows require care and/or financial support from the local church
 Only honour widows that are widows indeed

b. Recognizing a widow that requires assistance – verses 5-7, 9-10

- Desolate – alone with no relatives, lacking any human or government support
- Faithful godly testimony – she fully _____ God to provide for her needs
 She has a right heart attitude toward God, praying daily for her own care
- Does not seek to live in _____
 She is frugal, conservative, not extravagant or out to live it up
 Blameless in this regard, known for having a conservative testimony
- A minimum of 60 years of age
- Having been _____ to her husband
- A good public reputation
- Brought up children
- Hospitable

She has in the past taken care of travelers, perhaps as in missionaries or evangelists, it could include unfamiliar people referred to her household as needing a place to stay overnight, etc.

Washed the saint's feet... not a church ordinance but rather having taken care of the weary or those in need of respite or physical care

Faithful in all sorts of good works

c. Important things to consider – verses 4, 8, 16a

- If she has any children or nephews, or any relatives for that matter (male or female – verse 16a), they _____ her care and support. After all, when they were young, parents or relatives cared fully for all of their needs...
- If her own children or relatives will not care for her, they are _____ than infidels

2. Identifying widows that do _____ require ongoing care and financial support – 1 Timothy 5:11-15

a. Instructions concerning _____ widows

- Do not offer ongoing care and financial support to them
- They will not remain a widow and will eventually remarry
They may potentially remarry a lost man, end up living a life of damnation
- If cared for by the church their idleness can create serious problems
This can lead her into becoming a gossip and a very poor testimony, used by Satan to damage the cause of Christ while under the church's care – so don't do it!

To prevent this from happening she needs to be gainfully employed...

And if she cannot contain herself she should remarry a believing man. If she is young enough—to raise up a family and manage a household with her new second husband

b. Important things to consider – 1 Timothy 5:16

- The church is _____ financially responsible for any widow who has relatives that can care for her no matter what her age, even if she is over 60 years old
- The church is _____ financially responsible for any widow, in our western economy at this time in history, if she has insurance and/or social security, even if she is over 60 years old

3. An excellent pattern for proper discernment

a. Providing benevolent support in general – Phil. 1:9-10

b. Judging (or discerning) things in general – Prov. 3:5-6; 15:14; Hos. 14:9; Mt. 7:24; Jo. 7:24; 1 Cor. 11:31; 14:33; Eph. 4:14; 5:6-10; Col. 2:8; 1 Thess. 5:21; Heb. 5:14; James 1:5; 3:13-18; 2 Peter 1:3; 1 Jo. 4:1