

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ERIE

SERMON OUTLINE

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THE MINISTRY OF MERCY - Part 1

1 Timothy series #15

1 TIMOTHY 5:3-8

As I studied this passage this week, it occurred to me that unless you were in a Bible preaching church, that is a church committed to systematically teaching through the Bible verse by verse, you would never, ever hear a sermon on this text.

The word of God teaches the church of God is to take care of those who need care. God has always taken a special interest in the widows and orphans. **Hear me this morning - God cares for those who are helpless and hopeless.**

In this section we learn about the responsibility of the church in **caring for God's people in The Ministry of Mercy.** Surprising as it may seem today, Paul's instructions to Timothy represent a giant leap *forward* for women in the first century.

I. THE OBLIGATION OF SUPPORTING WIDOWS (v.3).

Paul sets the theme for the entire passage when he says in verse 3. "**Widow**" is an inclusive term meaning those who have lost husbands. In some cases, it could apply to a divorced or abandoned woman. "**Honor**" carries the idea of prizing or highly valuing something, paying the proper respect, appreciating that person. Now, notice one more important aspect of **verse 3**. We are to "**honor widows who are really widows**" He is not speaking of all widows, but rather of those who truly have no one else to support them. The church must support those godly widows who have no other means of support.

II. THE DISCERNMENT IN SUPPORTING WIDOWS (vv.4-8).

Along with Paul's command concerning financially supporting those who are "really widows" there must be some **discernment** to help us know which widows are "really widows" to be supported and those who do not.

A. Three Types of Widows the Church is Not to Support (vv.4,6,8, 9).

1. The church is not to support widows who have family around them. (verse 4)
2. The church is not to support widows with a worldly lifestyle. (verse 6)
3. The church is not to support widows who can provide for themselves. (verse 9)

B. The Type of Widow the Church is to Support (v.5,7).

Verse 5 generally describes the woman who is "**really a widow**" in three ways.

1. She is "left alone."
2. She "trusts in God."
3. She "continues in supplication and prayers night and day"

Paul reminds Timothy in **verse 7** that he is to "**command**" all "**these things**." E. K. Simpson in his commentary on 1 Timothy said, "***A religious profession which falls below the standard of duty recognized by the world is a wretched fraud.***"

Paul uses the word "**infidel**" (v-8) to describe these wretched, heartless, and cruel people. **Infidel (KJV)** is simply an **Unbeliever** without Christian faith (specially a heathen.) It is inexcusable for the family of faith to reject and refuse to care for their own families in need.