

Study Guide for July 23rd, 2006. Social Concerns: I Timothy 5:3-16.

Introduction: How well do we as individuals and as the church express wise compassion toward those who are widows? Are we a witness to our culture? How can we improve?

I. Roots of Compassion: God's concern for widows. (Selected passages)

- A. Describe God's attitude toward widows: Ps. 68:5: Ps. 146:9:
- B. Summarize God's warning regarding widows: Ex. 22:22: Is. 1:17:
- C. How did God provide for widows? Dt. 24:19-21: Dt. 26:12-13:
- D. Describe Jesus' attitude toward widows? Lk. 18:1-8 Lk. 21:1-4
- E. Write out James 1:27 and reflect on the significance God places on widows.

II. Expression of Compassion: The Church's support of widows. (I Tim. 5:3-8)

- A. **Give proper recognition** (vs. 3) means to take care of, including financial support. Why do you think that was necessary for the church in Ephesus?
- B. Who is supposed to receive this support? Who is **not** to receive it? Why?
- C. How does Paul describe a widow who should be included on the list? (see Lk. 2:37)
- D. What reasons does Paul give for family to support aged parents and grandparents?
- E. If you have aged family members, what does loving care look like? What is it not?

III. Empowered for Compassion: The Church's mobilization of widows. (I Tim. 5:9-16)

- A. Vs. 9 introduces a **list** of widows, not who needed support, but who offered service.
- B. What characteristics / experiences qualified a woman for such a position? (vs. 9-10)
- C. What reasons does Paul give for **not** including younger widows on this list?
- D. What does Paul counsel younger widows to do? Compare this word with his counsel in I Cor. 7:7-9, 34-35. How do these instructions complement each other?
- E. What benefits do you see arising from having widows minister? (see Acts 9:36-39)

Conclusion: How can the church exercise discrimination and still show compassion?