

Life in Community
A Community of Thoughtful Service to the Truly Needy
1 Timothy 5:3-16

- I. Supporting The Widows in the First Century
 - A. Why was this such an important work?
 - 1. Limited opportunity for work for women during this time
 - 2. Livelihood based on status of the husband, usually
 - B. Options available depended on the woman's age, social status, remaining family members, education level, etc.
- II. What Did This Ministry Look Like?
 - A. Who qualified for support from the church?
"Widows indeed"
 - 1. No living children or grandchildren who were able to offer support
 - 2. Had demonstrated a personal history of piety and service
 - 3. Not under 60 years old
 - 4. Faithful to her husband (a one-man woman)
 - 5. A reputation for good deeds, at home, in the church, and in the larger community in which she lived
 - B. Who did not qualify?
 - 1. Younger widows
 - 2. Women with families able to support them
 - 3. Women that had defamed the name of Jesus through their wayward lifestyles

- C. What support did they receive? – We are not exactly certain, but it at the least involved felt needs (food, clothing, shelter, or some combination)
- III. What Principles Can We Glean for the Life of the Church Today?
 - A. The church, while desiring to bless as many as it can, must be mindful about the use of its resources in "help-ministry"
 - B. The church should use what it has with discretion and wisdom
 - C. Christian family members should seek to be the first line of support for the needs of their own family (5:8)
 - D. The church, by the grace of God and the work of the Spirit, should strive to move people from a place of being helpless, to being helpers in the work of the kingdom.