

## Growing Strong in Faith | Part 8

Lesson 5

1 Timothy 5:1-16

August 13, 2023

### Caring For the Needy

#### INTRODUCTION

God designed families to help and care for one another. Today's families are more challenged than ever to stay together and to provide care and support for those in need. This can be due to distance, broken relationships, financial struggles, and other worldly influences.

1 Timothy 5:1-16 teaches us about Paul's instruction to Timothy concerning how he is to treat church family members and how the church is to care for the needy. In this case, "the needy" is referring to widows. According to Ray Stedman from AuthenticChristianity.org, during the 1<sup>st</sup> century, churches set up the equivalent of pension funds for widows truly in need. We will learn what qualifies as a "widow in need" and who has the responsibility to care for them.

Caring for the needy is a growing concern in our society today. Can Paul's words referring to the care of widows also apply to others in need?

***Memory Verse: "But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God"—1 Timothy 5:4***

Pray, and read 1 Timothy 5:1-16. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

## **OBSERVATION: What does the passage say?**

1. How does Paul instruct Timothy on how to treat older and younger men and women? (1 Timothy 5:1-2)
2. To whom should we give proper recognition, and who should be taking care of them? (1 Timothy 5:3-4)
3. What does Paul say about anyone who does not provide for their family? (1 Timothy 5:8)
4. Which age group of widows should be put on the list of widows, and which one should not be put on the list? Why? (1 Timothy 5:9-13)
5. What does 1 Timothy 5:16 say about women who are believers?

## **INTERPRETION: What do the passages mean?**

1. Paul was instructing Timothy about how to treat members of the church family. Expanding upon Paul's instructions, how do you think we should treat each other within the church family? (John 13:34-35; Galatians 5:13-15; 1 Peter 4:8-10; 1 John 3:18)
  
2. In verse 3, Paul instructs Timothy to give "proper recognition" (in some translations "honor" is used) to widows in need. What is meant by "proper recognition"? (Exodus 22:22; Leviticus 19:32; Deuteronomy 27:19; Isaiah 1:17)
  
3. From 1 Timothy 5:1-16, it is reasonable to assume Paul is speaking about financial support. What other ways are we to assist those in need? (Luke 3:11, 10:25-37; Acts 2:45; Ephesians 6:18; James 2:15-16)

4. It is scripturally mandated that families take care of their widows. (1 Timothy 5:4). Compare Paul's instructions to Timothy (verses 4, 8, 16) concerning a family's responsibility for their relatives with that of Ruth and Naomi. (Ruth 1:15-18, 2:10-12, 3:5-6)

**APPLICATION: How do the passages apply to your life?**

1. Have you had responsibility for a relative in need or cared for someone in the church family? What were the challenges, and what did you learn from that experience?

2. Have you felt God leading you to help someone in need outside your family? How did you respond, and what help, if any, did you provide? How did this make you feel?

3. Have you or a family member ever received help from the church or church family? What kind of help? What could have been the result if no provision had been made?