



Manage Your Assets to Always Include Meaningful and Memorable Gifts to Mothers, Widows, and Orphans

The first of two (2) lessons:

I take the cause of the widow very seriously. In my early years, I lived with a queen who was a widow. She never asked for anything. She was a giver. She was everything a young boy needed for security in the home.

I personally think the true widow is the most abused person by the church of Jesus Christ.

David Lloyd-George once said, “The true test of a civilization is the way it treats its old people.”

A *U.S. News & World Report* (4/3/81) article uncovered the ugly fact of brutality against the aged by their own families:

Each year, perhaps a million elderly Americans—or about 1 out of every 25—are abused by relatives.... Few people are aware of such abuse, although it occurs with a frequency only slightly less than child abuse.... Only one in six cases ever comes to the attention of authorities.... Victims are likely to be 75 or older, and women suffer more often than men. The most likely abuser is the son, followed by the daughter and spouse....

Though the article described physical, sexual, and extreme emotional abuse, we in the church are sometimes guilty of another form of abuse toward the elderly: apathy.

What does the Word of God say about “Widows and Orphans?”

What are our responsibilities as a church toward the “Widow and Orphan?”

We as a church family need to understand that there is a job, a task, a responsibility, a privilege for every church member concerning the widow and the orphan:

The Widow:

God says in His Word that He takes care of the widow.

God:

- **Defends the cause of the Widow**
Deut. 10:18, “He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing.”
Psalms 68:4-5, “Sing to God, sing in praise of his name, extol him who rides on the clouds; rejoice before him—his name is the LORD. ⁵ A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.”
- **Sustains the widow (to hold up or support; keeps; nourishes; strengthens.**
Psalms 146:9, “The LORD watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.”
- **Keeps the widow’s boundaries intact (home will not be taken)**
Proverbs 15:25, “The LORD tears down the house of the proud, but he sets the widow’s boundary stones in place.”
- **Can be trusted to take care of the widow**
Jeremiah 49:11b “...The widows can trust and depend on God.”

Do you want to know God? Isn’t that the goal, the objective of life, of the Christian’s life is to know the heart of God?

Jeremiah 22:15b, 16 says “The father (king) did what was right and just, so all went well with him. He defended the cause of the poor and needy, and so all went well. Is that not what it means to know me?’ declares the Lord.

Jesus is our example; He knew the heart of the Father...Our God! And, we are to be like Him.

“I and my Father are one.” John 10:30

“If you have seen me, you have seen the Father.” John 14:9

“Fix your eyes on Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith.” Hebrews 12:2

What does God say about us?

Do as Jesus does!!!

What does the Word say that we are to do about the widow?

- **We are not to take advantage of the widow**
Exodus 22:22, “Do not take advantage of the widow or the fatherless.”
- **We are not to ever take the cloak of a widow as a pledge**
Deut. 24:17, “Do not ... take the cloak of the widow as a pledge.”
(No lending money to the widow and receive everything she has as a pledge)
- **We are to plead the case of the widow**
Isaiah 1:17, “Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.”

- **We are to give to the widow...so they might be filled and satisfied...never to go hungry**
Deut. 26:12, "When you have finished setting aside a tenth of all your produce in the third year, the year of the tithe, you shall give it to the Levite, the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that they may eat in your towns and be satisfied."
- **Look after the widows in distress**
James 1:27, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

Are we doing that here in our church??

Let's talk about James....yes, the one that just stated "*Religion that our God accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after the orphans and widows in their distress.....*"

Who was this James? Did he quote it because he believed the Old Testament scriptures? Yes, probably...but there is another reason. There are several James in the Bible.

1. James, Apostle, Brother of John, Son of Zebedee Matt. 10:2,3
2. James, Apostle, Son of Alphaeus Matt. 10:2,3
3. James, The Younger Mark 15:40
4. James, Father of Judas, Not the betrayer Luke 6:16
5. James, the brother of Jesus Mark 6:3, "*Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?*" And they took offense at him.
Matt. 13:55, "*Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas?*"

James, the brother of Jesus, whom we think wrote the book of James and made the statement concerning the widow.

This James was:

- **Not a part of Jesus' ministry....not an apostle**
- **Slow to accept Christ**
 John 7:1-5 (quote 5 "*...For even his own brothers did not believe in him.*")
- **After the resurrection joined the disciples**
 Acts 1:14, "They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers."
- **Possibly was won by the appearance of the Lord after His resurrection**
 1 Corinthians 15:3-7....especially #7, "*Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles,*"

But, what did Jesus say at the Cross about His mother, who was a widow.

John 19:25-27, "Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman, here is your son," ²⁷ and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home."

Jesus had a responsibility to take care of his mother, a widow.....

But...Where was James?

James went to his grave, probably with some guilt...because John, not a part of the family...took care of his mother until she died....

We have widows in our church...

What are we doing to defend them, to sustain them, to look after them when they are distressed, hurting, and do we plead their case...by letting all the brothers and sisters know that they are hurting??

I challenge each one of you to find out the names of the widows in our church...and then get to know them.

Get to know others...those who are divorced and are a single parent.

Concerning the Widow...What can we do now?

1. Adopt a Widow (Families, prayer groups, men's groups, ladies groups)
2. Take them out to lunch
3. Organize a team to take care of things around the house
 - Change oil in the car
 - Change light bulbs
 - Change filters in the house
 - Check windows/Security
 - Be available to talk/conversation
 - Give a shoulder to cry on/Lift them up
 - Mend fences
 - Fix little things around the house
 - Unclog drains
 - Take to doctor/Grocery Store
 - Praise them

I am not to judge you...I have to examine myself...and myself only. However, I have to live by the Scripture (The Holy Word of God).

1 Timothy 5:3-16, Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. ⁴ 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. ⁵ The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help. ⁶ But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. ⁷ Give the people these instructions, so that no one may be open to blame. ⁸ Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." Verses 3-8 only.

Widows with families should be cared for by their family members (5:4, 7-8).

- Paul plainly commands that a widow with children or grandchildren should be cared for by them.
- The parents have contributed immeasurably to their children and grandchildren's welfare. Now it is their turn "to make some return" (v. 4) to their widowed mother or grandmother.
- This is "acceptable" or pleasing in the sight of God (v. 4).

In fact, Paul goes so far as to say that if a person does not provide for his own family (and he clearly includes elderly parents), he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever (v. 8)!

HOWEVER, DON'T THINK THE CHURCH IS NOT RESPONSIBLE IN ASSURING THAT THE WIDOWS ARE GENUINELY CARED FOR.

GOD HOLDS ALL OF US RESPONSIBLE IN MAKING SURE THESE PRECIOUS ONES ARE DEFENDED.

WHEN MY MESSAGES POINT TO YOU...THE MESSAGE IS POINTING BACK AT ME.

"OH WRETCHED MAN THAT I AM, WHO CAN SAVE ME FROM MYSELF?"

