

The Care and Feeding of Widows

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I. Introduction. Text: I Timothy 5:1-16.

II. The way people treat other people depends upon how they look at them.

- A. Young men were not to be seen as rivals but as brothers.
- B. Older women were to be treated as mothers by the younger men.
- C. Younger women were to be treated as sisters.
- D. Love is not to be artificially stirred up.

III. The problem of widows.

A. Qualifications of assistance.

- 1. They were to be real widows without family to help them.
- 2. The widow who was to be supported was to give themselves to a spiritual ministry.
- 3. The widow was at least to be sixty years old, a one husband woman, and well attested in her good deeds.

B. This kind of a woman would commend herself to the Christian community in powerful ways.

C. Younger widows were not to be supported because they were too young and would want to have a family themselves.

- 1. Paul did not want them to prove unfaithful to their first pledge.
- 2. Neither did he want them to become idlers.

D. Married women were to assist those who were real widows.

- 1. Paul underscores the responsibility of families to take care of the elderly in their midst.
- 2. It is the privilege and responsibility of families to take care of their older parents.
- 3. Anyone who does not help their older parents has disowned the faith.

Application questions:

1. What are some of the problems that arise from opposite gender relationships today?

2. What do the qualifications for assistance suggest about Christian standards for helping others with needs? Explain.

3. How have you committed to taking care of your family when they are in need? In what ways has our culture failed to support family members properly as they become incapable of supporting themselves?
