



Unit 10 Teachers' Guide

SERIES: LESSONS FROM THE CHURCH

Lesson #10: THE BENEVOLENT CHURCH

1 Timothy 5:1-16

Announcements and opening prayer.



Connect: an opportunity for people to immediately interact and connect with each other; icebreaker/attention getters. **Icebreaker:** You are running for Miss or Mr. Universe. You were asked, "What is the perfect family?" How would you answer this question to glorify Christ and not be judgmental?

Transition: One of the great attractions of the early church was how they took care of one another. Their compassion level surpassed that of society. People all around took notice. Today we will look at some of the instructions Paul gives to Timothy that helped shape the witness of the church in the area of benevolence.

The Bottom Line: God expects us to have compassion and action within that compassion. How we care for one another is a direct reflection on the church of Christ.

LESSON PLAN



Denotes "Apply"

🌐 What's the first thing that comes into your mind when I say the word, "benevolence?"

Until now Paul is giving instructions on matter concerning Timothy's relationship with the whole congregation. Now the teaching focuses on various specific within the church.

Read 1 Timothy 5:1-6

1. How is Timothy, the young preacher, NOT to treat older men in the church?

2. How is he called to treat older men in the church?

🌐 What does it mean to exhort?

- ⑥ Who are some older Christian men here or around the world that you would like to imitate in the ways they reflect Christ?
3. What parallel teaching do you see concerning the father, younger men, older women and younger women?

This covers how we are to treat every relationship within the church, especially if there is a time they may need help in their Christian walk. They are always to be respectfully exhorted, with a realization that they are truly my family, the family of God in Christ.

- ⑥ What room does this lead for the preacher having a hostile attitude toward anyone in God's family? So what does he do if they refuse to listen and turn hostile toward him?
4. Why do you think he added the term, "with absolute purity" to the instructions on how to treat younger women?
5. Who stands before God to see that the widows within the church are taken care of?
6. Whose has the primary responsibility of taking care of the widows?
7. Why does it fall on the children and grandchildren?
- ⑥ What if that would place a difficulty on your family?
8. In verse 6 Paul presents Timothy with an exception to the rule on widows. What does he say about her choices and the results of those choices?

This is the widow who begins to selfishly live for herself. The root meaning of the word is riotous and luxurious living. In Paul's day many widows were tempted to resort to prostitution in order to make a living. Paul may have been alluding to this fact, and at the same time suggesting what happens to a person spiritually once a Christian and then resorts to such a non-Christian lifestyle. Her choices cause her to no longer be eligible for the benevolence of the church for food, clothing and shelter. She has quit trusting in the Lord to provide.)

- ⑥ How would that behavior manifest itself today?

Read 1 Timothy 5:7-10

9. Were these instructions only for Timothy?

10. How does God view the Christian who refuses to help his immediate family if they are in serious need and are helpless to do anything about it?

Ⓜ What if they cannot take care of themselves because they continually refuse to make wise choices?

Ⓜ What are some examples of unholy lifestyle choices that might cause someone to be helpless when they are not really helpless?

11. What did it take for a widow to be put on the benevolence list of the church?

Read 1 Timothy 5:11-16

12. What about the younger widows?

They could still receive help from the church temporarily if needed, but they were not put on the widow's list, probably meaning permanent financial obligation from the church. They would still be of child bearing age and could remarry. If they did, they would want to break the covenant of being on the list. Many commentators think these widows entered an agreement to work for the church only in return for care. The younger women should not be allowed to make that contract. Instead Paul counsels them to marry and have a family and a home. Don't fall into sin for support or make a pledge you won't keep. Again, this has to do with this WIDOW'S LIST that is mentioned, not just benevolence.)

Ⓜ If an older widow had not means of support or any family left, could this relate to the church of today? How so or why not?

13. What is the last instruction to all believing women?



CARING TIME: SHARE AND PRAY

Close with a Prayer Time: *“Legacy of Service” – Share for anyone you know who is struggling do to a loss of a loved one, the loss of a job, etc. Consider how we might be able to reach out to help that person. Pray over those needs at each table.*



Going Deeper/Homework:

Memory Verse: “Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends”
(John 15:13).

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