



Welcome!

Welcome to the "Dig Deep" Bible studies. These studies are based on the message series, "Inside the Pastor's Mind," a study on the New Testament book of 1 Timothy. These short Bible studies are meant to help you take Sunday's message home and reflect on it throughout the week and apply it to your daily life. If you missed a message, or want to listen to it again, go to www.fishersoffamily.org and click on the "Media" link and download the message audio. We pray that you are blessed in your study of Scripture!

Read 1 Timothy 5:1-16

Define the word "charity" in your own words. What things does charity include? What does it not include? Are you a member of any charitable organizations? Would you consider yourself to be a charitable person?

In 1 Timothy 5, Paul speaks of being charitable, especially to widows. Pastor Zach mentioned two reasons why Paul may have singled out widows for his case study in charity:

- The Roman government made little to no provision for widows and even discouraged people from being or remaining single. Caesar Augustus issued an edict mandating all women to remarry within a year, otherwise they would be taxed. Therefore, widows needed monetary help.
- Theologically, God seems to have a special place in his heart for widows, and serves as their tireless advocate (Pastor Zach mentioned Deuteronomy 10:18 in this regard).

What challenges do widows face today? Can you think of any widows who may need your assistance? How might you help them?

Pastor Zach made three observations in his message about charity. First, he noted that charity is not just about money. It is also about getting involved in people's lives. How are we encouraged to treat others in verses 1 and 2? In verse 1, when Paul encourages us to "exhort an older man as your father," the Greek verb is *parakaleo*, which can also mean to "comfort." This Greek word is also used Matthew 5:4. Can you think of anyone who is going through a hard time and needs you to *parakaleo* them?

The second observation that Pastor Zach made is that charity begins in the family. Read verses 4 and 16. Note the reasons given in each verse as to why family members should take care of their own:

- Verse 4 _____
- Verse 16 _____

Many people see charity as the business of philanthropic organizations such as the Salvation Army or the church. According to Paul, where does charity begin? If someone needed help from your home, would it prove to be a charitable place?

The final observation that Pastor Zach made about charity is that it is discerning. In other words, it practices wisdom to discern who really needs help from who is merely feigning helplessness. In verses 9-10, Paul outlines stipulations for widows to receive help from the church. Notice that one stipulation of showing charity to a widow is that she has "washed the feet of the saints." Who else washed feet (John 13:14)? What does this say about this widow's faith? How does Paul's exhortation to help faithful Christian women, such as the widow described in these verses, echo Paul's command in Galatians 6:10? Why do you think Paul would make such a big deal out of helping other Christians? Does this mean that we are not to show charity to non-Christians? Do you put stipulations on your charity as Paul does in verses 9 and 10?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13. The old King James Version translation of the word "love" is "charity." How does this Scripture passage define what charity is and what it is not? Are there any aspects of charity, as it is described in 1 Corinthians 13, that you have an especially hard time with? What is the greatest virtue in the Christian life according to 1 Corinthians 1:13? Why do you think that Paul would consider this the Christian's greatest virtue? Do you treat charity as if it is your greatest virtue?