

Caring for Widows In The Church The "Honor Roll"

Purpose

The purpose is to provide material assistance to widows in the name of Jesus Christ. This will continue as long as the individual is qualified to receive help, and as long as resources last.

Scope

The fund is designed to reach (1 Christian widows within our church (2 Christian widows outside our church. Because of limited resources, it is intended to supplement existing channels of help, rather than to replace them (James 1:16-17). God uses the institution of the government for the good of His people.

Qualifications (1 Timothy 5:3-16; 2 Thessalonians 3:10-11)

Widows

The guidelines given by God are to be scrupulously followed.

These include:

- (1 Her children and grandchildren shall bear the responsibility for her support (1 Timothy 5:4,8,16).
- (2 She has remained single.
- (3 She is a practicing Christian (1 Timothy 5:5)
- (4 She is at least 60 years old (1 Timothy 5:9)
- (5 She has a reputation for good works, including hospitality, and giving emergency help to others when she was able (1 Timothy 5:10).

Guidelines

- (1 A genuine need must exist, as determined by the Deacons, using such information as is needed to make a sound judgment.
- (2 Our aim is to provide for needs, rather than for wants and desires of applicants (although God may provide desires—Psalm 37:4).
- (3 When a person can work, even if part time, this is required by Scripture (2 Thessalonians 3:10).

Administration

- (1. Since the deacons were given the responsibility to administer the distribution to widows in Acts 6:1-3, this is a basic function of their office. Recommended is a committee of three, with these spiritual gifts: mercy, helps and administration (suggested by Crown Financial Ministries). The administrator is responsible to disburse funds, upon the approval of the Deacons, within available funds. Periodic reports of the status of this fund will be made to the Elders/Pastor.

- (2. Record gathering and keeping is part of good stewardship, but nothing should be done to humiliate applicants for help. However, experience indicates that cash not be given directly to recipients, but directly to those providing goods and services (e.g. to a mortgage or electric company).
- (3. A review of the widow's financial situation will be conducted at least annually, with recommendations following.
- (4. Where needed, budget counseling may be required of the recipient, with ongoing help contingent upon the approval of the budget counselor. The counselor does not have to come from within the local church, but ideally would.
- (5. Termination of help will come when needs no longer exist, a widow remarries, when a job deemed advisable by the deacons has been refused , or upon other grounds deemed sufficient by the Deacons
- (6. No promise of lifelong support is necessarily made or implied by offering assistance to a widow.

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