

His Ministry

In a world where the old are often discarded and seen as past their usefulness, God desires His children to see things differently. Remember, our whole theme this year seeks to open our eyes to opportunities. One of those times occurs when a family member is widowed. Our calling as Christians is to ***“learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents” (1st Timothy 5:4)*** and we do so in order to ***“not let the church be burdened” (1st Timothy 5:16)***. Just how important is this to our Christian walk? Paul writes, ***“But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1st Timothy 5:8)***.

Although family is important, God’s concern for those left all alone goes further. One of my favorite books (letters) in the bible is the one written by James. Some have called it the proverbs of the New Testament. Its attraction, at least for me, is the simplicity of what is taught. Concerning our present discussion, consider these words found in ***James 1:27, “Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.”***

How many of us would want our religion to be described as “pure and undefiled”? I suspect all of us. Pure here means *free from corrupt desire, from sin and guilt*; that is, *genuine*. This idea of visiting means *to look upon or after...in order to see how [someone] is*. Combining it with what we read in 1st Timothy above, God’s people are exhorted to do what they can to help meet the emotional and material needs of others. Of course, a genuine faith looks out for others, especially those less fortunate, like orphans and widows.

One commentator writes, “Acceptable worship is that which combines religious service and a holy life with active participation in good deeds.” That is what this whole year is about, looking to honor our God through service to others. We are all called to be a part of HIS ministry of service.

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