

Caring for Widows

Dr. R. C. Sproul | adapted from ligonier.org/learn/articles/caring-widows

In biblical terms, to be religious does not necessarily mean you are godly. To be religious can mean simply that you're involved in the trappings of religion, that you may be a member of a false religion. Yet, the Scriptures sometimes speak of religion in a positive sense, in the sense of practice that is the fruit of true faith in Christ and commitment to His Word.

The Apostle James focuses on religion as the practice of those who have true faith in Jesus, and he says that true religion demonstrates the presence of saving trust in the Lord (James 2:14-26). What true godliness looks like, he tells us, is not a matter of merely holding to right doctrine with our minds, though that is essential. No, true godliness means that doctrine shapes our lives to such a degree that we manifest the kind of life God wants us to live. And James gives us a succinct definition of true religion, of true godliness: "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." James elevates the activity of caring for widows and orphans as the very essence of pure and undefiled religion. That strikes me as being very significant, and it's an idea that is neglected in the church today.

Widows and their care figure prominently in the agenda that God has set for His church. One of the earliest problems that arose in the Apostolic church was that the widows were being neglected. And if that was a problem in the first-century church, how much more likely is it that we, twenty centuries later, would be guilty of neglecting the widows in our midst?

When a person loses her lifelong mate, it's like losing an integral, intimate part of one's self because husband and wife, we are told, in the mystery of marriage are one flesh. So, the pain of widowhood brings a unique dimension of loneliness. It's jarring to suddenly be alone when one has been accustomed to the constant companionship with one's spouse over a long period of time. Since God is the great Comforter of His people, it makes sense that He would have such concern for widows given the pain they experience.

Widows have always experienced particular difficulties in every age and culture. They faced particular problems in the ancient world. There weren't insurance programs, annuities, or other sorts of things, and without a husband, the widow was usually the most vulnerable and helpless person in the community. Widows had little or no means of support in ancient societies. Thus, the care of the widows was given to the church both in the Old Testament and in the New.

What are sons for? To look after their mothers. What are mothers for but to look after their children? When you think of all of the years and the opportunities where mothers have looked after their children when they enter into their loneliness, the first line of care is to be the surviving family. But it by no means stops there, because the larger family is the church. James, the brother of Jesus, sees this mandate to care for widows as so important that he uses it to describe the crystallized essence of true religion. Do you think you're religious, but you don't care about the widows? Your religion is an exercise in futility, because James says pure and undefiled religion is the care of widows and of orphans in times of trouble.

Announcements

- Prayer Meeting this Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. at the church.
- Evangelism in Woodruff, SC on May 29, 2021 (10AM -2PM)

Vision

Our vision is to see the historic Antioch Presbyterian Church revitalized as a worshipping community to be a blessing to every man, woman, and child in the growing residential hub west of Woodruff and south of Reidville, to the glory of God.

Mission

Our mission as a parish church at the crossroads of Greenville and Spartanburg Counties is the gathering and perfecting of God's people through biblical worship, evangelism, and pastoral care.

Areas of Ministry Focus

Expository Preaching

Biblical Worship

Parish Evangelism

Pastoral Care

Discipleship

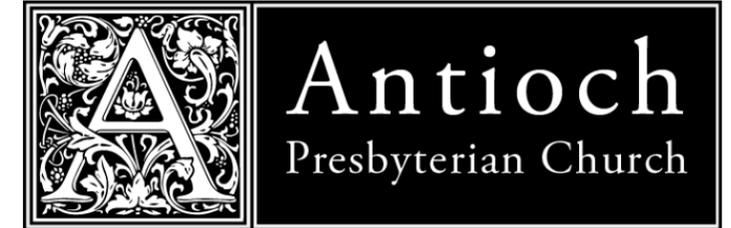
Leadership & Accountability

As a mission work, Antioch Presbyterian Church (PCA) is governed and overseen by a *provisional session* of elders serving as a *commission* of Calvary Presbytery. The six men appointed to the *provisional session* are active elders within the bounds of Calvary Presbytery, and they have graciously agreed to serve "above-and-beyond" to encourage the revitalization of Antioch. They include:

Dr. Chipley Bennett, Ph.D. - Ruling Elder, Providence Presbyterian Church
Dr. E. Todd Buchner, D.Min. - Pastor, Reidville Presbyterian Church
Mr. W. Tosh Groce - Ruling Elder, Blue Ridge Presbyterian Church
Mr. Richard Hollifield - Ruling Elder, Roebuck Presbyterian Church
Mr. William Johnson - Ruling Elder, Woodruff Road Presbyterian Church
Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr., Ph.D., D.D. - Professor of Systematic & Applied Theology, President Emeritus, Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary;
Organizing Pastor & Moderator of Session, Antioch Presbyterian Church
Pastor Richard Thomas - Senior Pastor, Mount Calvary Presbyterian Church;
Clerk of Session, Antioch Presbyterian Church

Church Staff

Mr. Zachary Groff - Ministerial Assistant
Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr. - Organizing Pastor & Moderator of Session
Mr. Johann Xie - Ministerial Intern



The Lord's Day

May 9, 2021

"A Care for the Widows"

1 Timothy 5:3-16

Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr.

Worship - Sunday, 5:00 p.m.

Prayer Meeting - Wednesday, 6:00 p.m.

3600 SC-417 | Woodruff, SC 29388

864.519.3604 | info@antiochpca.com | antiochpca.com

The Lord's Day

May 9, 2021

Silent Meditation

Psalm 146:9

The LORD protects the strangers; He supports the fatherless and the widow, but He thwarts the way of the wicked.

*Call to Worship

*Congregational Commitment

Minister: Congregation, in whom is your confidence?

Congregation: Our help is in the Name of the Lord, Who made the heavens and the earth.

*Salutation

*Hymn of Adoration

No. 146

Praise the LORD! My Soul, O Praise Him!
RIPLEY

*Prayer of Adoration & Invocation

*Revelation of God's Will

No. 174

The Ten Commandments
LES COMMANDEMENTS DE DIEU

*Confession of Sin & Supplication for Grace

Holy Lord, we have sinned times without number. We have been guilty of pride and unbelief, of failure to find Your mind in Your Word, and of neglect to seek You in our daily lives. Our transgressions and shortcomings present us with a list of accusations, but we bless You that they will not stand against us, for all have been laid on Christ. Subdue our corruptions and grant us grace to live above them. Let not the passions of the flesh nor lustings of the mind bring our spirits into subjection, but do rule over us Yourself in liberty and power. No trial is so hard to bear as a sense of sin. If You should give us a choice to live in pleasure and keep our sins, or to have them burnt away with trial, give us sanctified affliction. Deliver us from every evil habit, everything that dims the brightness of Your grace in us, everything that prevents our taking delight in You. Then we shall bless You, God of our righteousness, for helping us to be upright.

*Assurance of Pardon

Psalm 130:3, 4

³ *If you, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?* ⁴ *But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared.*

Offering

No. 107A

O Thank the LORD, for He is Good
(stanzas 1-3)
GOSHEN

*Prayer of Thanksgiving & Supplication

Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil; for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Hymn of Preparation

No. 446

Be Thou My Vision
SLANE

*Prayer for Illumination

*Old Testament Reading

Deuteronomy 15:1-11

*New Testament Reading

1 Timothy 5:1-16

*Congregational Response

Leader: The grass withers and the flower fades,

Congregation: But the Word of our God stands forever!

Sermon

"A Care for the Widows"
1 Timothy 5:3-16

Prayer of Application

*Hymn of Response

No. 184

Lord, You Love the Cheerful Giver
BEECHER

*Benediction

*Doxology

No. 117B

Praise the LORD God, All You Nations
REGENT SQUARE

*Praise the LORD God, all you nations; all you peoples, sing His praise.
For His truth endures forever, and His steadfast love is great
He is faithful! He is faithful! Hallelujah! Praise the LORD!*

*Silent Prayer

"A Care for the Widows"

1 Timothy 5:3-16

Main Proposition

God provides for the widows through church and family.

Outline

I. The Christian Responsibility to Care for Widows (v. 3-8)

II. The Church's Role in Caring for Widows (vv. 9-16)

**Congregation standing, unless physically hindered*