

## "On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan

## I TIMOTHY 5

### *I Timothy 5*

Timothy, the Apostle Paul's true son in the faith has now been instructed on several things related to how he is to conduct himself in the matters of the church of Jesus. It is worth noting that the "Church of Jesus" is primarily a reference to the "local assembly" in 98% of the occurrences in the New Testament. In our Western, independent culture, we pride ourselves on self-sufficiency. That is not the language or culture of the people of God in the New Testament. God has redeemed us for and to community. We are made for each other. The scriptures teach us that the Body of Christ does exist and that all who are in Christ are one. We are connected by the Holy Spirit baptism into one spiritual body in Jesus. However, that is not the emphasis in the sacred writ. The local assemblies were where Paul and the other Apostles spent their lives and energies. The local assembly is primarily where the gifts operate, where love, care, and encouragement are most effective. The local assemblies are where there are officers like that of Elder/Overseer, and Shepherd. This is also where discipline is enacted. These can hardly be done in reality and effectiveness in an "at large" body where there is no effective means of accountability. The local assembly is where the action is. It is only in the independent West that we have this idea of

being alone in our walk with God. If you read the Bible, just the Bible, in particular the New Testament, and no one tells you anything to the contrary, you will walk away understanding that you should be a vital part of a local assembly of believers.

This is nowhere more profoundly realized than in Paul's instruction to Timothy in the way we treat those who are part of the redeemed community of which we are a part. How we treat the older among us, both men and women. How we care for those who are most vulnerable, who are older and no longer have a spouse to care for them, the widows. Paul gives Timothy strict guidelines for who should be taken into the "church/assembly" and how those taken in are to be treated.

Finally, Paul even talks to Timothy about how to care for those who are in leadership within a local congregation. Those who lead in administration and those who lead in teaching the Word of God. Often this is the same person within the context of many smaller congregations, especially in the Western cultural context. If you are not a part of a vibrant local assembly, then find one and get involved as quickly as possible.

### Prayer and Action Steps

***Commitment to a local church should involve at least three things on your part. Personal Involvement, that is show up and serve. Personal Intercession, that is pray for the church, the leadership and for those in your circle of relationships and congregational efforts to reach others. Personal investment, that is give at least a tenth of your income to the church, and then over and above as God blesses. Why is the last one important? Because Jesus said, "Where your treasure is there your heart will be also."***