

# Powerful Christian Ladies

(Sermon Notes)

By Warren Zehrung 4/29/2017

Many people are missing out on one of God's great blessings because they do not appreciate the wisdom and contributions of God's elderly. Do we love honor and respect the elderly as God would have us do? God respects those who are in their golden years. God also honors those Christians who honor the elderly. Because they are weaker and more dependent upon Him, God holds the widow ladies in very high esteem. Do we love; honor and respect the elderly as God does?

The reason these **powerful Christian ladies** are to be respected and honored is because they have a direct line to God, and He responds to them – He will surely hear their cry to Him.

God is very serious about this issue. This world is in deep trouble because they have come to the point where they no longer have esteem for the elderly. Those wayward and thoughtless brutes foolishly say to the widow woman: You are not needed; I don't need to explain anything to you; you are not important; you are worthless and out of date; you are just a burden to me.

They forget who brought them into the world, nursed them, fed them, protected them taught them to walk, treated their fevers and educated them.

Proverbs 23:22 Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy **mother when she is old**.

God does not appreciate it when the widows are being neglected.

Acts 6:1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their **widows were neglected** in the daily service.

The reason that Christian ladies are powerful is because God hears their cry unto Him.

Proverbs 16:31 **Gray hair** is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness. [that is according to all of God's principles]

Righteousness is a rare commodity in the earth today; the righteous are special to our Creator God (Proverbs 20:29).

You would think – according to today's worldly norms – that life is all over after thirty years of age. Well, not according to God who intends for our experiences and loves to **grow** throughout life. It gets better than lollipops, tricycles, bicycles, skate boards, teenage life. Grandparents love their grand-children with a hope for their future... Life is designed to get better and more fulfilling...

James 5:16 ... The effectual **fervent prayer** of a righteous person avails much.

Psalms 68:5 A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in His holy habitation.

1 Timothy 5:5 She who is **truly a widow**, left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day.

And God indeed counts that as service to Himself:

Luke 2:36-37 There was one Anna, ... she was of a great age, ... And she was a **widow** of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but **served God with fastings and prayers** night and day.

God put Anna's name in the Bible because she was one of His **powerful Christian ladies**. She touched the life of Jesus Christ. She was not elderly and "used up" but continued to praise and worship God.

We can see the special honor that God has for the elderly here:

The world looks to powerful men – and disregards the helpless – those w/o political or financial power. God doesn't look at it that way.

God is going to use the weak and the elderly in a mighty way.

When I was in Pasadena I was with a young, strong man who disdained the elderly ladies. He was driving – and he screeched his car right up to an elderly lady who was slowly crossing the street with her Tim Conway shuffle. He sat there blowing his horn at her to get out of the way!!! In his mind - he was in the right – and she was a nuisance. He had no appreciation for her weakness.

Exodus 22:22-24 You shall not afflict any **widow** [shouldn't that go without saying?], or fatherless child. If you afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely **hear their cry**; 24 And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.

“I will surely **hear their cry**,” that is a warning threat from God against those who abuses the elderly. That is God to the rescue!

Why – because they are helpless, and God does have a special relationship with those who are weak. They are **powerful** because they have direct influence with God.

When I was a Pasadena minister – with all the “very high powered ministers” in abundance – I used to like to point out an elderly lady to them, and say, “You better be nice to her because you may be working for her in the Millennium!

That was a thought contrary to what they liked to think. They held a wrong belief that their “church rank” somehow related directly to their future position in God’s Kingdom. One “big” man said that he would be **fifth in the Kingdom**.

God thinks more highly of the elderly ladies than our society does.

Jesus pointed out to the men of His day how God did not visit the rich, powerful and famous men – but a weak, poor widow woman.

Luke 4:26-27 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Zarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

Why? Because she had lost all her source of support – would freeze and starve.

Luke 7:12-13 Now when [Jesus] came near to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

That boy was the widow lady’s only source of living.

A widow woman called me – well into her 90s- who has spent her life heating her home with fire wood she gathers — and offered to send me a few hundred dollars if I needed it! She was a frugal lady.

I would like to make two points:

1. The world has been turned upside down when a widow must help an able bodied man
2. God has blessed that faithful widow in her old age – so that she has security.

How does God look at a widow’s contribution? God does not forget – ever!

Luke 21:2 2 And [Jesus] saw also a certain **poor widow** casting in thither two mites.

Luke 21:3-6 And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury/lack/want has cast in all the living that she had. And as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with **goodly stones** and gifts, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

That poor widow lady’s gift was more pleasing to God than jewels – even the ornate Temple. God considers the elderly lady’s actions GREATER than that of the rich and powerful – the riches and powerful mean nothing to God. They will perish!

Be Careful... be circumspect...

Deuteronomy 27:19 Cursed be he that perverts the judgment of the stranger [not family of friends], fatherless, and **widow**. And all the people shall say, Amen.

God does not take it lightly when someone takes advantage of a widow woman.

Psalms 146:9-10 The Lord preserves the strangers; he relieves the fatherless and **widow**: but the way of the wicked he turns upside down. The Lord shall reign forever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord.

We are to genuinely care for the elderly as Jesus did.

Sometimes God allows ladies to go through unimaginable pain and anguish. It is hard to understand sometimes – because we can't see the end of God's works...

Mary – that young Jewish virgin, was chosen by God because of her lineage, virtues, strengths and faithfulness...

Can we pause and think What Mary was going through when her first-born son was condemned to die right in her presence – how incredibly painful that was for Mary to endure.

Everything He had done – seemingly coming to naught/nothing – dying an ignominious death – hung on a post - on the Stake in shame as a failure.

Jesus never broke His mother's heart.

John 19:26-28 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

The welfare of His widowed mother was a biblical responsibility. The transference of that legal, formal responsibility to John is preserved as an example to us.

Or Consider the elderly ladies who lost their husbands in the early church terror, pain and destruction, brought on the Church by Paul. We find Paul's confession:

Acts 26:9-11 I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem [supporting State Religion]: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad [not righteously] against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.

God allowed those things in order to further the Gospel.

Today, too many church members would side with the establishment – saying of the faithful persecuted brethren, "They brought it on themselves – they should have kept their mouth shut."

Can you imagine what it was like for Paul to face those widowed ladies whose husbands he had killed – And how hard it was for those ladies to forgive Paul who had destroyed their lives? Such a difficult thing for God to require of those ladies.

Mary was a member of the New Testament Church.

Mary gave Jesus of **her life** when she carried Him in her womb – then He in return gave her of His **eternal life** – the Holy Spirit.

How many women died martyr's deaths – the Bible doesn't say. We do not know specifically of their terrible – horrible, trials and tribulations.

Revelation 2:9-10 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan [often in leadership positions]. Fear none of those things which thou shall suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou **faithful unto death**, and I will give thee a crown of life.

### **The Cucumbers Ladies**

We had some elderly ladies near here who grew cucumbers and tithed on the sales – to Herbert W. Armstrong. Their home has a negative value. No one on this earth has much concern for them. God does – and that is a promise!

1 Corinthians 1:27-31 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

If fact, God will usher in perfect Justice. We should rejoice in that!

Proverbs 15:25 The Lord will destroy the house of the proud: but he will establish the border of the **widow**. [they will have their secure reward]

Also:

Don't offend the Little Old Ladies – because God won't forget it!

Malachi 3:5 I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, said the Lord of hosts.

Also;

God will bring retribution, justice and judgment:

Deuteronomy 10:18 He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and the **widows**, and loves the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

I received a letter from a widow lady, and it is all too typical. Let me share it with you:

“I do not feel the joy of my older years. I worked hard all my life, and I still must do so. Where will this all end? My loneliness is overwhelming. I wait for the day I can join my husband in the grave. I have two children in their forties – I have not seen my son in more than three years, and my daughter has not spoken to me for more than twelve years. I have grand-children I've never seen. I don't understand what I did wrong. There are many of us who are suffering from this grief.”

God is aware of everything that is going on. WE cannot forget the parents who gave us life; nursed us, changed our poo diapers; taught us to walk and talk; fed us; educated us; loved us and treated our fevers and bruises...

Exodus 20:12 Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God gives thee.

There is a story in Ruth of respect for Little Old Ladies in the Bible that is touching – because it represents how God feels about Little Old Ladies.

He knows when they suffer – and He takes action.

While you are turning there, let me tell you another story that took place in Pasadena.

There was an important man in Pasadena who married a woman who was in poor health - suffering from an illness. Her quite elderly parents had a beautiful home. The parents wanted to leave their fine home to their daughter. But she died, and the property reverted to the new husband – the Pasadena man. Now that he was the owner he evicted the elderly parents to a nursing home for the remainder of their lives. According to the law – he had every right to do so. I do not believe that God looks at things as man does. Perhaps that factored into why God brought the Pasadena church down like He did.

Ruth 1:12-17 Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons; Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it **grieves me much** for your sakes that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her. And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law. And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for **whither thou go, I will go; and where thou lodge, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:** Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.

These ladies ended up being in the **lineage** of Jesus Christ!

This reflects God perspective because it represents how God feels about Little Old Ladies.

Too many people think the Old Testament was harsh and ungodly – but New Testament Christianity has its foundation there in the Old Testament.

Isaiah 1:16-17 Wash you [repentance], make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the **widow**.

In the same way – things are not hopeless for helpless Little Old Ladies. Do not look at them as the world does.

In this evil world men want the control, money, power. God is not as impressed as some might think.

Zechariah 4:6 Then he answered and spoke unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, said the Lord of hosts.

In the Bible we don't find a welfare system like we have today. Children were blessings to their elderly parents – took care of them when they couldn't help themselves.

God not intend a life of total ease and pleasure for the Little Old Ladies, But He knew they could not compete in a harsh society with cut-throat competition – they would have perished.

In the Old Testament [Deuteronomy 24], God provided a Godly welfare system – not with demeaning handouts – but one in which a good honest day's labor would allow them to provide for their own needs.

This is written to **adult** children:

Ephesians 6:1-3 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

Honor thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with **promise**;) That it may be well with thee, and thou may **live long** on the earth.

1 Timothy 5:1-5 ... but entreat ... the elderly ladies ... The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity. Honor widows that are widows indeed. (really in need and dependent) But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to show piety (kindness-respect, support =

love, affection, too) at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.  
5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusts in God, and continues in supplications and prayers night and day.

Leviticus 19:32 You shall rise up [stand] before the hoary head [elderly, gray haired], and honor the face of the old person, and fear thy God: I am the Lord.

“Fear thy God” is not a suggestion. It means we better do it because God commands it. God has a special relationship with the weak and helpless – like widow ladies and the elderly. When they cry out, He especially, hears their prayers to Him. This world has taken a plunge off the cliff of decency toward the elderly.

It is to our great benefit to realize that each elderly lady is a virtual library of life’s lessons, experiences and history.

Job 12:12 With the elderly is wisdom; and in length of days understanding.

That is what it means in Luke 2:19 where it says, “Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.”

The Commandment - Honor thy father and mother applies equally to all the elderly ladies.