

## God's Love For Orphans

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Our title "***God's Love For Orphans***" may not entirely be what you think it is right now.

**Jn 5:17** *But He (Jesus) answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working."*

The thought comes to mind of **what** they are working for (obviously not for themselves but for the benefit of others, His own creation)...

... He especially cares for those in need... that's the heart of God.

As we are told in **James 1** that *true religion includes visiting orphans and widows in their distress...*

... and the Spirit hit me with the fact that WE, ALL OF US...

... **we were all orphans at one point.** (if you think about it)

All of us were born in sin.

We were trapped in spiritual death, separated from God.

Technically, we were of "our father the devil", **Jn 8:44**, being under the curse of sin.

But of course, the devil is not a good father at all, but the "father of lies".

Which of us was not born trapped in that relationship, trapped in the darkness??

**Jn 8:31-47** So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." 33 They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, 'You will become free'?"

34 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin. 35 **"The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever.** 36 "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

37 "I know that you are Abraham's descendants; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. 38 "I speak the things which I have seen with My Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard **from your father.**" 39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham.

40 "But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do. 41 **"You are doing the deeds of your father."** They said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God." 42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.

43 "Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word. 44 **"You are of your father the devil, and you**

*want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. (Sound like our flesh?? Our flesh is so wretched... we think wicked thoughts and wonder where they came from.)*

*Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and **the father of lies**. 45 "But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.*

*46 "Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me? 47 "He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, **because you are not of God**."*

We were all born "not of God", but under sin, as spiritual orphans if you will...

... lost and uncared for by this world and the devil, to whom this world belongs for now. **2Co 4:4**

**Were it not for God reaching out to us and saving us, we would have been lost forever.**

**1 Jn 3:7-10** *Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; 8 **the one who practices sin is of the devil** (think of an unrepentant lifestyle of sin); for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. 9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*

**10** *By this the children of God and the children of the devil are **obvious**: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.*

We are all either children of God or children of the devil! There's no third option!

Unbelievers won't want to hear this; but rejecting your God and Savior means you are a child of the devil.

(they might even be a "good person"... Satan loves to use good to deceive people, remember... just so long as it's good from human energy and pride, without God getting credit as the Source)

And we were all born this way... trapped in sin as children of the devil; children of a tyrant, under slavery to sin.

**But God our Father says "I want you. I'll take you in."**

That's why Holy Scripture says we believers have been ADOPTED into God's family.

No one else may have wanted you, and you couldn't save yourself...

... and God saw in each of us the orphans we were, destined for suffering under sin and death...

**God Loves Orphans:** God our Father said *"I want you. I'll save you. Come into My home. I will be your Father."*

And that's God's offer to everyone today, throughout the whole world even; He offers His love and grace to all who are willing to repent and turn to His Son.

That's the train of thought that prompted this series on "God's

Love For Orphans", and we'll just have to see where the Holy Spirit takes this.

In particular, we will be discussing what the Bible says about **pure religion**, and **orphans and widows...**

... and we will see **God's great concern for them...**

... and how WE as His adopted children are to **reach out to other orphans** as well and bring them into the Father's kingdom.

Think about orphans and widows for a minute...

What do they have in common?...

... a common description would be that they have lost someone in their life who could be **loving** them and **providing** for them.....

... God reaches out to them **with both love and provisions.**

That's what a good father does, right?

He loves His children and provides for them...

... and the same with a good husband.

I think of that parable where Jesus basically said "invite them all in off the streets to the king's dinner! whoever they are!" **Mt 22**

And so we also have that calling **on our lives**,...

... to let others know about our loving God and Father, so they no

longer need to be lost and lonely spiritual orphans.

Amen?? (the Great Commission, reap the harvest....)

Let's start with the concept of adoption.

**God's Love For Orphans:** When we approach someone with the Gospel, we are letting them know that God wants to adopt them.  
**Ro 8:23-25, Eph 1:3-6,10-14**

As we've seen recently, the Gospel is really presenting HIM, the Person of the Lord.

And in particular, we are to begin with the concept of God's Justice and then lead them to His love and forgiveness. (thus the call to *repentance towards God and faith in Christ, Ac 20:21*)

And so we might go to an unbeliever who we think might be open-minded, and we might say if led by the Spirit :

*"We are all lost and trapped in sin, spiritual orphans if you will. We have no hope in ourselves....*

*... but God loved us so much that He sent His only Son to pay for our sins at the Cross, so that whoever believes in Him will never perish. He wants to adopt you as His own child. He wants to give you eternal life, and this life is in His Son, Jesus Christ."*

Now please, don't think you should memorize this.

As we know, the Spirit will give us the right words for each person, because only HE knows what's going on in their heart.

But timing is everything, and this message is before you right now for a reason.

So this might be one approach, especially toward those estranged from their family/parents. (which is common nowadays)

In reality, **salvation is a form of adoption**, and we can rejoice that God our Father takes anyone and everyone into His family, if they are willing to "*repent and believe the good news*", as our Lord said. **Mk 1:15**

So let's get a fresh reminder about what Holy Scripture says about our adoption; and as we see this, **consider God's love for orphans as a Gospel approach** to those God puts in your life.

**Eph 1:3-6** *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.*

**Eph 1:10c-14** *In Him 11 also we have obtained an inheritance (only sons, or adopted sons in vs. 5, receive an inheritance), having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, 12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. 13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation – having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a*

*view to the redemption of **God's own possession**, to the praise of His glory.*

If you're a believer in TLJC, God now says "you belong to Me, you're My child, and I WILL take care of you."

And that adoption and that inheritance is sealed in Christ by the Holy Spirit of promise (by our God who cannot lie!).

**Tit 1:1-2** *Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those **chosen of God** and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, **in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago***

Notice "eternal life" is in view; the new life given to those adopted by God...

... believers have **a new Father**, and a new inheritance, now being a member of His family.

We also see in Holy Scripture that we are **awaiting our adoption** as sons in eternity... to "move in" with God our Father, into His eternal home.

**Ro 8:23-25** *And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, **waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.** 24 For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, **with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.***

On that exciting day, we will see God our Father in all His glory,



and we will see Jesus, our Lord and friend **and brother**, who purchased our way into the Father's kingdom by His own blood.

In other words, **our adoption will be consummated**, along with many others things. :)

It's almost like we orphans now have the paperwork, we've been legally adopted, we are now HIS...

... but even though we are not physically with Him yet, He sends provisions to take care of us,...

... even though we haven't officially been transferred to His home. (even now, we have the Love and Providing of a Good Father)

Why is this??

Because we are already "**God's Own Possession**": We spiritual orphans have already been adopted by our God and Father! **Eph 1:14**

Can I get an AMEN, somebody?!

And that is another angle into the good news of the Gospel.

Pray for God to bring you to the right people (notice I said bring YOU to THEM, not THEM to YOU... remember we are commanded to "go out" in **Mt 28**)...

... so you can share this wonderful perspective of hope with them.

"Reach out and love someone", and what better way than with the

good news of **adoption**"?

God is good, and as our Heavenly Father, He gives us the privilege to bring more lost souls into His family.

**God is love, and He loves family, and He wants more and more people to become His children, to come to His dinner table.**

And WE have the privilege of holding someone's hand and bringing them to the Father's kingdom!

We mustn't ever take that privilege for granted!

**A Gospel Perspective:** Isn't it easier, **as an orphan** who was lost but is now adopted, **to talk to another orphan** about your good Father who reached down from Heaven to save you? Isn't it easier, **as a sinner** saved by grace, **to approach another sinner**, knowing you both share the same problem and hopelessness?

**So, let's utilize that relationship, that common ground, to reach people!**

We complicate it, but it really is that simple.

Amen??!

Amen means you believe it. It means "so be it", or "truly".

That's what you are agreeing to when you say "amen"; you are embracing the truth.

God wants us all to buy in to the Word which the Spirit is giving

us right now and to personally believe it and embrace it.

So be ready, you may hear a request for a few more "amens" in this series :)

So, we've been reminded of what Holy Scripture says about our adoption...

**... and if we were adopted, that means we must have been orphans... at least spiritually fatherless.**

We'll get to that as the Spirit allows.

So let's go to a verse we should all be familiar with:

**Jas 1:27** *Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.*

Honestly, we could probably spend MONTHS on this verse and the concepts in it.

But again, we'll see what the Spirit wants to emphasize to us, as usual.

We might ask "What does God want from us? How are we to live out our lives on earth?"

**The religion a believer lives out in his life on earth includes this type of care for those in need, as his Father in heaven did for him.**

One other commonality to think about with widows and orphans...

**... when you help those who are in distress (financial, emotional, spiritual, physically), you are helping those who cannot reciprocate.**

Just think about that. You are helping those in a helpless situation, those **who can't pay you back.** (and maybe that's why it's a pure thing in God's eyes)

Isn't that what our Lord did for us??

At one point, the Lord promised He wouldn't leave us as orphans...

... He knew how helpless and lost we are without Him.

This was the night before His crucifixion, when He was sharing God's plan with his disciples:

**Jn 14:18** *"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."*

And so... **in His example**, the spiritual life we are to live is not only between our two ears and in our hearts, but it flows out of our hearts and towards others...

... His love is to flow out to others, especially those in need. (It could be physical needs, but also emotional needs, etc... visit those "in distress".)

One thing for sure; the greatest of love is when one lays down his

life for his friends. **Jn 15**

**That's an actual sacrificial activity.**

**Jn 15:12-14** *"This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. 13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. 14 "You are My friends if you do what I command you.*

As the Spirit has been teaching us for years now, love is an activity.

It begins in the changed heart, and proceeds out in the living of life with others.

And as we've also been hit with lately, you are blessed if you DO these things.

Jesus also said it's one thing to KNOW these things; it's entirely another to obey and actually DO them.

Or as James would say, don't fool yourself by being a talker and not a doer.

**Jn 13:5-17** *Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. 6 So He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, "Lord, do You wash my feet?" 7 Jesus answered and said to him, "What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand hereafter." 8 Peter said to Him, "Never shall You wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." 9 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head."*

10 Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." 11 For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, "Not all of you are clean." 12 So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you?"

13 "You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. 14 "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 "**For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.**

16 "Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. 17 "**If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.**

And the example before us now is how we treat orphans and widows in distress.

Regarding orphans and widows as an example of living a godly life, let's take a look at the life lived by the righteous Job.

Remember, he was called blameless and upright!

**Job 1:1** *There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.*

So, what does a blameless and upright man live like?

That's a good question, right? In other words, what does God want from us?

Hint: what does pure and undefiled religion do??

During his trials, Job reminisced about the blessed life God gave him and the way he lived...

**Job 29:1-17** *And Job again took up his discourse and said,  
2 "Oh that I were as in months gone by, As in the days when God  
watched over me; 3 When His lamp shone over my head, **And by His  
light I walked through darkness;***

*4 As I was in the prime of my days, When the friendship of God was  
over my tent; 5 When the Almighty was yet with me, And my children  
were around me; 6 When my steps were bathed in butter, And the rock  
poured out for me streams of oil!*

*7 "When I went out to the gate of the city, When I took my seat in the  
square, 8 The young men saw me and hid themselves, And the old men  
arose and stood. 9 "The princes stopped talking And put their hands on  
their mouths;*

*10 The voice of the nobles was hushed, And their tongue stuck to their  
palate. 11 "For when the ear heard, it called me blessed, And when the  
eye saw, it gave witness of me, 12 **Because** I delivered the poor who  
cried for help, And the **orphan** who had no helper.*

*13 "The blessing of the one ready to perish came upon me, And I made  
the **widow's** heart sing for joy. 14 "I put on righteousness, and it  
clothed me; My justice was like a robe and a turban. 15 "I was eyes to  
the blind And feet to the lame.*

*16 "I was a father to the needy, And I investigated the case which I  
did not know. 17 "I broke the jaws of the wicked And snatched the prey  
from his teeth.*

There we see the lifestyle of a blameless and upright man, in God's eyes.

**Why "Blameless And Upright"? : Job defended the weak and spoke up for them when no one else would (as God does!). And people knew he wouldn't overlook their unrighteous activities against the orphans and widows. In fact, he fought for them, even though it wasn't his fight. Job 1:1,29:1-17**

And because Job belonged to God, and he KNEW God's kindness towards him, he lived as God would have him live...

**... he lived in eternal life because he KNEW God...**

... and he did as God had done for him (think of adoption).

This my friends is a picture of pure and undefiled religion,...

... Job is a visual demonstration for us of what James teaches us thousands of years later...

... this is one definite way we are told to live out our life in Christ.

And if you think about it, there is no shortage of people in need.

Not only are there plenty of spiritual orphans in this world to approach about God's adoption plan...

... but there are also plenty of literal orphans and widows to reach out to.



There is plenty of opportunity to stop sitting around and wondering what God wants us to do.

There are plenty of widows who have lost their loving husband and provider.

And there are plenty of orphans as well who have lost the love and provisions of a father.

How many children out there do you know today that have only one parent raising them??

Could they rightly be considered an orphan?

**Defend The "Fatherless":** The Bible often calls orphans the "fatherless", because the father is usually the provider in a family, esp. if the mother is staying home to properly raise the child. **Ps 68:5, 146:9**

And in many countries even today, there are no jobs for women... they couldn't find work even if they wanted to.

That's why many fatherless children are given into orphanages in India **by their own mothers...** because the mothers can't provide for them properly.

So, ask yourself, when's the last time you looked at the child of a single mother as an orphan; as one that God wants you to "visit in their distress"?

We sit around wondering what God wants us to do, when there

are plenty of people in distress we could reach out to.

In fact, you might in that situation find both a widow and an orphan; one who has lost her husband and her child who has lost his father.

The Spirit's saying instead of thinking you're spiritual by sitting home contemplating all the time; get up and do the things you say you believe in.

**God Loves Orphans: DO LIKE GOD. Jas 1:27, Jn 13:17**

God does because love does, and God IS love.

Let's imitate God and Christ, who REACHED OUT to widows and orphans.

The Lord didn't sit back on his Jewish sofa back in the day and wait for people to come to Him.

He SHOWED us what love is, and what He wants us to do. Don't complicate it!

Make sure you do these things with the right heart, and not for selfish gain, but don't complicate it.

Again, there's the benefit of helping those who CAN'T reciprocate. It's difficult to have an ulterior motive.

In fact, these are the very people our Lord commanded us to love:

**Lk 14:12-14** *And He also went on to say to the one who had invited*

*Him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, otherwise they may also invite you in return and that will be your repayment. 13 "But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, 14 and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."*

Now back to orphans and widows as specific examples of those we are to reach out to...

I think of the Lord's compassion on the widow who also lost her only son...

**Lk 7:11-16** *Soon afterwards He went to a city called Nain; and His disciples were going along with Him, accompanied by a large crowd. 12 Now as He approached the gate of the city, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a sizeable crowd from the city was with her. 13 When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her, and said to her, "Do not weep."*

*14 And He came up and touched the coffin; and the bearers came to a halt. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise!" 15 The dead man sat up and began to speak. And Jesus gave him back to his mother. 16 Fear gripped them all, and they began glorifying God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and, "God has visited His people!"*

How did God "visit His people"?! How did God show Himself?

**By visiting a poor widow in distress, and it was a hands-on experience.**

And the Spirit's telling us to remember: God visited you and I, orphans without hope, and He reached out to save us, did He

not?!

And He's saying *this is what my children do, as well.*

Follow the example of your good Father, and your brother and Lord, Jesus Christ.

**God's Purposes Are Known:** We often get caught sitting home in self-pity, as though we haven't been given new life in Christ. Well, we're deceiving ourselves. His Word tells us what He wants us to DO.

The reason we get tricked into depression and loneliness is because we're often **lazy** and **not willing** to get off the couch and obey the Word.

Our faith is to be **exercised** on others, not only expressed privately to God our Father.

Our Father reached down to others in need, and that's what our Father wants us to do as well.

If we have the right heart, if our motivation is glory to God, then we live the spiritual life by doing something as direct and simple as "*visiting orphans and widows in their distress*".

And notice also James said "*visiting*".

He didn't say giving financially, although there might be a time for that.

Sometimes we might just need to comfort those God puts in our

path.

That brings glory to God, and also helps us be "unstained by the world."

**Jas 1:27** *Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.*

This is another way obedience blesses us... it helps us keep ourselves unstained by the world.

If we are actually using our time to focus on those in need, we don't have time to entertain worldly filth.

Remember Job's example?

It also says Job turned away from evil...

**Job 1:1** *There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.*

If we obey the call to visit orphans and widows in their distress, there's no time to get deceived by sin and the world.

How can a man keep himself unstained by the world?

How about by doing good things; the good things God did for you, for others??

If you find a couple people to regularly "check in on", or "visit"...

... if you find God calls you to certain people as your "assignments"...

... well that's how He rescues us from self pity and self focus, and that good activity keeps us unstained by the temptations of the world.

Allow me a moment to share...

I love my life. Despite my flaws, and a couple difficult days I had last week, I love my life.

Why? - God gives me the opportunity to do things that He, our Father, is proud of.

As Jesus said, *if you love Me, you'll keep My commandments.*

He gives us plenty of things to do that He calls "good".

**And it's simpler than we want to make it.**

The question then only becomes "are you willing to obey My commands?"

"Are you willing to deny yourself and pick up your cross and follow Me?"

Following Jesus includes living for others, as Jesus did when He healed the multitudes everywhere He went.

And He desires us to reach out and love others, in a variety of

ways...

... ultimately that's between you and the Lord.

But don't be deceived by sitting home on the couch and thinking you are living the spiritual life.

Why not volunteer to help widows in your community?

**Why is that not our focus, the priority in our hearts?**

Well, that's between each of us and the Lord. Maybe we're not ready yet.

Or maybe we too busy sulking and focusing on self.

But you too can love your life, because you choose to live in God's purpose for you...

... and you will be more blessed if you GIVE, not sit around waiting to receive.

That's sin's path to misery.

Let's see what else the Spirit has for us about widows and orphans...

Let's borrow a little more wisdom from Job:

**Job 31:13-23:** *"If I have despised the claim of my male or female slaves  
When they filed a complaint against me, 14 What then could I do when  
God arises? And when He calls me to account, what will I answer Him?"*

15 *"Did not He who made me in the womb make him, And the same one fashion us in the womb?"*

16 *"If I have kept the poor from their desire, Or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail, 17 Or have eaten my morsel alone, And the orphan has not shared it 18 (But from my youth he grew up with me as with a father, And from infancy I guided her),*

19 *If I have seen anyone perish for lack of clothing, Or that the needy had no covering, 20 If his loins have not thanked me, And if he has not been warmed with the fleece of my sheep, 21 If I have lifted up my hand against the orphan, Because I saw I had support in the gate,*

22 *Let my shoulder fall from the socket, And my arm be broken off at the elbow. 23 "For calamity from God is a terror to me, And because of His majesty I can do nothing.*

We should have a healthy fear of God if we do not help those in need and we know better.

Obey God and His commands and we'll be blessed in every way.

Disobey His commands and we will be under discipline from our loving Father, and it might indeed be painful.

**Living for those in need, particularly orphans and widows, was a major part of righteous Job's lifestyle! By faith, we can live this way too.**

We can forsake our "normal" way, whatever we consider normal.

We can live a new life in Christ, eternal life, given from the Father to be shared with others.



**Ps 68:1-6** *Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered, And let those who hate Him flee before Him. 2 As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; As wax melts before the fire, So let the wicked perish before God. 3 But let the righteous be glad; let them exult before God; Yes, let them rejoice with gladness.*

*4 Sing to God, sing praises to His name; Lift up a song for Him who rides through the deserts, Whose name is the Lord, and exult before Him. 5 **A father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows**, Is God in His holy habitation. 6 God makes a home for the lonely; He leads out the prisoners into prosperity, Only the rebellious dwell in a parched land.*

**Is 1:16-17** *"Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, **Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow.***

Remember our recent emphasis on making the most of your time because the days are evil? **Eph 5**

Let's remember this too:

**Gal 6:9-10** *Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. 10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.*

This is how we "know love", or recognize love, the very love of our heavenly Father who adopted us, by grace.

**1 Jn 3:16-24** *We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us;*

*and we ought to lay down our lives **for the brethren** (We are brothers because we have all been adopted. Brothers are related by blood, and so are we based on the blood of Christ.)*

*17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? 18 Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.*

*19 We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him 20 in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things. 21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;*

*22 and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep **His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.** 23 This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, **and love one another, just as He commanded us.** 24 The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.*

We'd be remiss if we didn't heed some NT instruction about widows:

**1 Ti 5:3-4** *Honor widows who are widows indeed;*

**1 Ti 5:9-16** *A widow is to be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man, 10 having a reputation for good works; and if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work. 11 But refuse to put younger widows on the list, for when they*

*feel sensual desires in disregard of Christ, they want to get married,*

*12 thus incurring condemnation, because they have set aside their previous pledge. 13 At the same time they also learn to be idle, as they go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention. 14 Therefore, I want younger widows to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach;*

*15 for some have already turned aside to follow Satan. 16 If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, she must assist them and the church must not be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed.*

Let's go to a familiar passage, but this time see how it ends...

**Deu 10:12-19** *Now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require from you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to keep the Lord's commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good? 14 "Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it.*

*15 "Yet on your fathers did the Lord set His affection to love them, and He chose their descendants after them, even you above all peoples, as it is this day. 16 "So circumcise your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer. 17 "For the Lord your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe.*

*18 "He executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love for the alien by giving him food and clothing. 19 "So*

*show your love for the alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt*

We might say "show your love to orphans because you were orphans too!"

There are no excuses with God!

And we have the power to love because He first loved us!

He requires of us these things because these things were freely done for us!

Let's take advantage of the opportunity and privilege He has granted us!

Let's live in the inheritance He has given us!

We can and will accomplish good for His Name, and it's by simpler means that we like to think, as we over-spiritualize everything.

In Deuteronomy, God is giving instructions to the nation of Israel, and how His people should live:

**Deu 14:28-29** *At the end of every third year you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in that year, and shall deposit it in your town. 29 "The Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance among you, and **the alien, the orphan and the widow who are in your town**, shall come and eat and be satisfied, in order that the Lord your God **may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.***

**Deu 16:9-15** *You shall count seven weeks for yourself; you shall begin*

to count seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the standing grain. 10 "Then you shall celebrate the Feast of Weeks to the Lord your God with a tribute of a freewill offering of your hand, which you shall give just as the Lord your God blesses you; 11 and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God, you and your son and your daughter and your male and female servants and the Levite who is in your town, **and the stranger and the orphan and the widow who are in your midst**, in the place where the Lord your God chooses to establish His name.

12 "You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes. 13 "You shall celebrate the Feast of Booths seven days after you have gathered in from your threshing floor and your wine vat; 14 and you shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter and your male and female servants and the Levite and **the stranger and the orphan and the widow who are in your towns**.

15 "Seven days you shall celebrate a feast to the Lord your God in the place which the Lord chooses, because the Lord your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you will be altogether joyful.

**Deu 27:19** 'Cursed is he who distorts the justice due an alien, orphan, and widow.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

**Ps 146:9** The Lord protects the strangers;  
He supports the fatherless and the widow,  
But He thwarts the way of the wicked.

**Jer 49:11** "Leave your orphans behind, I will keep them alive;  
And let your widows trust in Me."

Should we not "adopt" the same attitude of God?

The same heart God has for orphans and widows??

It is the pathway to doing the will of God; to living in pure and undefiled religion...

... by helping those who cannot pay you back; as the Lord helped us who couldn't pay Him back.