

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

STORY

Mildred Boulware and Carolyn Dale, members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Oak Hill, Alabama, see their work with the elderly in rural Alabama not as a job but a ministry. So when their oldest senior—Willie Lee—did not show up for the daily program, they were alarmed. They immediately drove to her house to check on her.

Willie Lee lived alone in a two-room shack in the woods. She had a water spigot in her yard—her only water—and she heated her house with an old iron stove on which she also cooked her meals. The walls of her house were black with soot, and her only meals were heated cans of beans or gravy.

Mildred and Carolyn knocked on her door, but there was no answer. They broke the door down and ran inside. They found Willie Lee lying on her bed ice cold and unconscious. The fire in her woodburning stove had gone out during the night. Now she was nearly frozen. The emergency crew arrived and told the women they had saved Willie's life. "Just a couple more minutes and she would have died," an EMT member said.

Discuss one-on-one or in small groups the following questions.

1. How can you tell when people see their work as serving the Lord? *They go the extra mile; they love those they serve.*
2. If the women saw their work as just a paycheck, would Willie be alive today? *Probably not. They would just assume she wasn't coming in that day.*
3. Why do you suppose these Lutheran women valued the life of a poor elderly woman? *God's Word teaches us to value all whom God has made and for whom His Son has died, including those not yet born and those elderly, sick, or unable to contribute to society.*