

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript*

### **How to Win Your Mate To Christ 1 Peter 3:1-7 Part Three**

How many of the men here in this congregation have been positively influenced by a special woman in your life? I would suspect that the numbers would be extremely high. But let us make this more narrow. How many of you here this evening/morning have been positively influenced spiritually by a woman? Again I believe that the numbers would be very high. But let us narrow this question down even further. How many of you here this evening/morning have been positively influenced spiritually by your wives? This number I am sure is smaller, but I would think that number would be statistically significant.

I would have to include myself as a man who has been positively ministered to by my wife. When I first met Lynn my interest in spiritual things was negligible. As time went along I found myself drawn into activities through her that spiritually stimulated me. As time went along I found myself drawn into relationships with people through her who had a very positive impact upon my life. I can honestly say that it was through Lynn that the door to incredible spiritual blessing was opened for me.

Women can have a significant impact on men. In fact Peter in addressing women who were married to unsaved husbands **1 Pet. 3:1-6** is given the hope that if they would behave in a certain way that it very well may be possible that their unsaved husbands may be won without a word.

Peter in spelling out this behavior lists three very specific duties.

#### THREE SPECIFIC DUTIES ARE OUTLINED

1) SUBMISSION - **“In the same way you wives, be submissive to your own husbands.”** We have already talked about particular behavior at length. This is the right thing for women to do. This comes out very clearly in the very next duty that Peter lists.

2) CHASTE AND RESPECTFUL - Look at **V. 2 “as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.”** We have discussed the first of these two words, the word “chaste.” The word “chaste” in most people’s minds emphasizes sexual purity. However, as we examined this passage I believe that it became clear that a less confusing translation would have been, **“as they observe your pure and respectful behavior” (1 John 3:3).**

The pure behavior that this is talking about would be that behavior that exemplifies the model woman. For Solomon, his model woman was described in **Prov. 31**.

For the 20th century male the description of his model wife I am sure would not be the identical description of Solomon in **Prov. 31**. But the point that we should not miss is that each of us has in our minds a picture of a model wife or husband, the pure wife or husband, the chaste wife or husband that is uniquely our own.

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The saved wife that is being addressed in this passage is being exhorted to live her life in such a way before her unsaved husband that he truly believes that he has married the model wife. That “excellent” wife that Solomon tells us whose worth is far above precious stones.

For all the wives in this congregation this morning particularly those with unsaved husbands are you prepared before the Lord to strive toward purity and the goal of becoming the model wife for the Lord’s sake? Are you prepared to place the needs of your family and the instruction of the Lord before your own personal felt needs? Hopefully the answer to these questions is yes!

But now let us take this a little further. Let us say that a saved wife through the sustaining grace of God is able to actually come close to achieving this standard. What prevents the husband from simply exalting his wife and not humbling himself before the Lord? What will cause Him to respond to his wife’s conduct in such a way that he Himself will embrace her Lord and her Savior, the Lord Jesus, as His Lord and His Savior?

Let us go to the next word. The word is “**respectful**.” The saved wife is not only to live a “**pure**” or “**chaste**” life but also a “**respectful**” life. The verse says, “**as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.**”

The word translated “**respectful**” comes from the Greek word PHOBOS which means “fear.” This is exactly how the KJV translates this particular verse. The KJV reads “**while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.**”

This reference to “**fear**” could mean a reverential awe toward her husband, her deep concern to show proper respect and not to be remiss in any duty. But it is more likely that the reference is to her reverence toward God and deep devotion toward Him. This is consistent with what we have already seen in the epistle.

In **1 Pet. 1:17** it says, “**And if you address as father the One who impartially judges according to each man’s work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay upon earth.**” Then we see this theme repeated again in **1 Pet. 2:17** “**Honor all men; love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.**”

This reverential fear of God is exactly what we see in **Prov. 31** in Solomon’s description of the model wife. It says in **V. 30** of **Proverbs 31** after she is described and after we see the blessings that came to her from her husband as well as her children, the following statement “**A woman who fears the Lord will be praised.**” It does not say a woman who fears her husband, but rather who fears the Lord.

Let us go back and look at the verse again, it reads “**As they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.**” Peter is saying to the unsaved wives that their husbands should hopefully not only see a model wife but also a wife who fears the Lord.

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This is important to understand. This passage is telling the unsaved wives that if they are going to have the hope of winning their unsaved husbands without a word they are to live their lives in such a way that two things are seen. First of all the husband sees a pure wife, a model wife. And secondly the husband is able to observe her reverential fear of the Lord.

For your husband to know that you are a woman of prayer is not bad. For your husband to know that you are a woman of the word is not bad. For your husband to know that you value Christian fellowship is not bad. For your husband to know that you cherish the opportunity to publicly worship the Lord in the community of the saints is not bad. IN FACT NOT ONLY IS IT NOT BAD, IT IS A NECESSARY PART OF YOUR TESTIMONY. CERTAINLY WE SHOULD NOT FLAUNT, IT BUT NEITHER SHOULD WE HIDE IT.

But someone might say, what happens if your husband objects to that area of your life which continues to give testimony to the fact that you are a God fearer? What happens if he objects to the time you spend in prayer, in the word, in fellowship with God's people, or at worship services. I really truly believe that this is more hypothetical than real. If a family is being served in the way that we have described this morning, as a wife seeks to be that model wife she typically will be given the green light to pursue those things within her life that she sees as necessary in living out a reverential, respectful life before the Lord.

But someone might say, what if the husband doesn't give her a green light? I believe that the scriptures are clear, we are to fear God rather than man. This is exactly what happened with Daniel. The authorities over him commanded him to worship in a certain way and he refused. He was willing to suffer the consequences in order to remain faithful to his God, and so it is with the saved spouse.

Pursuit of this quality of life that is characterized by “**chaste and respectful behavior**” is not easy. There are certain forces at work against the saved wife. One of those forces is mentioned in the very next verse and this leads us to the third duty that Peter is exhorting these saved wives to embrace.

### BALANCED BEHAVIOR

All those seeking to live Godly and pure lives before the Lord will have various challenges facing them. It is very interesting to note the particular challenge that Peter isolates for us in **VV. 3-4** in regard to these wives. In these verses, he is addressing wives who may fail to be a powerful witness to their unsaved husbands in the matter of purity because of their preoccupation with external beauty. Let us read **VV. 3-4**. “**And let not your adornment be merely external-braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; (4) but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.**” The NIV reads this way, “**Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of bold jewelry and fine clothes’ (4) Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.**”

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In America did you know that women's clothing stores outnumber men's clothing stores seven to one?

Whether you agree with Peter or not, it appears to be clear from this passage that Peter believes that a significant threat to a Christian woman not becoming a model of purity is a preoccupation with her outward appearance. We should not use this passage to say that women should not be concerned with their outward appearance. The passage does not say that. What the passage does say is that our concern for our outward appearance should not replace or overpower our concern for personal purity.

How might we know if we have crossed the line? We may know if we have crossed the line by how other's perceive us. And in the context of this passage, by how our husband perceives us.

If when people think of us, what they think about is how much money or time we spend looking for clothes and that is what dominates their thinking about us, something is wrong. If when people think of us, what they think about is how much attention we are putting into looking good and that is what dominates their thinking about us, something is wrong.

All of us probably can think of people we feel fall into this category, but this passage is not written to us in order to apply it to others, but rather it has been written to apply to ourselves. If we are spending more money on our grooming, jewelry, and clothes than we are giving we need to think seriously about the possibility that we are one of those Peter is addressing in this passage. If we are spending more time and energy shopping for clothing and for primping ourselves than ministering our gifts in the church and seeking to minister to the needs of people in the world, we at this point should be feeling a sinking feeling in our own hearts.

When people think of us, or more specifically when our husbands think of us, what should come to their minds is not how much time and money we are spending on our outward appearance but rather something very much other than that and what would that be?

Let us combine V. 4 with V. 3, **“And let not your adornment be merely external - braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; (4) but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.”** Peter in essence saying that the Christian wife's true beauty is **“the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit.”**

As the Christian wife is seeking to live a pure life out of reverential fear toward the Lord she will practice submission. And that submission does not have to be characterized by fear since it is the Lord Himself who has given her these instructions. Knowing this will make it possible for her to relax. She will not be alone in walking this path of obedience. She will be able to adorn herself with a gentle and quiet spirit.

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“Gentle” in the Greek world was an amiable friendliness that contrasted with roughness, bad temper, or brusqueness. In biblical perspective the term indicates a person who does not attack back, for he or she waits on God to judge in the end; knowing God is just, the person can suffer evil without bitterness and vengeance (Num. 12:3; Matt. 5:5; 11:29). This fits well with “quiet”, a term used in the NT only here and in 1 Tim. 2:2. It simply communicates the image of calm, peaceful, and tranquil as opposed to restless, rebellious, disturbed or insubordinate.

It is very difficult for a husband to carry the responsibility of leading the home no matter how good or bad that leadership might be, if he has a wife who makes it a practice of grumbling and complaining about their life situation. **Prov. 21:19** says **‘It is better to live in a desert land than to live with a contentious and vexing woman.’**

We are not here to fight for our rights, stand up for our rights, defend our rights. We are here to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and to have a mentality of serving rather than being served. The world may think such an unassuming and mild disposition when it comes to our personal rights to be rather foolish and misguided, but what do the scriptures tell us?

Look us again look at V.4 **“but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.”** God is very much aware of those who are adorned with the inner quality of a gentle and quiet spirit. In His eyes it is a spiritual gem “of great worth” of infinitely more value than perishable outer adornments. It shone brilliantly in the person of God’s Son (Matt. 11:29; 21:5).

**Matt. 11:29** **“Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls.”**

### CONCLUSION

There are very few men who are in this congregation who have not been benefited because of their relationship with a special woman. Hopefully, as the wives of this congregation hear and heed these instructions, particularly those whose husbands are unsaved will see your husbands transformed as God uses you in their lives to glorify Himself.