

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

How to Win Your Mate To Christ 1 Peter 3:1-7 Part Four

Marriage gives us the opportunity to serve in ways that are not afforded by any other relationship.

This opportunity for service opens up the door for effective evangelism because it allows the unsaved spouse to see the transforming power of the Gospel in all its glory. It allows the unsaved spouse to view our resurrected Lord continuing His ministry of seeking and saving that which is lost through his or her saved mate.

CHRISTIAN WIVES (VV. 1-6)

Peter initially speaks to the Christian wives and shares with them three duties that they need to perform if they are going to dramatically impact their unsaved husbands.

SUBMISSION

V. 3 “In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives.” In respect to a wife’s overall behavior submission is the key to effective evangelism in respect to her unsaved husband. There is no other quality that is nearly as important as this quality. It is this quality above every other quality that will endear the husband to his wife.

When we think of “submission” we need to think of it in the very broadest sense. Submission is not just doing what the husband tells you to do. But more importantly the submissive wife is seeking to do what the husband wants her to do whether he commands her or not. IN EFFECT THE TRULY SUBMISSIVE WIFE IS SEEKING TO CONFORM HERSELF TO HER HUSBAND’S IMAGE OF THE MODEL WIFE. IN EFFECT SHE IS SEEKING TO BECOME THE WOMAN OF HIS DREAMS.

If he wants his wife to sit down with him when he comes home from work she will do this. If he wants her to have dinner on the table at a certain time she will strive to do this. She will seek to do this as soon as she understands that this is what he desires without him ever having to command her or tell her.

She will do this because she is seeking to live a “**chaste and respectful**” life.

CHASTE AND RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR

The wife of the unsaved husband wants him to see two things: a chaste life and a respectful life. The word “chaste” can also be translated “pure” and I believe that this translation would be less confusing. The saved wife in this context is seeking to be seen by her husband as pure and in pursuit of this end she would of necessity be obligated to conform herself to his image of the model wife.

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This pursuit of purity upon the part of the wife which would express itself in the kind submission to her husband that we have been talking about is out of respect which the husband can also observe. What is important to remember is that the respect that is spoken of here is not the wife's respect of her husband but rather of the Lord. Not only will the husband be able to see a woman who is seeking to conform herself to his desires, but he will also see a wife who is committed to conform herself to the Lord's desires.

There are many snares that can trap us and prevent us from living out obedience as spelled out in God's word. Peter now lists one of those snares that women may be particularly susceptible to and that is found in **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.”**

BALANCED BEHAVIOR

The third behavior that Peter is encouraging the saved wife to pursue is balanced behavior. Our concern for external appearance should not take priority over that of inner beauty. It should not take priority of a meek and quiet spirit.

Peter closes this section to the wives by giving examples of godly submission in **VV. 5-6** **“For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands. (6) Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.”** These women who Peter is referring to from the past put their faith and trust in God. It says that they **‘hoped in God.’** This trust, would enable these wives to be submissive to their husbands “under difficult and trying circumstances. Peter refers to Sarah the wife of Abraham as a specific example of a woman who adorned herself in the way Peter has just described.

Peter illustrates this point by telling us that Sarah called Abraham, Lord. This appears to be a reference to **Gen. 18:12** where she is seen as speaking about him and referring to him as her Lord. This way of referring to Abraham is quite impressive. Consider the evening that Abraham came home and told Sarah that the Lord had spoken to him and had directed him to leave Ur of the Chaldeans to go where he as yet did not know. She must have had certain questions. She may have even expressed her thoughts and opinions but if we are understanding this passage correctly at the end of this quiet and respectful discussion it would appear she would have said to Abraham, “My lord, you have asked me to follow you and follow you I will.”

It might seem to certain people particularly in the day and age that we live in that this attitude of submission would reflect weakness, but certainly we do not see weakness in the passage before us but rather strength. **“Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right”** (Which would be doing as she did). And then what does it say? **“Without being frightened by any fear.”**

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There is no fear because the person who trusts in the Lord as Sarah did has nothing to fear because the Lord is with them. **Ps. 9:9-10 “the Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. (10) He that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.”**

And now we move on to the husbands.

CHRISTIAN HUSBANDS

Let us read **V. 7 “You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”** When it says, “you husbands likewise” I believe that it is continuing to address Christians who have unsaved spouses. Certainly the problems that Christian husbands might have with unsaved wives would be minimal compared to Christian wives who had unsaved husbands but still this was an issue. This is clear from **1 Cor. 7:12** where it says “**But to the rest I say, not the Lord, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, let him not send her away.**” Again we are reminded in this verse that in that time period in that culture that men were in the driver’s seat. But again just because Christian husbands may not have been exposed to as much abuse as their women counterparts, they need to know how to live with their unsaved wives in such a way that their wives might be drawn to consider the claims of the gospel were just as valid.

As with the wives, Peter isolates three difficult behaviors that Christian husbands need to exhibit with their wives.

CONSIDERATE BEHAVIOR

Let us look at **V. 7** again “**You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way.**” The word for “understanding” is the Greek word GNOSIS. What this literally means is “knowledge.” As husbands we are to live with our wives according to knowledge. What do we know about women?

AFFECTION

For the husbands in this congregation let me ask you this question. Does your wife need affection? And I would believe that across the board this morning every man here would say absolutely. Peter is telling you to live with her according to that knowledge.

Just so that we do not have any misunderstanding about what we are talking about. By affection I am not talking about a sexual relationship. By affection I am talking about all the ways that a man can say “I love you” to their wives.

Men are to live with their wives in such a way that their wife knows that their husband loves them.

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Now it might seem to the women that men can verbalize the fact that women need to be shown affection, but most men are very inept at doing it. But certainly if the men in this congregation want to be obedient to this injunction I believe that we need to apply ourselves with energy to what we know about our lives.

If you are having difficulty in this area then I would suggest that you would go to your wife and genuinely and sincerely ask for help. Initially she may feel puzzled by such a request. She might think that when you love someone, affection comes naturally. She may respond this way because she may not appreciate the fact that women quite naturally express affection much more easily than a man does. It does not mean that the man does not feel affection it simply means that a man typically is not as effective at showing affection.

If you would rather not ask your wife I will give you a list that I found in a book by a male author. It sounded pretty good to me so I will share with you.

Hug and kiss your wife every morning while you are still in bed.

Tell her that you love her while you're having breakfast together.

Kiss her before you leave for work.

Call her during the day to see how she is doing.

Bring her flowers once in a while as a surprise (Be sure to include a card)

Gifts for special occasions (birthday, anniversary, Christmas, Mother Day, and Valentine's Day) should be sentimental, not practical. Learn how to "shop for a woman."

After work, call her before you leave for home, so that she can know when to expect you.

When you arrive home from work, give her a hug and kiss and spend a few minutes talking to her about how her day went.

Help with the dishes, after dinner.

Hug and kiss her every night before you both go to sleep.

You might have noticed that it is four times during the day that your wife would receive a hug and or a kiss.

What else do we know about wives?

COMMUNICATION

Let me ask the husbands another question here this morning. Does your wife have a need to communicate with you? And again I believe that the husbands in this congregation would answer a resounding, yes!!

Seldom will you hear a man say, "My wife is not talking with me." But frequently you will hear a woman complain that her husband is no longer communicating with her. Men do not seem to have as great a need for conversation with their wives as women do with their husbands.

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Men do not seem to have as great a need for conversation with their wives as women do with their husbands. Women, on the other hand, seem to enjoy conversation for its own sake. Many women will spend hours with each other on the telephone while men rarely call each other just to chat and be brought up-to-date.

Husbands, do your wives have a need to communicate with you? And all of us would answer a resounding yes! Then husbands, as Peter is exhorting us in this passage, let us live with our wives according to that knowledge.

CONCLUSION

We have just turned our attention to husbands. We as husbands clearly see that the Lord through Peter is commanding us to live with our wives according to knowledge. We know that our wives need affection, we know that our wives need to communicate with us we must therefore purpose before the Lord to respond toward our wives by what we know if we are truly going to love her and honor the Lord.