

Does Your Conduct Convict the Lost to Come to Christ

by James Jennings

This sermon focuses on the importance of godly conduct in winning the lost to Christ, using Peter's letter as a guide. It emphasizes how our behavior can convince others of the truth of our message, with a specific example of a Christian wife potentially winning her lost husband through respectful and pure conduct. The sermon highlights the power of conduct in convicting, silencing, and ultimately leading the lost to glorify God on a day of visitation.

Scripture: 1 Peter 3:1, 1 Peter 2:12, Proverbs 14:1, Titus 2:5, 1 Peter 3:4, Romans 6:6, 1 Peter 1:15, Proverbs 31:30

Topics: "Godly Conduct", "Winning the Lost"

Description

This sermon focuses on the importance of godly conduct in winning the lost to Christ, using Peter's letter as a guide. It emphasizes how our behavior can convince others of the truth of our message, with a specific example of a Christian wife potentially winning her lost husband through respectful and pure conduct. The sermon highlights the power of conduct in convicting, silencing, and ultimately leading the lost to glorify God on a day of visitation.

Transcript

This morning, I want to speak kind of a Mother's Day sermon. Happy Mother's Day, by the way. On Does Your Conduct Convict the Lost to Come to Christ? And we find in Peter's letter to the suffering Christians, he explains an important role of our godly behavior and how it can help in winning the lost to Christ.

Our conduct that the lost see can convince them of the truth of our message. That's a very important principle that we need to remember as Christians. And Peter, he gives this general principle we're going to look at in 2 Peter 2, verse 12, but then he gives a specific application of it in 1 Peter 3, verses 1 and 2. So let's read 1 Peter 3, verses 1 and 2. Then we're going to look at verse 12 and explain that, and then we're going to go back to the specific example he gives of this general principle in regards to the Christian wife seeing her lost husband saved.

So 1 Peter 3, verse 1. Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the Word... Do not obey the Word. 2 Peter 2, verses 7 and 8, it speaks about those who disobey the Word and he synonymously says there are those who do not believe. So I believe this is talking about a lost husband, not a husband who's a Christian and has fallen in sin.

So that even if some do not obey the Word, if your husbands are lost, they may be won, gained to Christ without a word in what's used of God in a mighty way by the conduct of their wives. Verse 2, when these lost husbands see your respectful and pure conduct. Amen.

So we're going to look at that. Let's pray. Father, Lord, I thank You for allowing us to gather here and assemble this morning.

Lord, we know that one of the reasons You've given Your Word that should happen when we come together is that we might stir one another up to love and good works. And so, Lord, I pray that You would use this message in some way to specifically stir people up to good works, to love, to being exemplary in conduct, in a manner of life that's worthy of the Gospel. Lord, that You might use us in a greater way to win souls and convince the lost of the reality of the truths that we have proclaimed to them.

And so, Lord, I just ask, help me now. Lord, I'm weak. In Jesus' name.

So, it's a well-known verse. It's a very good verse to run to, especially if you're in a situation where you have a lost husband who's not a Christian. And we've had many sisters who have rightly sought to lay hold of this passage, these verses in 1 Peter 3, 1 and 2. And I hope this message will all the more help them to want to lay hold of that truth that the conduct of the Christian is a mighty evangelistic tool in someone being convicted and coming to believe the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

So, we see a specific example in 1 Peter 3, 1 and 2. But I want to look at chapter 2, verse 12. Many would argue that this verse teaches the general principle in verse 3 and 1 of chapter 3. Verse 1 and 2 are a specific example of this general idea that Peter is trying to convey to these Christians who are in the midst of trials, suffering at the hands of unjust bosses, unjust husbands, unjust governments. So, let's look at verse 12 of chapter 2. Peter here, verse 11, he's speaking to them as what we are.

We're sojourners and exiles in this world. This is not our home. And he calls us to abstain from the passions of the flesh that wage war against your soul.

Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable. And he gives a reason. So that when they, the Gentiles, speak against you as evildoers, so they're slandering us as if we're evildoers, even though it's not true.

He's not saying that the Christians are being evildoers, but rather the lost are saying they're evildoers. When they speak against you as evildoers, instead of a response that is one of reviling them, they may see your good deeds. And this, something happens, and they glorify God on the day of visitation.

And that word the, it's not in the Greek. It's referring to a day of visitation. There's some day of visitation that happens, and what comes out of these individuals' mouths is glorifying God.

Which either means they acknowledge that He's Lord as they're perishing, or it means they're acknowledging out of natural overflow and praise of thanksgiving for God's salvation in their lives. So I'm about to put forward that I believe v. 12 is teaching the same idea that we find in v. 1-2 of chapter 3, but here, Peter is speaking in a broader sense. This isn't just about wives with lost husbands.

You could apply this to all sorts of situations. A lost husband with a lost wife. Lost parents with a lost children.

A saved church with a lost world that's watching us. So, Gentiles, let's think of some of these phrases here. Keep your conduct.

That word conduct, the manner of life, Peter uses that eight times in this letter. And ultimately, the manner of life that he's pointing to is the example of the Lord Jesus Christ. He gives Christ as our example, but Peter gives all sorts of specifics for different people in their different situations of life on what this conduct looks like.

But he says here, keep your conduct among the Gentiles, the non-Jew honorable. Later in chapter 4, he speaks about the Gentiles again in v. 3, For the time has passed that suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do. Gentiles, the non-Jew, you get the idea what Peter is saying is the lost.

He's not saying that there aren't Jews that are lost, that our conduct matters before the Jews. But the conduct of the Gentiles, these types of sin, that's often how the Scriptures speak about the lost. They're Gentiles.

There are Jews who are Gentiles because they're not actually Jews truly in the heart, circumcised of the heart. And so there are Gentile Jews. And Peter in this letter clearly has a correct view of who the true church is and who the true Israel is.

So he says, keep your conduct among them honorable. And then he has that amazing phrase, the phrase you always want to stop when there's a therefore or so that honorable, so that something happens. When they speak against you as evildoers, we're going to have people slander us.

They're going to see in our conduct good deeds. They're going to see that we're not really evildoers and they're going to glorify God on the day of visitation. To glorify God, that's what is going to happen.

Now he says here, when they see your good deeds, what's it mean? See. It means they're watching. They're observing what we're doing.

And this word see is only used two times in the Bible, the Greek word. It's only used two times and it's in verse 12 and it's in chapter three, verse one or verse two. When they see your respectful and pure conduct.

These are the only two verses in the Scriptures that this Greek word is used. And so Peter is saying there are people observing you. They're watching you.

They're looking at your conduct. Their eyes are on the Christian. The world wants to be able to say Christians are hypocrites.

Right? The Christian wants to be able to say, I don't know of anything. I'm not thereby acquitted. It is God who will judge me, but I'm not aware of anything against myself.

Even though they're saying we're evildoers, even though they're slandering us. So they're watching us. They're speaking evil about us.

And then they see good deeds. And something happens. The lost glorify God.

They glorify God on a day of visitation. What's He mean there? Is this glorifying God natural praise from being saved? Or is it their forced acknowledgement? You know, every knee will bow and confess that

Jesus Christ is Lord. I believe it's a natural acknowledgement that comes from someone who has been saved.

But when does this happen? It says the day of visitation. Let's think about that term for a moment. On a day of visitation.

A day of visitation. When it says the day of visitation, some people could read this and their initial thought is He's talking about judgment day. It says the day of visitation.

The thing is, as you read 1 and 2 Peter, Peter doesn't refer to judgment day in that way. In 2 Peter, he says the day of judgment and destruction, or he says the day of the Lord. So in Peter's mind, he's using some different terminology when he wants to make it clear he's referring to the day of final judgment.

So that's one thing to consider here. Also, Peter in Acts 15-14, it says related how God first visited the Gentiles. People like Cornelius, to take from them a people for His name.

So there he's using this idea that God visited the Gentiles to take for Himself a people for His own name, meaning God visited them to do what? To save them. To bring them to the truth. Luke 1-68, Zacharias said in regards to Christ's birth that God had visited and redeemed His people.

That God was visiting His people in the person of Jesus Christ and Christ is coming to redeem a people for His own possession. So this idea of a day of visitation, Peter himself even uses this idea of being visited to refer to God coming and saving someone. So I would take when it says there glorified God on a day of visitation, that a day of visitation is referring to when God visits them like Cornelius experienced with salvation.

And that's what causes them to naturally now praise God. And what led to this, what he says here is a factor is that they saw the good deeds and then glorified God. But something happens between this.

They don't just see the good deeds and then they believe on Christ. Something else is going on here that's happening. Look at a few verses here about what's happening.

2 Peter 2.15. I'm sorry, not 2 Peter. 1 Peter. I was hearing the pages turn and I thought it's not that far away.

Sorry, 1 Peter 2.15. This is a few verses later after v. 12. For this is the will of God that by doing good..." This idea again of conduct. What happens? "...by doing good, you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people." So doing good gets people to be quiet with their accusations against you.

He also says in 3.16, having a good conscience. That's the idea of a manner of life. You've got a good conscience.

Your conduct is pure. Having a good conscience so that what happens? When you're slandered, that's the very thing he mentions in v. 12. They're going to speak against you as evildoers.

Having a good conscience so that when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior, whether it's a lost spouse, a lost co-worker, whoever, what happens to them? As they're reviling your good behavior, they may be what? Put to shame. Put to shame. Something happens.

And their mouths are silenced. And they're put to shame. They're ashamed about the accusations that they were railing on you the Christian.

The words they were saying, their mouth is now shut. And Peter's saying, what led this to happen was your conduct. That was a massive factor in their mouths being shut and in them now being ashamed.

Ashamed. And that's the same idea in 3 with the wife. So that even if some do not obey the Word, they may be one without a word by the conduct of their wives.

So conduct, the manner of life, is being used of God to convict these people, to get them to shut their mouths, to be ashamed of their sin, and then you're able to tell them what it says in 1 Peter 2, 6, that whoever believes in Christ will not be put to shame. And you tell them that. That husband who's so convicted over his sin to his Christian wife.

You tell them, you know what, you're ashamed. And you should be ashamed of all the slander and the reviling. But Christ has come, and if you believe in Him, you will not be put to shame.

And that husband believes on Christ, supernaturally is born again by the living, abiding Word of God, and now he glorifies God on that day that the Lord has visited his household with salvation. So that's my present understanding in verse 12. That it is Peter putting forward a general principle to the Christians about their conduct being used by God as a means to convict, silence, and put to shame the lost world who is slandering us that they might then be visited by God and ultimately glorify God on this day of visitation.

So those who were once slandering us are now glorifying God. That's the radical transformation. The Lord takes a Saul and He's no longer cursing the Christians and wanting to kill them, but He's now praising the Lord.

Now, what Peter is not saying is that we don't use words. I mean, it's amazing. Peter says without a word in chapter 3, verse 1. They may be one without a word.

But Peter's idea is not that there is no speaking involved. He's not saying that a person is born again by the living, abiding example of a Christian. Not at all.

Peter says right before verse 12 in chapter 2, verse 9, he says this, that we proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. So clearly we are proclaiming the truth. Chapter 1, verse 23.

You are born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable through the living, abiding Word of God. So someone is preaching the truth. The Spirit of God takes the truth of the Word of God and regenerates someone and they're born again.

They're made into a new creature. It doesn't say they're being born again by someone's example. That God's using the Word.

But the life is a convicting assurance to them that the message that has been proclaimed that they have heard is true. So, Peter is saying that once they know your message, it's your conduct that will make all the difference as a clear sign to them that you have the truth. Your conduct will make all the difference.

Just last week, our neighbor Louis, he needed a quick ride down a couple blocks away. And so I said, alright, I'll give you a ride. And he hopped in the car and he started to say that the person's house he was going to, he said, this man, he's a real Bible scholar.

You know, he really studies the Word of God. And then he paused and he said to me, but you know, by the things he says, I don't know if that's really true. And I thought that's right.

James 1.26, whoever does not bridle his tongue, his religion is worthless. If a man can't control the tongue, it shows his religion is worth absolutely nothing. And so if that guy's trying to evangelize my neighbor Louis, it's not going to do any good.

Because Louis himself can see that the man is a hypocrite, a play actor. But the same idea of the conviction that the Christian's life can be on the unbeliever. Paul dealt with that in Philippians 1. And I looked at that years ago.

But he said, as you live a manner of life worthy of the Gospel in Philippians 1.27-28, he then says it's a clear sign to them. You not being frightened by your opponents is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation and that that comes from God. So not being frightened convicts them that we're really saved.

We actually have a hope. In the same way, Peter, even as he looks at Sarah here in chapter 3, there's a sense he's saying, look, this woman, her husband sees that she's not living in this constant fear. There's a hope and a trust that she has.

And as he sees that conduct, as she reveres God, it convicts him. I don't have that hope that my wife has. And it's able to convince him of the power of the Gospel.

And this message is true. So once they know your message, your conduct's going to make all the difference. In a good way or a bad way.

Another thing we see here, Peter has a correct view of true Christianity. Peter understands if you're a Christian, you've been born again. Chapter 1, verse 15, He who called you is holy.

You will also be holy in all your conduct. Peter expects that Christians are going to live different. They're going to be set apart.

There's a distinction that you will see by the works of the Christian. Not the works don't say, but they vindicate and prove that the faith is genuine. And that points people to the message that changed us.

The lost, as he says in chapter 4, verse 4, with respect to this, when they don't join you in their drinking parties, they are surprised. The lost should be surprised. I mean, they should see your conduct.

And they should go, wow, this is really surprising. I can't believe they're actually being consistent. I mean, I thought they just didn't cuss when they were around their family.

But even at work, in the back room, so to speak, they're still having a pure speech here. Or wow, that Christian, he left his phone out. You know what? I wonder, is the guy a hypocrite? Let me go look at his Internet history.

Wow, there's nothing here that bothers me. I thought he was going to have all sorts of filth being looked up on his phone. They're surprised.

You know what? It should be surprising. God radically changing a person and giving them a new nature and new desire should be pretty surprising to a world who knows nothing but living in sin and eating their sin like a dog that returns to its vomit. So they should be surprised.

And this surprise should cause them to either suppress what they saw or ask. Or ask. Look at 3, verse 1 again.

The husband might be won without a word by the conduct of his wife when they see, so they're watching respectful and pure conduct. And you know what might happen? You know what that husband might do to that wife? He might do what 3.15 says. In your hearts, honor Christ the Lord as holy.

Wives, Christians, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. So people are going to ask us for the reason for the hope that is in you. And Peter here uses an example of Sarah 3.5. He says this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves.

That husband sees his wife hoping in God. And he goes to his wife one day. Rather than suppressing, he says, honey, tell me the reason for that hope that's within you.

And now that woman can use all the words in the world she wants to. Her husband's opening the door saying let's have a conversation about it. The life, the hope in God, put him to silence.

He stopped slandering her. He was ashamed of his conduct and his treatment. And he says to her, what's the reason for the hope? That's what we're talking about.

And in all situations of the Christian life, it's not just the wife with the lost husband. It's the husband with the lost wife. It's the parents with the lost children.

The last thing I want to be to my children is a hypocrite. Where I come in here and I present myself in some way and I go out there and I'm another person. So, Peter too is speaking to believers who are facing suffering, persecution, fiery trials, and it's like Peter expects that God's given us the strength, and as he says in his second letter, the divine power necessary to do all of these things.

So Peter has a view of Christianity that the power is available for God to give you the day-by-day help to live this out. This is not some task that is impossible to consistently strive to live out. Our conduct in the midst of suffering is a vital time to shine as opposed to when all is normal and all is easy.

So we don't want to be like Romans 2.21 says. Those who teach others, do you not teach yourselves why you preach against stealing? Do you steal? Or Matthew 23. Don't observe what those Pharisees tell you.

Observe whatever they tell you, but don't do the works. They had the issue. They preach, but they do not practice.

So, maybe just a few brief things here about what specific conduct Peter is referring to. Verse 21 of chapter 2, for this you've been called because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in His steps. What type of conduct is a manner worthy of the Gospel? A conduct of imitating the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, loving as He has loved, imitating Him.

But Peter says in this letter, 2.13, submit to every human institution. 2.18, submit to unjust masters who are harsh. 2.23, have no deceit in your mouth.

2.23 speaks of Jesus was reviled. That means verbal and physical abuse was heaped upon Him. And He didn't revile in return.

With men in the Old Testament like Moses, they did revile in return. And God dealt with them for doing that. Jesus didn't seek to get even.

Someone mentioned an example years ago and it's always stood out to me. They mentioned they were driving their car, someone cut them off. And then they felt they started to drive close to the guy trying to make a point.

Trying to get even. And it convicted them. That's not the Christian conduct to win the lost.

Right? That doesn't work. So they stopped. Jesus didn't threaten.

Do we respond in a way to give our enemies anxiety that we might get back at them at some point? You were on me, so I'm going to try to give you some anxiety. I'm wanting you to have a little anxiety for the next couple of weeks. I might try to get back at you.

He didn't do that. Imagine the wife who does that to the lost husband. Not going to be helpful.

They didn't repay evil for evil, but on the contrary, they blessed. They didn't join in the drunken worldly parties. They were not grumbling, 4.9 speaks of.

As elders, we were not domineering over those in our charge. We're being examples. That's some of the practical conduct that Peter deals with in this letter.

And all of it falls under the main head of seeking to follow and imitate the example of Jesus Christ. And that conduct puts the person to shame who is reviling us. At least it can.

So, Peter says in 2.11, we're waging war against the passions of our flesh that wage war against our soul. Well, another way to look at it is this. You abstaining from the passions of the flesh which wage war against your soul is not just you waging war for your own soul, but waging war for others' souls.

You see, this isn't just about me and I'm waging war. No, I want the lost people's souls to be won and gained for Christ. And so when he says in 1 Peter 1.9, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls, there's a final salvation the Christian is pressing on towards.

We're wanting to take as many people as we can with us. And so we're proclaiming to them the excellencies of Jesus Christ. But then a big differentiating factor is our lives are a convicting example that shames them, silences them as they see our good deeds, and it causes them to ask us for the reason of the hope within.

And we tell them about Jesus Christ that if you believe on Him, you will not be put to shame. And they believe on Christ. They have a day of visitation.

They're supernaturally born again by the Word of God through the Spirit of God using the Word of God. And now they glorify and praise the Lord. And so the Lord is glorified not just in the conduct of our life, not

just in the fact that we didn't sin and give into the passions of the flesh, but the Lord's glorified in that there have been people who've been bought by His blood who we've been the means of seeing them come to Christ and be saved.

So it's not just I'm trying not to be captured. We're trying to set free the capture. Okay, so that was kind of the first part.

Now the second part. The first part was putting forward that there is a general principle that Peter puts forward in verse 12 about the conduct of our life being used by God as a big difference maker in someone seeing the message we already proclaimed. They're living in such a way, that message has got to be true.

And he gives a specific example in 1 Peter 3, 1 to 2. And that is with this woman who's a Christian and her husband is lost. Now, the verse it reads, maybe one without a word by the conduct of their lives. Well, the word there is not there in the Greek, in the original language.

So some would say that you could take from that, that Peter isn't just thinking about the conduct of the Christian woman, specifically how that relates to her husband. But some would draw out that Peter's actually, whether they're right or not, that Peter's actually saying Christian women as a whole, their conduct is a testimony to all lost men. And obviously that's true anyways, because that's the broader thing Peter's dealing with.

But the wife of the husband, that woman is the main thing that husband's going to see. And so obviously the most convicting example a wife can be is to her own husband. Does her testimony before the whole world and other husbands matter? Absolutely.

But I think Peter's main thing here is the wife specific to her own personal husband. So because he established in verse 12 a more general idea, obviously this isn't just one specific situation. You could change out these terms and the conduct that Peter mentions to put a husband who has a lost wife, et cetera.

Peter's main thing is he's concerned about the Christian community as a whole. And here he gives this encouragement to a wife specifically. And you could see his heart wanting to encourage the women.

You know, the woman's in a situation where she's submitting to the authority and the control and the orders of a husband who's probably not living in an understanding way. He might even be reviling her. And Peter is coming along and encouraging her in her conduct that it's not in vain.

It's not in vain even if the husband never gets converted, God gets glorified. You see, Peter's bigger thing is not just do they get saved? Peter's bigger thing is God being praised. So let's think for a moment just about women in the Bible.

You know, it's a Mother's Day and women can be very influential in a positive or a negative way. And I'm gonna read through a quick list of some positive examples and some negative examples. Proverbs 14, one is maybe a good starting point.

The wisest of women builds her house, but folly with her own hands tears it down. So the woman has the ability to either build up or to tear down. He doesn't give a middle ground there.

So let's think of some women in the Bible. One man's wife was in the religious community. She was fleeing a city about to be under judgment.

And in her heart of hearts, she loved the world. She loved her sin. And Lot's wife looked back and perished turning into a pillar of salt.

So that's a negative example. Here, a positive is a wife can be like Abigail and save their lost, drunk husband from causing his own death. Now, he shortly thereafter died and David married Abigail.

But the point is she used wisdom. She protected her husband. She showed respect to him to some degree.

Here, a negative example is wives can manipulate and entice their husbands as Samson's wife did. Judges 14, you only hate me. You do not love me.

Manipulative language to get their own way, to get that riddle out of Samson. She wasn't looking out for her husband's good. Some wives say, as Deuteronomy 13, six says, let us go and serve other gods.

Sadly, Solomon faced that. Proverbs 27, 15 says a continual dripping on a rainy day and a quarrelsome wife are alike. They're similar.

How, how are they similar? To restrain the quarreling wife is to restrain the wind. Meaning you can't restrain the wind or to grasp oil in one's right hand. You can't do it.

Wives, they could be good at home defense. Judges four, Jael, the wife of Heber took a tent peg or took a hammer in her hand. And then she went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple of his head.

And then she killed the intruder. Maybe that's a bad example, but wives can encourage their husbands when they're in despair, not thinking correctly. Judges 13, Manoah said to his wife, we shall surely die for we have seen God.

He's just, some would say he's in despair. Maybe something's wrong with his response there. His wife said to him, honey, if the Lord had meant to kill us, He would have not accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering at our hands.

So the wife helps him to think correctly here. God's not going to strike us dead. He wouldn't have done that thing earlier.

So the wife is encouraging the husband. Titus 2, 5, what a verse. Just talks about being pure, working at home, submissive to their own husbands.

And it gives a reason that the word of God may not be reviled. I can revile the word of God by how I conduct my life. Peter doesn't want us doing that.

He wants our conduct, not reviling the word of God, but holding the word of God in high esteem where the world sees this isn't just something we preach. It's something we live. But the most amazing thing, one of the most amazing things the Bible says about the wife is right here in 1 Peter 3. It says that the woman can win her husband without a word by her conduct.

That's incredible. You can win someone. I mean, there's a lot of things that I don't have the ability to win.

I don't have the ability to gain. It's out of my reach. And Peter is saying another soul coming to Christ, that's not an impossibility.

Even a lost person who's reviling you, that's not an impossibility. There's a lot of encouragement there. This person can be won as opposed to not being won.

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9, 19, he uses the same word that I might win more of them. You see, Paul lived a life wanting to win people. While you do what you do, while your witness and testimony of your life is the way it is, one of the factors is you're wanting to win souls to Christ.

Ultimately, you're wanting to do what's very precious in God's eyes. Right, it's all about the Lord. But one of the things you see God doing where you recognize your conduct is not in vain, is that God can use this to bring that soul to the truth, to be the big difference maker in the message they've already heard about the excellencies of Jesus Christ that they've rejected, but they see the consistent, habitual, continual conduct of your life.

They're put to shame, silenced, and they ask for a reason for the hope that you have. So a lot could be said here about verses three and four and five on the conduct that Peter calls these women to specifically. But just briefly here, what does it look like if you're a Christian woman and your husband is not saved? He says, verse one, obviously he says be subject.

So he talks about submission, submitting to his authority. That's how God's designed it, right? The roles were equal in personhood, man and woman, but were not equal in roles. God has designed different roles for the man and a different role for the woman.

And the woman is submitting to the man. And so this Christian woman is submitting to a lost husband who's most likely not living with her in an understanding way. He's not submitting to him unto sin because he calls her to what type of conduct? Peter says here when they see your pure conduct, verse two.

So obviously this doesn't in any way mean submitting to do something that is sinful. But they're watching and they see this pure conduct, this submission. That's one of the factors here.

Another is respect. When they see you're respectful in pure conduct. Now that word respectful, it means fear.

Some people would argue that it's talking about when they see your fear of God. I know John Piper believes that. Whether it does or it doesn't, obviously they're seeing a reverence of God.

But there's other verses that talk about the wife respecting her husband. I tend to lean here that this fear he's speaking of here is this idea of the wife's respectful conduct towards her husband is what he is saying. Respect.

Think about respect. One husband wrote this. There's a husband who got converted.

He said, when my wife's friends voiced negative opinions about me, she never joined in. And when other men sought to be consoling, she refused to open herself emotionally to them. She showed me respect when I did not deserve it.

And that pure conduct, that respect was a factor in this individual coming to receive the knowledge of the truth. A gentle and quiet spirit he mentions here. He says, do not let your adorning be external.

The braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry or the clothing you wear. So obviously he's not saying you can't braid your hair or he'd be saying that you can't wear clothing. And obviously he's not saying you don't ever use words when he says without a word.

But the emphasis here is what? Verse four, let your adorning, let the focus of what you're wearing not be the external, but the hidden person of the heart. With the imperishable beauty of a gentle and a quiet spirit. A gentle, there we have it, a gentle and a quiet spirit.

And what's God think about it? Because who cares what the world thinks about it, right? We're not looking to the world's approval. Which in God's sight, is very precious. What a reminder, this is precious to God.

The world isn't going to say it's precious. Peter says the precious blood of Christ. Does the world say the blood of Christ is precious? No, Christians say the blood of Christ is precious.

And Christians are saying this type of conduct is precious in God's sight. And if he bought me with the precious blood of Christ, I want to live in a way that's precious in God's sight. One who's been bought by the blood of his only son, whom he sent to be our redeemer and pay our price of redemption, to pay our ransom and let us go free.

So a gentle and quiet spirit. The word gentle is the word for meek. The idea is being lowly, considerate, not self-assertive.

Not self-assertive. And there's a biography I read a pastor a hundred years ago. And this example came to mind.

This is what he said about his wife. This is an example of a woman not being self-assertive. If there happened to be on our table, one thing better than the other, one type of food better than the other type of food, she would modestly, but cheerfully and earnestly resist all opportunity to partake of the better food until she ascertained that there was enough for us both.

You say that's really subtle. Well, don't subtle things make a big impact, right? Subtle things right there. I mean, you go reverse that situation.

He got the lost husband and the wife, it's like give me half of the steak. Is that really a right you wanna fight for there? Is his soul more important than the belly's appetite? Little things like that God used. I mean, why did it get in this guy's biography? Because it stood out about the character of his wife.

So this meekness, it's not being self-assertive. This quiet spirit. Quiet spirit means possessing an inward, calm, quiet, tranquil, peaceful, at rest.

This is a woman in the midst of trials and she's at rest. Remember, the husband might ask his wife, what's the reason for the hope? He sees she's not over there in anxiety and fear. Habitually, she might have fear, but it's not the pattern.

And he asked for the reason for the hope. You see, he sees there's something there that she has. She's not anxious and loud all of the time.

Look, she's not always speaking before her husband speaks. There's something bigger here about a quiet spirit. There's this sense of respect and honoring the husband.

Where you're not just quick to speak, where people might, whether you're leading the family or not, they might get the perspective you are by the way you speak and handle yourself publicly. And then that looks bad with people's perception of your husband. This quiet spirit does not mean the woman is not bold.

She's obviously fearless. Doesn't mean she's not going to speak up and tell the truth with emphasis of what Christ has done. But Peter, obviously, he's dealing with all women here.

He just dealt specifically with the conduct of women who have lost husbands. But Peter's warning us, don't let your primary focus, sisters, be about external adorning. It's not all about the external.

That's not the main emphasis for the Christian. It's rather the internal. And Peter here, he even appeals to history.

He says here, verse five, for this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves. Peter's saying the same style of heart thousands of years ago is still in style today. The way they used to adorn the heart, that's still how you adorn the heart today.

Now he gives this example of Sarah calling her husband Lord. Obviously, that idea of Lord, that was in the culture, that was a term they used. We don't use that term now.

You might say something like sir, or something more than that, but most people, they're not going to call their husband Lord. That would be odd, right? But there's a sense of respect. And it's interesting the example that Peter refers to.

Some would argue it's in Genesis 18. And Genesis 18 does not necessarily look like Sarah was being a really good example of a woman who did not fear anything that is frightening. And Tim did a whole sermon on this called Thank God for Sarah.

You should listen to it. It was I think eight years ago. But I think part of the point is this.

Peter refers to an example of Sarah and he puts emphasis on the one thing she did right in that whole situation. And that was what? When she was caught there, the Lord said, did you laugh? And she lied. She called her husband Lord.

That was right. And what does that indicate? What was the natural response of this woman when put on the spot? How did she regard her husband? She just said Lord. Her natural response was to speak well of her husband.

And so I think that's part of what Peter's emphasizing here. He's looking at an example of a woman who did do something right in that situation. She called her husband Lord.

She showed him respect. That was the natural overflow of her heart in that situation. You know, Peter's basically saying Proverbs 31 30 here in another way.

Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain. But a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. A woman who fears God is to be praised.

You're not going to win a lost husband's soul with a focus on external. You know, it's so easy to put excessive time into the outward, to stare at the mirror on the wall rather than the mirror of God's Word. It's so easy to want to fix the outward blemishes and we forget the internal blemishes of the heart.

And obviously, social media has made this so much more of a focus because you can have your own profile picture. People get to see how you look. There's just a focus.

And then you get all these comments, you look so pretty, and everyone's praising you publicly about the external. We want to be praising people primarily about the internal. I'm not saying don't encourage someone.

But let's focus on the internal. That's what God puts His focus on. Man looks at the outward appearance.

God is looking at the heart. He's caring for the heart. Imagine encouraging that sister, wow, I saw your incredible example where you resisted asking for a piece of that steak at dinner.

I mean, I saw that drool coming out of your face and you just said no! Because you didn't want your lost husband there. You thought he might have snapped at you there because he loves his meat. Who knows? We need to have our eyes on what's pleasing to God.

Which in God's sight is very precious. Very precious. Breaking very costly ointment to pour on Christ's head is precious in God's eyes.

The world and religious people, they don't look at that as precious. Now one thing to think about here is this. How on earth is a wife living like a godly Christian, how is that convicting conduct to a lost husband? Doesn't the lost husband look at godly Christians and say that's old school? Doesn't he mock that? You know what? I think this shows something.

Peter recognizes. He recognizes mankind is made in the image of God. Men, whether lost, they could be as lost as they could be, but they know what it's like when someone shows them respect and submission.

It doesn't matter how lost you are. When someone shows you respect, when they're submitting to you, they're agreeing with your ideas, and they're saying let's do it, that speaks in volumes. Even to the lost person, it's compelling.

A gentle and quiet spirit. We were watching some bluegrass band. There's this family in Branson.

They have this bluegrass band and there's this interview being done. And in the interview, there's one of the girls from this Christian bluegrass band, and then there was another woman in the interview. And one, you could tell, the focus was on the external.

There was a stiffness there, a self-awareness of being on camera. And then you had this girl from the bluegrass band. She was just quiet, gentle.

She wasn't focused on the external. And you know what people in the comments were saying? They were commenting and saying, that girl is life material. That's the lost world.

The lost world can watch that interview and see this one might be, as they say, more fun at the party. But this one is wife material. Even the lost world recognizes that.

They acknowledge that. They're compelled by that. They know what wife material is and it finds its roots in submission and how God has designed us.

The truths of Christianity. So, we've got 1053. So I'm gonna wrap this up.

Look, it's gotta be said, Peter is not guaranteeing 100% that the lost spouse always gets saved, right? That's not in the text. It's a possibility. But again, as I said earlier, what is a guarantee is God will get glory.

God will get honor and praise as you abstain from passions of the flesh and wage war for your own soul. Hopefully, that lost person is gonna come along and see the truth. And Peter says here, verse three, he says, so that even if some do not obey the Word, it's an interesting language, even if some, meaning it seems Peter's idea is the majority in the church have a saved spouse.

Now, if that's what he's implying, why would that be an encouragement? Obviously, a lot of people tend to marry a Christian and that's why they have a saved spouse. But this is here, in a way, the beginning thrust of Christianity. I imagine a lot of these people had already been married when they got converted.

And yet, Peter says, even if some do not obey the Word, what could the encouragement maybe be that you could pull out of there? It could be the fact that it's only some because others have already been converted. Because of this conduct being the difference maker that these people saw that ultimately won them to believe on the truth. Another thing here in closing, is Peter expecting perfection out of the wife? No, he's not.

Again, he refers to Sarah here. Sarah was not by any means an example of perfection. So you don't want to set the standard too high, but you don't want to go too low.

She habitually sought to be a woman who hoped in God and feared the Lord. Let's see here. How do you live like this? There's all this conduct here.

Well, again, you've got to read the whole letter. And you get to chapter 4. And you basically have, as some say, chapter 4 is Peter's Romans 6, basically. Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, meaning Christ died, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking or with the thought as it's rendered.

What thought? The thought that whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin. The idea there is the Christian has died. They're a new man.

Their old man has been crucified with Christ. They're no longer enslaved to sin. So how can I live out all of these realities? Because I'm a new man in Christ.

That's why I can live the rest of my time for the will of God. Or 2 Peter 1, he says we're partakers of the divine nature. So we've been changed by God.

His divine power has granted us to all things pertaining to life and godliness. So the power is here to live this out. Don't say there's not the power.

There absolutely is the power. So what does the lost world see in your manner of life? Right? What do they see? What in your own life is behavior or conduct that negatively affects your witness? It could be conduct online, in person, wherever. Your lack of godliness may be the very reason you lack influence upon those you are around.

So are you saying that we should be worried about the lost, what they see? I'm saying you should be worried about what God sees and God cares what the lost see because you're bearing His name. You have His name tag on you. Don't shame your heavenly master with how you conduct yourself because it will reflect the head.

And obviously this conduct is not referring to some one-time act, but a continual, consistent witness. When we are hypocritical, let us not fail to admit it, but come clean and have an honest confession to the lost who witnessed our hypocrisy. If it goes unacknowledged, it will only cause them to think we are numb to it and insensitive.

They won't know. Again, it's simple. I sin against my children, I don't not tell them about it.

I tell them. I confess it. I don't want them to perceive that that hypocrisy is something I'm blind to.

You've got to be transparent. So, think of it, brethren. The hope expressed here, the lost can be won.

The lost can be won. Absolutely, we've got to preach the excellencies of Jesus Christ. We've got to be proclaiming the Word of God, that the Spirit of God would take that Word, visit a person, and cause them to be born again by the living, abiding Word of God.

But Peter doesn't just say that's all you do. Peter points at our conduct and our manner of life. And he says it can be a clear sign to people.

It can put them to shame. It can get them to shut their mouths. You're able to win them over.

That can be the difference maker. There might be some hypocrisy that's hindering your witness. It's being a difference maker in the negative way.

It's turning them away from seeing the truth. And look, whether someone is a hypocrite or not, if you're lost, you can't blame them. If you reject the truth, your blood's going to be on your own head, as we looked at a couple of weeks ago as I looked at the watchman.

You know in that watchman sermon, there's a great emphasis on our responsibility to speak. Here, there's a great emphasis on your responsibility to live and conduct your manner in a life that is worthy of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. So this strategy, it worked 2,000 years ago, it will work today.

And we need to believe the Lord. Don't lose heart. If you're a sister here and you have a lost husband, don't lose heart.

Keep pressing on, trusting the Lord. God's able to use this. Let's pray.

Father, Lord, I thank You that Your Word time and time again reminds us that the things we do are not in vain, that they're not without a purpose. Lord, You do not have us floating around doing things without a purpose. And Lord, we do want You to be glorified in the maximum way that You can out of our lives.

Lord, I pray that You would save. Father, would You save people, Lord, who we have sought to conduct ourselves in a God-honoring way before. Lord, despite our failures, despite our fears, despite our inconsistencies, Lord, we're appealing to Your mercy.

We're appealing to You, not wishing that any should perish. We're asking that You would come down and save the lost. Lord, that You would send Your Holy Spirit that it activate the Word of God and that these people would be born again into a living hope.

Please, Lord, that their souls could be one. Lord, have mercy. Please, Father, we want, Lord, we're longing for people to come to the truth.

Lord, that's what we want them to be convinced about is the truth. In Jesus' name, Amen. Okay, well, we'll have a break if you're visiting.

We have a 25-minute break. We're going to take the Lord's Supper, so we might start earlier than 1130.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/uSW07yapMPE.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/james-jennings/does-your-conduct-convict-the-lost-to-come-to-christ/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net