

**SERMON 7<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2020**  
**1 Peter 3: 1-12**

**Friends:**

We spend a “lot of money” on being “attractive”!

- According to website “statista” Americans spent almost 94 billion U.S. dollars on beauty and personal care products in 2019!
- The “Japanese”, come in 2<sup>nd</sup> place spending approximately 38 billion U.S. dollars!
- France, Germany and the U.K. took places “3, 4 and 5”!
- The Australian figure is almost \$6 billion U.S. dollars!
- And yet “none” of this seems to buy “happiness”!
- The United States is number 1 in cosmetic spending, “yet” number 23 in the “world’s” satisfaction with life ranking!
- Japan is 2<sup>nd</sup> in cosmetics spending... and 90<sup>th</sup> in satisfaction with life!
- “Of course: God is “not” against “physical beauty” – He “designed it”!

In these opening 6 verses it is “internal beauty” that God most seeks” and is “pleased” by; a beauty that no expenditure on cosmetic products or surgeries can buy!

- ‘Genesis’ tells us that the “woman and man” are part of the “same flesh”! (*Gen 2*) She was produced from his ‘rib’, so “unity” is “more significant” than “distinction”!
- Peter “argues” that God is “pleased” with beautiful “women” who attract their unbelieving husbands in Christ!
- After the “fall: in Genesis 3 God “cursed: the woman with a desire for her husband!
- That is with a desire to “control” her husband!
- In sinful ‘response’, the husband will “try to put her in her “place”!”  
(*Gen 3:16*)
- Ray Ortlund says:- this about the “struggle” in marriage:-  
““Either” she will suffer “conflict” with her husband; or she will suffer “domination” by him!”  
: this is the “origin” of the “battle” of the sexes”!
- With this “background” Peter is “showing us” in Verses 1-6 how the “gospel” transforms the relationship between “man and woman”; undoing the “curse” in Genesis 3!
- “White Ribbon Australia” tells us that on average “one woman” a week is murdered by her current or former partner! “1 in 5” women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15!

- We certainly “need” to hear what our “loving God” has to “say” about a good and nurturing marriage.
- Many ‘women’ try to control men with physical beauty, others with words: nagging, criticizing and complaining!
- “Either” way the “curse” proves true: women seek to “control” men in general, and their husbands in particular!
- Peter is “saying” that for “believers”, marriage is to stop being a continuous “battlefield” and “instead” become a place for “growth and Christian mission”!
- Christian ‘women’ married to unbelieving ‘husbands’ should seek to attract them to Christ with the imperishable beauty of “submission” (**V1**)! Of course “submission” has a “bad rap” in today’s world! When society hears the word “submission” they “raise up their hands” with the belief that submission to a man is “demeaning”!
- “Submission” in marriage is “NOT” reticence, servanthood inferior, docile, degrading and “not” a sign of weakness!
- ‘Submission’ in marriage is a spirit of “respect” a wife has toward her husband!
- It is an “attitude” intended to help “her” and her “husband” to live a more contentful, peaceful “life together”!
- Problems and disagreements between a husband and wife in marriage are “inevitable”!
- But when a woman shows this respect for her man, it is much more likely the problems will be resolved harmoniously, without “quarreling, bitterness and resentment”!
- That is not to say this will happen “because” the man dominates and gets his way all the time!
- Some people look “down” on submission as if it were something demeaning, degrading or humiliating. In a Biblical sense that is “not” what submission in marriage is all about!
- For a wife practicing submission to her husband it does not mean she should be a “silent YES” person or “doormat”!
- “nor” does it mean she should have “no opinions” of her own! The wife is “supportive” of her husband because she “chooses” to!
- the “husband” can relax with his wife because he knows that when he fails, she will be working “with” him to help him put it right!
- A wife who practices submission is a wife with “strength of character”!
- She will often have different opinions to her husband!

- But she can express her views and ideas without disrespectful “confrontation”!
- In fact, it’s wrong if she doesn’t express her opinion!
- God “ordained” the wife to be her husband’s “helper”, not his doormat!

(Gen. 2:18)

**Friends:**

Our main problem with authority is that we don’t like “anyone” telling us what to do!

- “But” since our God is “good and wise” the “command” to “submit” to Him and to ruling governments and “now” in “marriage” is “also” “good and wise”!
- On a ‘serious’ note, we don’t live in a perfect world, and “abusive authority exists”!
- If you are a “woman” in an abusive relationship, “get help “immediately”!”
- Go to the appropriate authorities – if you husband is part of a local church, seek help from your pastor!
- “This situation” is not what Peter is speaking about in Verses 1-6. Peter is talking about a non-abusive marriage: and the deeply “unfashionable” command to “submit”!

**Friends:**

Authority and submission are “good” “because” they are rooted in the Trinity!

- There is ONLY one God and He exists in 3 persons! Each Person is equally God, yet the son “submits” to the Father!

(1 Cor.11:3)

And the Spirit submits to the Father and the Son.

(Jh. 15:26)

- “Authority and submission” are good, also, because they are rooted in “creation”!  
(Gen 2: 18-15)
- The man and the woman are “equally” God’s image (Gen 1: 26-27), but they have different roles in governing God’s creation!
- “Life God”, the man and the woman share “equally” in essence but have different roles of authority and submission!
- Peter does “not” call “all” women to submit to “all men”!
- The “goal” of the wife’s “submission” is, according to Verse 1, to “win over” their non-Christian husbands “without words’ when Verse 2 they “see: the purity and reverence of their wives’ lives!

- Peter goes on in Verses 3 & 4 to tell us about a “beauty” that “never fades”!  
Peter does “not say” that “adorning” yourself in this way or any other way is sinful!
- His ‘point’ is that this should “not” be the “adorning” women (and in our society “men” as well!) “pursue most” and that external beautification does “not last”!
- In ‘2010’ a Mozo lifestyle habits study indicated that Australian “men” fork out \$125 monthly on their looks, not too far behind the “women” at \$167 per month!
- “Don’t” put all your “hope” in attracting a husband or wife in the first place, or throughout your marriage, through “physical beauty”!
- I tell those I “marry” particularly the “young ones”, in 20, 30, 40 years, your “bodies” will start to “droop and drop”; will you still “love each other?”
- Peter summarizes what inner beauty is:  
*“a gentle and quiet spirit” (V4)*
  - Gentle means humble!
  - It’s not harsh!
- Sometimes “gentle” is translated as “meek” and is used of “Jesus”, who brought His Kingdom on the earth ‘without ‘harshness or military force!  
*(Matt. 11:29)*
- A “quiet spirit” has the sense of a quietness of “peace”, as opposed to the loudness of war!
- It ‘means’ being a “calming” presence, particularly when things ‘are’ or ‘could’ become “warlike” – to calmly pursue “peace” while others create “war”!
- “Notice” that to be “gentle and quiet” is “not” incompatible with being extroverted, talkative, humorous, enthusiastic and so on!
- And “notice” too the qualities of ‘gentleness’ and ‘quietness’ shows strength of character “not” weakness!
- “Meekness or gentleness” is one of the principal fruits of the spirit!  
*(Galatians 5:23)*
- The “role” of the “wife” gives her an ‘opportunity’ to display Christian “love and humility” in a distinctive “way”; but Peter makes it “clear” that Christian “men and women” are “alike” called to “reflect” toward “others” the “meekness” they find in “following” Jesus Christ!

### **Friends:**

Christian “wives” have an important “part” in the church’s witness!

- That witness may not be easy, as their husbands have resisted the claim of the gospel!

- The may 'ridicule' the message and 'insult' their wives!
- So strong my "be" their 'hostility', that it is no longer possible for their "wives" to "speak" to them about the Lord!
- Even "then" the Christian wife must "not despair"!
- She still "possesses" a mighty "weapon" for winning her husband to the faith; it is the "testimony" of her "life"!
- Her 'husband' has refused to heed the work, very well, let him be "won" over "withhold words"! The silent eloquence of his wife's pure and reverent "behavior" can preach daily the transforming "power" of Jesus Christ!

### Friends:

The "world" we live in values all those things that "glitter" and "dazzle", "gold and gems" of outward show, but God puts a high price "tag" on the 'hidden' unfading "beauty of the "heart"!"

- The contemporary world "resists" the aging process at all costs, "yet" the "youthful body" that it "idolizes" quickly "fades"!
- Can "real beauty" still be blooming with "wrinkles"?
- Peter's "answer" is by looking at the long established beauty school of "Sarah", Abraham's wife! **(VV 5-6)**
- Sarah "respected" her husband; certainly Sarah's submission to Abraham was "not slavish"!

*cf. (Gen. 21: 10,12)*

- As God's beloved children, we are to continually do good, without being "frightened" by any "fear"!
- Verse 7:  
*"Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that "nothing" will hinder your prayers!*
- The "path" of Christ living is not different for the husband than for the wife!
- "Both" are "called" to "follow" Christ in "humble" and "compassionate" love; accepting "rebuffs" with forgiving grace!
- The "husband" is called to 'honour' his wife! That honour includes considerate "understanding"!
- "Husbands" be good to your wives!
- The husband should "delight" in his wife!

- The “husband” must dwell with his wife as one who knows her “needs”, who “recognizes” the delicacy of her nature and feelings!
- “While” the ‘wife’ is of the weaker sex in “muscular strength”, her “role” in the “gift” of “physical life” is surely “not less”!
- In “relation” to the fits of “spiritual life”, the woman is in no sense “weaker”, for in Christ there is “no longer” male and female!
- So in the “new life” of God’s “grace”, husband and wife are “equals”!
- “So that “nothing” will hinder your prayers”!
- If “husbands” fail to give that honour to their wives; their fellowship with their “wives” will “suffer”; so will “their fellowship with god”!
- Treat your wives as “equals”, so your “prayers” don’t run “aground”!
- The “prayers” of the husband will be “hindered”!
- They will b “blocked”, they will “lose” their “effectiveness”!
- Peter probably has in view that “joint” prayers of the couple!
- Husbands and wives are to “pray together”, to call upon God, in repentance and faith!
- Paul took, “emphasizes” the “importance” of “prayer” in the “marriage relationship”!
- 1 Corinthians Ch. 7:-

*“Each man should have “sexual relations” with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband”! (V2)*

- Do not “deprive” each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may “devote” yourselves to “prayer”! “Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control!” (V5)
- “Marriage” is “NOT” a sacrament conveying “divine grace”, but it is the ‘human relationship’ that God has designed to “mirror” the love of Christ for the church, and of the church of Christ!
- “Husbands”, love your wives; “just as” Christ loved the church and gave Himself “up” for her!

*(Eph. 5:25)*

- Verse 8:  
*“Finally, all of you, be “like-minded”, be “sympathetic”, “love on another; be compassionate” and “humble”!”*
- Peter wants the “church” to be “agreeable”; to maintain the “unity” we have in Christ!

- The “church”, our church, should share the same thoughts and attitudes, thinking harmoniously!
- We are to “share” the “mind” of Christ! We are to “submit” to one another in Christ; and this “will” “undercut” the misunderstandings and hostilities that can often “divide” the Christian community!
- “only” the “love of Christ” can help us maintain the unity of spirit in the “assembly”!
- Christ’s love also “shines” in the “sympathy” that makes the Christian life of blessing!
- ‘Jesus Christ’ is the high priest who “sympathizes” with our “weaknesses”!  
(Heb. 4:15)
- “Sympathy” means readiness to “rejoice with those who rejoice”, and to “mourn” with those who mourn”!  
(Rom. 12:15)
- So much of “contemporary research” into human motivation and psychology has the purpose of “manipulating” people for economic or political advantage! Christian sympathy “does not” exploit; it “shares and supports”!
- “Love one another” is brotherly love and is specifically Christian!
- It is ‘not’ simply a sense of “comradeship”; “but” we are children of God by ‘new birth’, and therefore ‘brothers and sisters’!
- As “we” have been loved by God, so we must love our “fellow believers”!
- “All” of these ‘graces’ in Verse 8 reflect the love of Christ, and none is more clearer in the “call to be “compassionate”!”
- God has “shown” His compassion to us in Christ, we “deserve” eternal ‘separation’ from Him, “but” “instead” “receive” eternal life with Him!
- The Gospels speak of the “compassion” of Jesus for the crowds and for the sick!  
(Matt. 9:36, Mk. 1:41, Lk. 7:13)
- “Only” God’s “love”, poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, can “move” us to show His “compassion”!

### **Friends:**

How “compassionate” are “you”?

- ‘Honesty’ without “compassion” is “brutality”!
- “Arthur H. Stainback” said:  
“*The value of “compassion” cannot be ‘over-emphasized’*”

- Anyone can “criticize”. It takes a “true believer” to be “compassionate”! No greater “burden” can be carried by an “individual” than to “know” no one cares or understands!
- How will you “show” God’s “compassion” this week?
- The ‘last’ of the graces Peter mentions is “humility”! **(V8)**
- According to “John Ruskin” (1819-1900), the leading art critic of the Victorian era, said “the first test of a truly great man is “humility”!”
- This was ‘stated’ in a Christian “context” by “C.H. Spurgeon”:  
*“Humility is to make a “right” assessment of one’s self!”*  
  
*“Pride is a sinner’s “torment”; but humility is a saint’s “ornament”!” (William Secker)*
- Verse 9:  
*“Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay “evil with blessing”, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing!”*

#### **Friends:**

No ‘retaliation’, no ‘sharp-tongued sarcasm!’

- We are “not” to speak ‘evil’ against someone! No ‘abusive’ or ‘insulting talk’!
- “Christians” are not to repay evil words with more of the same, “but” with the “opposite”, following “both” the teaching and example of Christ!
- “Not only” are we called “NOT” to “curse”; we are called “actively” to “seek to bless”!
- As we “seek” to be a “blessing”, we will “obtain a blessing”! **(V9)** This blessing we “receive” from God is “underserved”!
- “Two wrongs” do not make a “right”!
- We don’t “lower” ourselves to enter their “game”!
- We “don’t” have to build our ‘happiness’ on someone else’s unhappiness!
- “Vindictiveness” is “not” God’s method of providing us “happiness”!
- When we exercise “vindictiveness” we take the matter “out of” the Lord’s “hands”!
- Paul says in Romans 12:19:  
*“Dear Friends, “never take “revenge”. Leave that to the righteous anger of the Lord. For the scriptures say, “I will take revenge; I will pay them back” says the LORD!”*
- If we “retaliate” by “gossip”, we parade the sins of someone else, even though it be “imagined” or real”!

- Then God's "discipline" will "come 'our' way!"  
(Matt. 7:1)
- The 'function' of Verses 10 to 12 provide a "reason" for Verses "8 to 9"!
- Verses "10 to 12" is a quotation from "Psalm 34: 12-16"!
- We are to keep our "lips" from 'evil'! We "bless" others, even our enemies, "with our tongues"!
- We are to say nothing "evil or hurtful", we are to speak the truth in love!  
(Eph. 4:15)
- Peter urges us from Psalm 34 to make every effort to live out our commitment to Christ by giving "evidence" in good works!
- James says "faith without works" is "dead"!  
(James 2:20)
- In every situation we are to pursue "peace" with others, "including" our persecutors!  
**(V11)**
- We "recall" Jesus' statement; 'Blessed are the peacemakers' (*Matthew 5:9*). To "work" for 'reconciliation' and 'harmony' among people (rather than returning evil for evil) is "pleasing to God!"
- O Lord raise up peacemakers in our world! In the "united States" at the moment in our country, in our churches, in our families
- Will "you" be a "peacemaker" for Christ this morning?
- Verse 12:  
*"For the "eyes" of the Lord are on the righteous and His "ears" are attentive to their prayer "BUT" the "face" of the Lord is against those who do "evil"!"*  
*God "sees" what the righteous are doing and He is looking after them for "good", recognizing and meeting their "needs"!*
- By "contrast", God "turns his back" on those doing "evil"!
- "This verse" tells us what kind of person God "loves" and what kind of person God "despises"!
- God "examines" the "innermost" heart of man!
- God "protects" those whom He calls "righteous"; but He will "repay" evildoers with wrath!

**Friends:**

Are "you" "righteous" in God's "sight"?

- 'Only living faith' in Jesus, God's eternal Son, "makes" us "right" with God! By "grace" alone You have been saved!
- Peter wants us to "love life" and "see good days"! **(V10)**
- The "Black Dog Institute" says every year in Australia 65,000 people make a "suicide" attempt; with more than "3,000" "DEAD" in 2017!

It's pretty "obvious" that many people "don't love life", "don't see good days", "few people are content", "few people are fulfilled"; "only" a few people are at peace! Only a few people are happy!

- "But" we as Christians should "love Life"!
- We love God first; we're agreeable, we're sympathetic, we're loving, we're compassionate, we're humble!

**Friends:**

Be a "blessing" to others in Jesus' Name!

***Let's Pray***