Submission and Suffering Part 3

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 12 March 2025

Preacher: Joey Snodgrass

[0:00] Well, hopefully my sermon's better than that game, am I right? Man, that was rough, thanks.! I got off and Josie was like, do you need help? And I was like, like with the game or in general?

Yes, I do need help. Thank you. If you would open with me to 1 Peter chapter 3. We'll be back in our journey through 1 Peter. And we've been looking at the last few times, it's been a little topsy-turvy just with weather and me being gone. So we've looked at submission and suffering for two parts, and now this is going to be part three. We've seen where Peter, in chapter 2, called these citizens of the Roman Empire to be subject to the governing authorities, to be submissive towards those in power over them. We saw the last time we were in 1 Peter, in chapter 2, verse 18. He calls on servants to be subject to their masters with all respect, even if some of them are abusive, even if some of them are harsh towards them. And so tonight, we come to submission and suffering, part three, and he calls wives to submit to their husbands.
So let me read our text tonight, 1 Peter chapter 3, verses 1 through 7. 1 Peter chapter 3, verse 1. God's sight is very precious.
hindered. Now as we read through that, you may have noticed kind of an imbalance in this text. There are six verses devoted to the wives, and one verse devoted to the husbands. You're like, that's not fair. But remember, Peter is writing to people who are suffering. And he's writing particularly to people who are suffering unjustly in these last three sections we've looked at. And here, he's writing to Christian wives, some of whom have husbands who are unbelievers. And so these women would have been in a very vulnerable position. These women would have been very likely to suffer, even at the hands of their own husband. So he's called citizens to submit to unjust governments.
[3:09] He's called servants to be subject and submissive toward unjust masters. And now here he speaks to wives being submissive towards husbands, even if they're unbelievers, even if they're still dead in their sins. But the thing that should stand out to us is not the imbalance here between how much he says to wives versus how little he says to husbands. The interesting thing here is that he does address the husbands. He did not address any government officials. He didn't address any of the masters in the end of chapter two, but he does give word to husbands. He speaks directly to those in authority in this relationship. So it does stand out that he does give a word to the husbands here in these churches. So we'll just walk through this in two points. Number one is wives. Wives. In verses one through six, he's speaking to the wives. And he says three things to them. The first thing he says is to be subject. Be subject. And we see this in verses one and two. He says, likewise, or in the same way, wives be subject to your own husbands. So it's interesting here because women are not called to submit to men in general, but to their own husbands. Wives don't submit to other women's husbands in their home. The husband is the leader and they're called to follow their own husbands in his leadership.

Now, why does Peter say this? One of the reasons he gives for this submission is an evangelistic motive. These husbands don't believe the word, but if their wives live in a godly way in front of them, these husbands may be drawn to Christ because of that. And so he mentions those who have unbelieving husbands. So that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives. He says, if some do not obey the word. Now what he's describing here is an unbelieving husband. He's not talking about a husband who just sometimes sins. He's not talking about a righteous husband who at times disobeys the word. If you remember all the way back in chapter two, at the beginning, Peter likes to describe salvation in terms of obedience. And so in chapter two, verse eight, he says, these people stumble because they disobey the word. And all the way back in chapter one, the first two verses, he says we were set

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

apart for obedience to Jesus Christ. And so when
Peter talks about obedience, he's talking about the outworking of salvation. When he talks about disobedience or those who don't obey the word, he's talking about someone giving evidence that they don't believe in the word of God. So this is referring to men whose entire lives are characterized by disobedience and unbelief to God's word. And so he's speaking primarily here to wives who have unbelieving husbands. And like I said already, this would have been a very vulnerable position for these women to be in. Peter's writing to churches all throughout the Roman empire. And in Rome, husbands had complete authority over the life of their wife. They had complete authority over it. If they wanted to divorce her, they could divorce her. No problem. If they saw fit to abuse their wives, there was very little legislation against that. A husband had complete authority over the life and well-being of his wife. There were basically no laws protecting these women if their husbands were evil or abusive. Additionally, in the Roman empire, wives were expected to follow the religion of their husband. And so if their husband was a polytheist, the wife was expected to also be a polytheist.
So Plutarch, he said this, it is proper for a wife to recognize only those gods whom her husband worships. And so not only had these women cut themselves off from Roman society by worshiping one God and worshiping Christ, but they had even alienated themselves from their husbands. They likely would have been cut off by their families. The government, in some instances, would have viewed them as enemies of the state. And now it appears that they're rebelling against their husband's authority by following Jesus and not submitting to the religion that he followed.
[8:11] These women were, in many cases, in a dangerous position. And Peter doesn't tell them to run for the hills. He doesn't tell them to fight back. He doesn't tell them to just walk away from their marriages and their families. Peter calls them to submission. They're called to submit.

And just like the other groups we've looked at, this submission isn't ultimate. There are certainly limitations on this. They must be obedient to God. So this isn't an ultimate submission to their husbands, but they are called to submit to their husbands. And what's the goal here? That they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives. Peter's saying, when they see your life, when they see your good deeds, when they see your love, they will be drawn to Christ. They might even be saved by you living a godly and righteous life. They currently disobey and ignore the word. But if you live rightly, then without a word, they might come to Christ. They might believe in the message of Jesus that he died and rose again for their sins. And this happens, verse 2, when they see your respectful and pure conduct. Or literally, your fearful and pure conduct. Now, if you remember back to chapter 2, 17, it said to honor the emperor, but to fear God. God is the only one we are called to fear.
God is the only one that citizens in Rome are called to fear. God is the only one that servants are called to fear. God is the only one that these women are called to fear. And so this reverence, this fear, is in the presence of God. And later, Peter will say, do not fear anything that is frightening at the end of verse 6.
And so this fear, this respect, is ultimately directed toward God. And so wives are called to submit to their husbands because of their relationship with God. Wives are called to submit to their husbands because of the wives' relationship with God. They're not called to submit to their husbands because their husbands are smarter than they are. Not because their husbands are holier than they are. And in this case, especially, since they don't even believe. Not because it'll make them happier or make their lives easier.
But because this is what God calls Christian wives to. Now, this is interesting because if a wife continually and repeatedly exhorts her husband to believe, it's possible that she could push him away.
[11:10] It's possible that she could not only expose herself to more danger, but even kind of just shut him down towards the possibility of believing. Peter suggests here the better course of action is to live a faithful Christian life. And as their husbands see their transformation, they may be drawn toward faith in Christ. Peter is saying that a wife's best evangelistic tool is a gracious and submissive attitude toward her unbelieving husband. This kind of goes against some of the more maybe aggressive evangelism strategies that some people promote. But Peter later on in this chapter will actually kind of apply this same principle to the church as a whole in terms of their evangelism. So if you look at chapter 3 verse 15 with me, Peter says, in your hearts, honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and respect.

We always want to be kind in our evangelism. We will have to say some hard things that aren't received well, but we want to be kind and respectful in the midst of our evangelism. So Peter, while he initially brings this up to wives of living the Christian life before their husbands, he kind of applies a similar evangelism strategy to the whole church. He says, we want to do this with gentleness and respect. We want to be faithful with the gospel. We don't want to be arrogant or rude towards anyone.
We want to be kind as we share the gospel, even though we'll have to say some difficult things. Me and a group of friends fairly recently met with another friend who had walked with Christ for a time, seemed to be a believer, and didn't abandon religion altogether, but went to a false religion.
And so we had a very direct conversation with him. I hope it was in love. I hope it was kind and respectful and gentle, but we had to tell him, if you believe what you say you believe, you're going to go to hell. And we just said it straight up to him. That's a very difficult thing to say to a friend. That's a difficult thing to hear from a friend, but it's true. And there's a way you can say that that's out of love and gentleness and respect. So Peter's not saying here, hey, don't worry about sharing the gospel. Step back from evangelism. What he is saying here is to make sure that when you share the gospel, you're doing so with gentleness and respect. And he even applies this to wives living with unbelieving and potentially abusive husbands as well, that when they see your respectful and pure conduct, they may be one without a word. So he tells them to be subject. Secondly, he tells them to adorn themselves faithfully, to adorn themselves faithfully in verses three and four. [14:31] So he says in verse three, do not let your adorning be external. And he specifies what he means, the braiding of hair, the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear. Now reading this, this might seem shocking to you. It could be easy to jump to the conclusion like, okay, I'm a girl. I can't wear jewelry. I'm speaking for a girl. I'm not saying I'm a girl. Can't wear jewelry.

Can't braid hair. Can't do anything like that. Can't dress nicely. Some translations say, do not let your adorning be merely external. So these things listed here, this gold jewelry, the braiding of hair, these things aren't inherently sinful by themselves. There's a way to do these things that is non-sinful. But if that is your sole focus, if that's your primary focus is just your external appearance, ladies, you've missed your calling. Peter is saying to these women, don't let, don't be so focused on the external. Don't let your adorning be purely for appearance.
Don't let it just be external. So obviously this was probably a massive problem in these churches. Peter's writing to multiple churches and he sees fit to include this in this command to all of them. So the question we have is, is it sinful today for ladies to do these things? Is it sinful today for ladies to wear gold jewelry or to braid their hair or to wear nice clothes?
What Peter is driving at here, and I think in the background of this text is modesty, is one of the things. And so we'll go to 1 Timothy 2 in just a moment where Paul gives some very similar commands to the church in Ephesus. But if you dress in such a way to draw attention to yourself, whether that's through lavish and expensive clothing or immodesty, you're sinning, but you can do your hair, wear your jewelry, wear nice clothes without committing sin. So Peter's not, this isn't a call to just be frumpy.
[16:49] This isn't a call to let yourselves go like Elsa. I'd gone so long without a Frozen reference too. Man, streak's over. Okay. So this isn't a call just to not be concerned at all with how you present yourself.

Lacey, in her past, has had a Sunday school teacher who would kind of like make fun of her for wearing makeup or earrings or a dress to church, and she would say, God doesn't care what you look like on the outside, as long as, you know, on the inside, that's what counts. Is that fully what Peter's going for here?
Is he telling the women not to care about how they present themselves? No, what he's calling them to, though, is to be more focused on the development of their character, more focused on the development of virtue in their heart that will spill over and be evident in their lives and in their works. And as we think about clothing, as we think about, for all of us, guys included, what we wear, modesty should be a goal for all of us. Now, what modesty is, is something of a moving target. The Bible doesn't define what modesty is, because modesty, in many ways, is very culturally situated. So we should not be like the world in pushing the boundaries of modesty. We shouldn't be trying to push the boundaries of what's acceptable to wear out in public, but we do need to recognize that we are situated in our culture, in our historical moment, here and now. And so what's modest today

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

would be highly immodest a hundred years ago. We just have to recognize that. Modesty kind of adapts and changes as culture changes. And we as Christians are living in culture. We shouldn't be pushing the boundaries of it, but modesty is very situated in the culture in which you live. And so I think wisely, the Bible doesn't come out and say, hey, this is the definition of modesty for all time. But it does call us to modesty in how we dress and in how we present ourselves. So this isn't a call from Peter to wear muumus, because that's what they wore a hundred years ago, and that's what modesty is. Peter is calling them to not present themselves in a way that brings undue attention to themselves. But what does he call them to in verse four? Let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious. What is this adorning of the hidden person? But what is this adorning of the heart? This is faithfulness to Christ. This is cultivating the fruit of the spirit in your life through reading the Bible and through prayer and through memorizing scripture.
[20:02] This is how you work on the inner person. This is how you work on the heart, which Peter calls imperishable beauty here. And he's not calling your Christianity to stay private. He's not calling for you to stay completely quiet about your faith in Christ. What he is saying is that if you cultivate your heart, that will affect your speech, that will affect your actions, that will be evident to everyone around you. This is what you should adorn. This is what you should spend the bulk of your time on. This is where your effort should go. This is where your energy should be spent, is on cultivating this inner person of the heart. He says, with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit. What does it mean to be or to have a gentle and quiet spirit? Well, this doesn't mean, ladies, that you can't be extroverted. My wife, Lacey, is very extroverted. She likes to have fun. She likes to talk to people.

I'm amazed because I'm like slightly tism, you know, and like can't talk to anyone very well. Lacey can just keep a conversation going, and it's incredible. So Peter's not saying, hey, you've got to be quiet.
You can't talk to anyone. You can't say anything to anyone. This also doesn't mean that you've got to talk like Miss Rachel and just be so gentle and kind and quiet. What is he calling for here? This gentle and quiet spirit. This has more to do with the kind of speech than the volume in which you speak. So it's not quiet in terms of volume, but the quality and kind of words that you speak. And so do you cause problems? Are you a complainer? Are you a grumbler? Are you a fighter or an arguer? These are the kinds of things that Peter's cautioning against. A gentle and quiet spirit is loving and kind and patient with everyone. And Peter says, which in God's sight is very precious.
[22:22] If you remember back in chapter 2, verse 4, so that Christ was rejected by men, but in God's sight, chosen and precious. And this word actually means like very rich. It's a great treasure. This internal adornment is true wealth. This internal adornment is true riches. Riches should not be shown or demonstrated or fully displayed through your clothing. True riches in God's sight are this internal adornment of a gentle and quiet spirit. Peter's point is that the adorning that truly counts is that of the inner person. This is inner and lasting beauty. Peter calls it imperishable.

Beautiful beauty. And so wives should be ultimately focused on their relationship to God. Ultimately focused on how they're pleasing God, how they're serving Him. And so ladies, if you want to be a good wife someday, pursue God. Be faithful to Him. Know His word. Know what He requires of you and be faithful to Him. Clothing, jewelry, hair, clothes, beauty, all of it will fade away, but your soul will last forever. What should your priority be? This adorning that Peter calls for, this is beauty that does not fade away. These are riches that will last forever. And our culture today is very fascinated by by external appearance, by how you look, by your appearance. And so we see from the Bible, this is not a new problem. This is something that's as old as the Bible itself. And so we as Christians should not be marked as being consumed by external things. We should be pursuing godly virtue and godliness in every way.
Social media can be really unhelpful to us in this way, especially Instagram. Anyone got Instagram out there? Yeah, it's no shame, but it's image driven. And so this very much plays into the temptation to only focus and think about things that are external and temporary. And the Bible constantly reminds us, beauty is fleeting. It's here and it's gone, but what is lasting is the character, the hidden person of the heart. And the third thing he calls them to is to imitate holy women.
To imitate holy women. He says in verse 5, for this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves by submitting to their own husbands. And notice how he describes these women. He describes them as holy and he describes them as those who have hope in God. He

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

describes them as having this hope and trust and belief in God. They hoped in God and so they obeyed God in submitting to their own husbands. That's how they adorned themselves. There's this imperishable beauty of obeying God and following the leadership of their husbands. They were made beautiful through this godly submission to their husbands. And he gives one specific example in verse 6. As Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord.
This is a reference to a story in Genesis 18.22. And it's interesting because Sarah is not even talking to Abraham in this story. Sarah is told that she will have a baby at this time next year. And she's old.
[26:44] Abraham is old. And she says, how can that be since my Lord is old? So she's not even talking to Abraham. She's really just making kind of a passing comment about his age. But the way Peter reads this is that even in this kind of casual conversation where she's not even addressing him, she speaks of him with respect.

She speaks of him as the leader of their family, as the leader of their home. And it says in verse 6 that Sarah obeyed Abraham. And so there's a lot of carryover here between submission and obedience. And so a wife's responsibility in the home is to follow the lead of her husband. And again, there are limitations on that. If a husband asks a wife to disobey God, she is not obligated to do that. So this isn't an ultimate authority that belongs to God alone.
But wives are called to submit to their husbands. And he says, and you are her children. You are her children if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening. Now by children, he means that they imitate her, they look like her, they resemble her. But he's saying something more here. A sign of honor for the Jews was to be called the son of Abraham. And Paul in Romans and in Galatians says, you are children of Abraham through faith in Christ. And so what Peter is telling these ladies here is that by demonstrating your faith through your submission to your husband, you're demonstrating that you belong to God's people. You're demonstrating that you are descended from Sarah spiritually.
You're demonstrating that you belong to the God who makes covenants with his people. And Peter says, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening, or this could be read as anyone who is frightening. And so Peter is saying, fear God, live faithfully, don't be afraid even of your husbands. Fear God above everything else and do what he says. God is the one they must fear.
[29:14] Secondly, he speaks to husbands. Just one verse, verse 7. And why just one verse to husbands? Well, again, Peter's focusing here primarily on those who are likely to be oppressed, likely to suffer.

And so he just includes this one brief word to husbands in verse 7. It says, likewise, wives, excuse me, likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way. Live with your wives in an understanding way. Or more literally, live with your wives according to knowledge. And how are they to do this? Showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel? So the question we have is, in what way is Peter calling women weaker? In what way is he referring to them as the weaker vessel in comparison to their husbands? Well, he's not talking about spiritually or intellectually. There are many women who are smart and smarter than their husbands even. So he's not saying their women are stupid. He's saying they're the weaker vessel in another way. So in what way is he talking? I think the best way to understand what Peter is saying is that typically women are weaker physically and even emotionally in comparison to their husbands. Now this is a generality. So it's not always true of every single example, but it is typical. So physically, men are typically stronger than women. There are some exceptions. Those Olympic powerlifter girls scare me a little bit, but I only fear God, so I'm not afraid of them. And so there are exceptions to this certainly. And then emotionally, women are typically more sensitive than men. And Peter refers to women as the weaker vessel. Now these weaknesses are not evil things. These weaknesses are not bad. These weaknesses are in accordance with God's design. And so this sensitivity that women typically have is a good thing because it makes them loving and compassionate. Mothers and wives makes them so incredibly nurturing. Mothers are gentle and nurturing towards their children. Dads are like,
I don't care about your feelings. Just do what I say. And so men and women are created differently. And so when you hear weakness, don't think negative. This is a part of God's design, even from the beginning. But this weakness can be exploited. This weakness can be used to do all kinds of harm. In this case, spousal abuse. Husbands physically beating up their wives. A wife typically can't defend herself against that. That's a weakness. That's a weakness. In that case, that's exploited and used for evil.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

Likewise, Satan also has and does exploit this weakness as well. Women, again, typically are more vulnerable to being manipulated emotionally. God has made you as a woman typically more sensitive than men. And that's a good thing, but it can be exploited by Satan himself.
You think of Eve in the garden. She was deceived by the serpent. And so if you go with me now to 1 Timothy, back to the left. Keep your spot there in 1 Peter 3. In 1 Timothy 2, Paul actually is arguing very similarly to what Peter says in our passage tonight.
[33:25] In 1 Timothy 2, verse 9, Paul says, likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel. So here's a comment about clothing, just like Peter made. With modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness with good works.

Verse 11, let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. We've got the comment about clothing and then being submissive. Verse 12, I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man, rather she's to remain quiet. So there's that word quiet once again. And so Paul is saying that in the church, men are to be the pastors. Men are to be the teachers. And he goes into chapter 3 talking about the qualifications for pastors. But look at his reasoning in verse 13. For Adam was not formed, or Adam was formed first, or Eve. So Adam, from the beginning, was created to be the leader. He was formed first.
Verse 14, and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. And so follow Paul's argument here. He is saying Adam was formed first. So by design, he's the leader. Eve is to be the follower. And Adam is not the one who was tricked. Adam is not the one who was deceived. That was Eve.
Now Adam completely failed in his responsibilities. He, open-eyed, just rebelled against God. But Eve was the one who was deceived. And so Paul's argument here is that Eve, when she stepped out and was speaking on behalf of this couple as a leader, she was manipulated. She was tricked. She was deceived.
And so both by creation and the fall, Paul is going to argue that men ought to be the ones leading in the church. Okay, you can go back with me to 1 Peter chapter 3.
[35:30] So this weakness in itself is not any shortcoming in women. It's not a flaw in them. It's not a bug. It's by design, but it can be exploited, especially when husbands fail to fulfill their role.

And so this, Satan's been in this deception game for ages. And I'm not saying that women are the only ones that are deceived. There are plenty of men who are deceived as well. But so many people will follow a false teacher and say, yeah, he's a really nice guy. He's really loving. He's really gentle.
He's really compassionate. And they, whoever that is, guy or girl, is being manipulated by this false teacher that Satan is using. And so Peter calls these husbands to show honor to their wives as the weaker vessel. He says, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life. The Bible does not dehumanize, dehumanize women. The Bible does not speak down to women. The Bible does not say women have less capacity than men in terms of spiritual things or in terms of intellect. The Bible, above everything else in our world, bestows the utmost honor on women. And he reminds the husbands of that. They are heirs with you of the grace of life. Women will not have a lesser place in heaven than men. Wives will not have a lesser place in heaven than their husbands. They are joint inheritors. They receive the blessings of God together as believers. And so, girls, the Bible does not dehumanize you. The Bible does not oppress you. The Bible lays out God's path and plan for you to find ultimate joy and satisfaction as one of his creatures.
And Peter's reminding these husbands, they will inherit eternal life with you. Take care of your wives, lead them well, and you'll stand beside them in glory because they will inherit eternal life with you.
And this role, it's countercultural, the role of the wife to submit to her husband. The world hates it. Even people in the church can hate it. But if this is followed, both ladies and their husbands will flourish in their relationship before God. Now, what if husbands don't do their job?
[38:30] There are plenty of husbands who fail to be good husbands, who fail to be good leaders. There's a consequence that happens that Peter even speaks directly to.

So that your prayers may not be hindered. Peter's saying, husbands, if you fail to lead your wives, if you fail to love your wives and live with them in an understanding and gracious and gentle way, God will not listen to your prayers.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

That's a very serious threat. Our ability to pray to God is one of the chief blessings that comes to us through Christ's death and resurrection. He has said, you can pray to the Father in my name because his blood was shed for us. And here it says, if you fail to treat your wife correctly, your prayers will be held back. Your prayers will be hindered. It's a very serious threat.
And perhaps it may be why there are many prayers uttered by men in churches across the world that go unanswered. Because they're failing in their obligation to live with their wives in an understanding way. Now, to wrap this up, some of you are sitting here like, I'm not married. I'm not close to marriage. Like, what does this have to do with me? Like, none of you are married in here student-wise. Nate Pritz is close. He's engaged. But other than that, no one is ultra, ultra close to getting married. So thirdly, to conclude this, I want to talk about preparing for marriage.
Or you can call it dating. But preparing for marriage. And I've got six things, six somethings about dating. Call them whatever you want. Six somethings about dating that will hopefully help you. But before we get there, individually, just individually, you, if you're not a believer, I hope you repent and believe in Christ. If you are a believer, individually, are you developing the character to be a good husband or wife one day? Are you following Christ? Are you obeying him? Are you developing a character that would make you a good husband or wife one day? That's a question just to start at the outset. So guys, are you courteous and kind to ladies? Guys in here who have only brothers? Girls are different. If you call your brother a fat cow, he will laugh at you. If you call a girl that, she will die on the spot. She'll just melt into a puddle of tears. So girls are different. And if you've got only brothers, this may be a little bit of a struggle for you. But guys, are you courteous and kind in how you talk to, talk about, and treat women? And ladies, it's spelled out for you in verses three and four. How to cultivate a character that will make you a good wife someday? Now girls who have only sisters. Anyone in here have only sisters?
[41:47] A few of you? Guys are disgusting. Okay, we're just, we're born that way. We're sick creatures. All right, so you know, the smells at Falls Creek aren't like an act to impress you. That's just who we are by nature.

So that's okay. That's normal, I guess. So are you cultivating a character that will make you a good husband or wife someday? And if you've ever met like an older person who's a believer and they're just so kind and gentle and you're like, man, they're so nice to be around. They've cultivated that character for years. That started all the way back when they were young. And so preparing for marriage, even if you're in sixth grade, on this front starts today in cultivating a character that will make you a good husband or wife. Okay, number one, the first something about dating. Don't date anyone that you wouldn't marry. Don't date anyone that you wouldn't marry. So if you're a Christian, this means do not date an unbeliever. Okay, 1 Corinthians 7 says that we as believers are only allowed to marry in the Lord.
We're called to marry other believers. So if you can't marry an unbeliever, don't date one. And don't think like, ah, man, such a nice guy though. I think I can convince him. Or like, man, hey, she's really pretty. I think if I bring her to church, she'll believe. No missionary dating. So don't date someone you wouldn't marry. Invite them to church. If they get saved, then you can date them. But don't date unbelievers. And then a couple of questions, assuming they are a believer, and I've told you guys these before. I've told several of you them, even in individual conversations. But ladies, would you want your sons to act like the guy you've got your eye on? That'll be, if you have kids, if you get married, well, get married first and then have kids. Sorry. That's going to be their example of a man.
That's going to be their example of, that's going to be their example to follow. And so in thinking through dating, would you want your sons to imitate him? And then guys, would you want your daughters to act like the girl you've got your eye on? That would be their example of what a godly woman is supposed to look like. So just a couple of questions for you there. Number two, this is not from the Bible. This is just, you know, maybe some wisdom passed on from a successful dater. By successful, I mean I got married. So two, don't date if you can't get married in five years or less. Again, this is not the Bible. This is just some practical wisdom. So if you're a sixth grader, stop it. There's no chance you're going to get married in the next five years. And so the reasoning behind this is the purpose of dating is to lead to marriage. And so if you're not purposely working towards that, it's not a super productive use of time. Also, if you date for a long, long time, five, six, seven, eight, nine, 12 years, it's going to be very difficult to stay pure if you're with that person for that long. And so I think dating should be kind of a shorter track. So if you're like,

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

I'm 12, maybe I can get married at 16. Like, no, you can't. So just pump the brakes a little bit. Okay. You can have friends that are girls. You can have friends that are guys. You can probably wait today. Okay. So those first two are negative. So don'ts. Again, the second one, that's not the Bible. [45:26] I'm not your parent. Just some wisdom. Number three, these next four are kind of positive. So if you are dating, so primarily speaking to high schoolers here, if you are dating, don't become spiritually dependent on who you're dating. Don't become spiritually dependent on who you're dating.

So this text does not say be subject to your boyfriends. This text does not say live with your girlfriends in an understanding way. Dating is to be a temporary thing, either leading to marriage or ending in a breakup, short of marriage. And so do not become overly spiritually dependent on each other. This is intended to be a temporary thing. And so make sure you're cultivating other friendships.
So don't be like, no more friends. I'm dating. Bad idea. So make sure you're cultivating other friendships. Don't become overly, don't become spiritually dependent on the person you're dating. Pursue God individually on your own. Number four, if you are dating, be pure. Be pure. Ultimately to the Lord, he sees the heart. He sees what you think. He knows what you desire.
And so most importantly, be pure before the Lord. And secondly, be pure individually in how you think and how you treat people as an individual. And if you are dating, be pure toward each other. This is a great temptation that has always been around to compromise on your purity and indulge in sexual immorality. And our culture is not helpful in combating this temptation. Our culture would push for high involvement, low commitment relationships in terms of dating. But 1 Thessalonians 4.3 says, this is the will of God for you, your sanctification, that you abstain from sexual immorality. And so if you're dating, be pure. Even if you're not dating, make that your aim to be pure. Number five, if you are dating, are you okay with the relationship ending? Are you okay with the relationship ending? Certainly, it might be sad. It would be difficult to walk through. But are you holding on too tightly?
[48:04] Dating is not marriage. And so I'm not asking, would you be sad if you guys broke up? But would you be okay if that relationship ended? Lacey and I started dating late in our junior year of high school. And when we both went off to college, we went to different schools. And kind of individually, we had just said, like, this might, we might not be able to make this work. And we didn't talk about that. Lacey wasn't like, I might break up with you. We'll see. But individually, we had kind of both resolved that, like, men, this, we might not be able to make this work. We'll just have to see. And so that would have been sad, certainly. And by God's grace, it worked out. So far, I don't know what Lacey has planned, but if you're dating, are you okay with the idea of the relationship ending? And then number six, if you are dating, be sure to live now in a way that you wouldn't be ashamed of if you meet their spouse one day. Okay, so if you are dating, make sure you live now in a way you wouldn't be ashamed of if you meet their spouse someday. So there's a chance if you're dating in high school that you'll end up marrying that person. There's a greater chance that who you're dating in high school won't end up being your spouse. And so are you guys acting in that relationship in a way that you wouldn't be embarrassed of later? If your girlfriend and you break up, she gets married to another guy, and one day you meet that guy. Act in a way now that you won't be ashamed of if that day comes about.

Okay, so those are, you know, six some things, hopefully helpful about dating, preparing for marriage as you guys walk towards that as you grow up. I'm going to pray for us, and we'll go to small groups. Our Father, we thank you for this evening, being able to gather together to sing praises to you, our God, who has saved us through the work of your Son on the cross, paying for our sins.
I pray for students here who maybe don't believe that, that you would open their hearts to the gospel, that you would change them radically, that you cause them to walk in a manner that's worthy and pleasing to you. I pray for all these students as they're preparing for marriage, as they're walking towards that age where marriage becomes a possibility, that you'd keep them pure, you'd keep them holy. And I pray that as they do date, and if they do date, that they would be godly, that they would be pure and holy in your sight, Lord. I pray our church would come alongside them and help them in that in any way they need. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host