

“The Beauty Inside”

1 Peter 3:1-7

Once again, Happy Mother’s Day to all of the moms out there who are connected to Redemption Hill, including all those who are new and joining us online, perhaps for the first time!!

Wherever you are watching, drop a heart or give your mom a shoutout in the comments to let her know how amazing she is!

Can I just say that the mother of my four children is AMAZING!!?

PIC OF MARSHA & THE KIDS

I’m so thankful for her leadership, not only in our home, but also in our church. She cares for so many people behind the scenes. From the time we launched Redemption Hill 9 years ago to this day, she has made countless sacrifices to see people experience the love of Christ!

And beyond amazing, my wife is breathtakingly beautiful? Can I get an AMEN?!

I’ll never forget where I was standing in Applebee’s Restaurant the first time we met. We were in the back of the restaurant, and I almost had to stand on my tiptoes to see her walking through the crowd. :)

When I saw her for the first time, my heart skipped about 25 beats, and I said to myself, “Self, don’t mess this up!” And then I prayed (I got down on my knees in the restaurant! - No, I didn’t but in my heart, I was on my knees!) God, I need you, and I need you now!!”

There is no doubt her external beauty has inspired a poem or two from my clumsy pen! but that wasn’t what made me want to pursue a relationship with her. It was her fun-loving personality, her values, her godly character, *her beauty on the inside*, that made me want to get to know her more, begin dating, and eventually drop to one knee, so that I could spend the rest of my life with her!

Yes, her external beauty caught my attention, but it was the beauty inside that captured my attention and has held me hostage ever since! (I’m about to move into a poetic flow. That’s what she does to me...)

This is the focus of Peter’s instructions in...

1 Peter 3:1-7 (text displayed). — The Beauty Inside...

These words call all the moms and all the women out there to...

The Point: Chase after a life that displays the beauty inside.

I want to show you three marks of the beauty inside. The first is this...

1. Honor in Relationships

Honor is a relational word. It means to show esteem or respect for someone, to treat them as worthy of admiration.

The most beautiful honor a woman can give is HONOR to GOD. Peter makes this explicit in verse 5, where he talks about women “hoping in God.” We need to understand that everything Peter calls women to (and specifically wives) in this section falls within the larger framework of their allegiance to and love for God!

The greatest way you display breathtaking beauty is by honoring God.

As it says in Proverbs 31:30: **“Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.” (Proverbs 31:30)**

BUT the focus of this section concerns how wives honor their husbands.

This language of “honoring” is incredibly intentional on my part, because I want to help you understand the meaning of what can sometimes be received as negative wording in verses 1 & 5. There Peter says: “Be subject” and “Submit to your own husbands.”

Now, I know you may be thinking: “Pastor Tanner, oh great! That means men get to be dictators and women are doormats.”

Absolutely not! Let me answer some questions you may be asking that should help you better understand what Peter is and is not saying...

1. Are men and women equal in worth and dignity before God. YES! Absolutely! Without Question!
2. Are all women supposed to submit to all men? No! He’s specifically addressing wives and husbands.
3. Does that mean wives have to do whatever their husbands say? NO! The call is to lovingly and willfully follow the leadership of your husband wherever his leadership aligns with the will of God.
 - In fact, Peter specifically addresses wives who had unbelieving husbands. In Greco-Roman culture, women were expected to follow their husband’s religion, which clearly these women rejected when they chose to follow Jesus!
 - Peter hopes they will “win” their husbands over to following Jesus by the way they live!
 - So... to be crystal clear, wives should never follow their husband’s leadership to a place Jesus would not lead them.
4. “Oh... so I’m off the hook, if this command is only relevant to the first century but not the 21st century?” No. Peter addresses all wives in all cultures and contexts, not just those with unbelieving husbands. If there’s any doubt about that from verse 1, there can be no doubt from verse 6 because he points to Sarah and Abraham, the supreme example of a believing husband.
5. “Okay, so help me out... how do I process this command?” I’d love to.
 - Jesus is your example. God the Son, always gladly submitted to the ultimate leadership and direction of God the Father. Jesus shows us how following the leadership of someone else is not a sign of inferiority, but is actually the path of greatness (see Mark 10:35-45). Additionally, verse 7 shows us that..
 - Husbands have an extremely high calling to love and honor their wives! Verse 7
 - He says husbands should “live with your wives in an understanding way.” Literally the Greek would be translated: “according to knowledge” (*kata gnōsin*), which meant to love their wives according to God’s will.
 - “Showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel.” What does that mean? Process of elimination: A general physiological assessment. (As revealed in the next phrase)
 - “Fellow heirs of the grace of life.” Spiritual equality.
 - This is so serious that Peter says: If you fail to do so, your prayers will fail.

Here’s the beautiful thing: when two people focus on mutual love, service, and honor, their marriage will thrive!

T: So Peter says, the beauty inside is seen in the honor you show in your relationships. #2.

2. Purity in Life

Look back in verse 2: “when they see your...”

The NIV is actually better translation. It reads: “when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.”

Peter says the greatest impact happens when we live our lives before God with a sense of reverence and ultimate respect for him. Everything flows from your relationship with God.

Reverence for God leads to a holy and pure life. A holy and pure life shines forth a the kind of beauty Peter describes in verses 3 & 4. Look at those two verses again.

Some people actually view these words as a prohibition against women braiding their hair and wearing jewelry or nice clothes. That’s not Peter’s concern. He comparing the value of External beauty against Internal beauty, and he concludes that there is no comparison!

External Beauty

Moms, I know you haven’t been to the salon in at least 7 weeks. I know you may be wearing your PJ’s 3 or 4 days a week. I know you haven’t got your nails done in a hot minute, but listen, that doesn’t stop you from being beautiful.

If you are watching with a woman right now, I want you to turn to them right now and say, “You are beautiful!” “You are beautiful and your hair looks good!” Somebody give a mom a shoutout in the comments. Tag a mom if you’re worshiping with us on Facebook!

Moms we love you! You are beautiful on the outside, but Peter says, the most important beauty to pursue is “hidden in the heart.” It’s who you are on the inside!

“The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” (1 Samuel 16:7)

Internal Beauty

Here he specifically encourages them to display a “gentle and quiet spirit.” Peter is not advocating for one personality type over another. He’s commending a humble attitude that is not argumentative, but that shows God’s grace and love with consistency!

But it’s not just humility, it’s the 100,001 good deeds you do throughout the course of your life as a woman of God!

Who knows MOMS are famous for doing those 100,001 good deeds for their children and families that go unnoticed by 99.9% of the world?!

Listen: nothing is behind the scenes to God. He sees it all!

- He sees the long days at work that put food on the table.
- He sees the diapers you change at 3am.
- He sees the patience you display when your teenager cops an attitude.
- He sees the listening ear you bend when you just wanted a 5 minute break!
- He sees you crushing it as the greatest homeschool teacher in Massachusetts!
- He sees the example you set by serving others in need.
- He sees the prayers you pray for your children.
- He sees every act of unconditional love you’ve poured out.

And God says, that beauty cannot fade! That beauty will never die! That beauty is very precious, very costly, an absolute treasure in my sight!

T: Display the beauty inside through honor in relationships, purity in life, and finally...

3. Hope for Tomorrow

To illustrate what he means, Peter points back to one of the heroes of the Bible, a woman named Sarah. Sarah was a woman of faith. When Peter says she “hoped in God” that means she trusted God and possessed great confidence he would reward her diligence to honor her husband and live a life of purity.

This theme of hope continues to surface again and again throughout this letter. These women were born again to a living hope.

- Which caused them to live with a confidence in God’s ability to fulfill every one of his promises.
- This hope motivated their resolve to “do good,” (as it says in verse 6) BUT added to that...
- Their hope in God gave them the power to face in life! Look at verse 6 one more time... SO POWERFUL...

“And you are her children (Christian moms, he’s speaking to you! Christian women, he’s speaking to you!) if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.”

WOW. I know this is a tough season. I know your responsibilities as a mom have been stretched, challenged and tested. I know there are plenty of reasons why you could be filled with anxiety, BUT... listen to me... YOU ARE A DAUGHTER OF SARAH.

Your hope in God makes you FEARLESS!

This is what I love about my wife. She is absolutely beautiful on the outside, and she may look super sweet with her diminutive stature, but she is strong, bold, and fearless in Christ. Her hope in God enables her to move forward with a confidence each day to set an incredible Christlike example for our three daughters (Parker, Kesed, and Jordyn). I see the words of Proverbs 31:25 shine in her life...

“Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come.” (Proverbs 31:25)

Her hope in God transforms the way she prays and speaks truth, teaches and counsels, loves, serves and sings!

Conclusion:

I want every mom and every woman to listen to me right now. Lean in! When you consistently display this kind of life, a life that shines forth the beauty inside, you will leave a legacy behind you for generations to come!

Octavius Winslow said: **“How powerful and deathless is the influence of a holy mother!” - Octavius Winslow.**

Prayer

Introduce “The Blessing”

“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.” So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them. (Numbers 6:24-27)

Final Word

- Live Prayer...
- Stick around... chat..
- Connect with a group...