

Winning Souls Without a Word 10-23-16

*In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be **won without a word** by the behavior of their wives 1 Peter 3:1*

The Christian life is a series of relationships.

| Christian Relationships | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Authoritative | Submissive |
| (Rulers) | Subjects/Citizens |
| Husbands | Wives |
| Fathers/Parents | Children |
| Masters/Employers | Servants/Employees |

These relationships are in two parts: the subjective / submissive part, and the authoritative headship part. All of us are in these relationships, and we find ourselves on both sides of the list. We have little control of who these relationships are with, and we must remember that these relationships are most of what it means to be a Christian. Therefore, we are under the command to observe our obligations in these relationships as though unto the Lord.

A great part of the New Testament speaks to these relationship. Colossians 3:18-4:2; Ephesians 5:22-6:9; Romans 13:1-9; 1 Timothy 2:2 and 5:1-6:2; Titus 2:1-10; 1 Peter 2:12-3:9. In each case it is prefaces with the explanation that this is the conduct of a Christian, and that these relationships are how we serve Jesus Christ in our day to day lives. Being a good husband, wife, son, daughter, father, mother, employee or citizen is how we reveal Christ to the world.

Which of these relationships has the most power to change people? We might consider that our Lord and God Jesus Christ is our king, husband to the church, Father, and Master. But we do not always remember that it was in His submissive role as servant and son that He achieved His greatest work. What we need to understand is that it is in the submissive roles in our lives that we have the potential to have the most effect on people. This is stated for us in Philippians 2:5-10.

It is in this context that Peter says in 1 Peter 3:1 that by our submissive conduct we can win souls without a word. Before Peter said this, he told us in 1 Peter 2:21-23 that Jesus also worked without a word, and saved our souls. He quotes Isaiah 53:7-8, which also points to the idea that Jesus suffered without a word. There is something of great importance here; Scriptures make it clear that by being submissive, the Father gave Jesus victory, and the enemy had no cause for accusation. This is our chief point: when we live up to the submissive part of our role, the Father does His part for victory.

In 1 Corinthians 3:6-9 Paul described his work in the Kingdom. He said that his and Apollos' work was not much; it was God who gave the increase. We need to be fully invested in this idea; when we work our part in our relationships, God then works His part (because of our submissive obedience).

So apart from fulfilling my part in these relationships, what can I do to affect change? First, we must learn rust in God and not to lean on our own understanding (Proverbs 3:5). Second, we need to commit our lives to His plan for change (1 Peter 2:21). Finally, we need to learn endurance and be patience (Hebrews 6:12). If we do our part, God WILL do His.