

THE INFLUENCE OF A GODLY WOMAN

A friend of mine calls them “church widows.” They are women whose husbands are not members of the Lord’s church. Not all of the husbands of “church widows” will finally obey the gospel, but some do. The apostle Peter gives instructions to wives whose husbands need to be won over to Christ and obey the gospel. He writes:

Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives: While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of the plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price (1 Pet. 3:1-4).

It is according to God’s laws governing marriage that all wives be in subjection to their husbands, even if the wife is a Christian and the husband is not. Of course, that does not mean the wife is at liberty to follow the lead or rule of the husband to do that which is wrong, but these wives are generally to be in subjection to their husbands. Why? Because when the wife obeys God in this, and in all other ways, she is setting an example that may eventually lead her husband to obey the Lord.

There are times when the unbelieving husband will attend the worship services of the church with his Christian wife, hear sermon after sermon on his need to obey the gospel, yet time and again spurn the invitation. But it may be that when the faithful wife continues to be obedient to God, she may by her life, not by any words she speaks to him, be the very influence he needs to finally surrender himself to the commands of God. If she says too much in words, her persistence can actually be a hindrance to him, but a life of purity and goodness can be the encouragement and convincing he needs.

A godly woman is adorned inwardly with a meek and quiet spirit. It must be this kind of adornment that is the influence that leads her husband to obedience, not the outward adornment of pomp and fashion. If the woman focuses on the outward adornment to influence her husband, it can even lead to a hypocritical response on his part. Men will sometimes do anything for a fashionable, physically attractive wife just to please her. The godly woman focuses on the inward adornment lest her husband, being influenced by the corruptible seem to submit to the incorruptible when he has really only tried to impress her. Physical beauty leads to physical responses, while spiritual beauty leads to a spiritual response.

Sometimes it is said that a sermon is better seen than heard. That can certainly be the case when the godly wife preaches to her unbelieving husband, the one sermon that he needs to be led to obedience; the sermon of the influence of a beautiful life in a godly wife.

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