

**Going: Next Door and Beyond**  
**Love in Deed—the Action Witness: 1 Peter 2:20b-3:7**

Intro: Did you see the Pew Study just done about Americans' knowledge of religion? Adults in America are not very knowledgeable about what other religions teach nor do they know very much about their own faith. Atheists, Mormons, and Jews did better on the questions than professing Protestants and Catholics.

I. FOLLOW IN HIS STEPS (v2:21).

Peter quotes Isaiah 53:9 in this passage as he talks about the Christian behavior of slaves who are believers, the very same chapter we saw addressed last week in Acts 8 with Philip and the Ethiopian man. This chapter in Isaiah is both a description of our salvation in Christ and an illustration of proper Christian behavior in the world. The summary of this recommendation for living in the world would be in 1 Peter 2:23: *When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.*

A. Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should “follow in his steps” (v21). The Greek term for “example” is *hypogrammos* which referred to a tool for learning to write, a written copy given to beginners that included all the letters of the alphabet. They copied those letters and so learned to write. We are to follow his lines, trace his outline, and thus get our letters right.

B. He did not retaliate and made no threats (v23)

C. He entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

II. WIN THEM WITH BEHAVIOR (v3:1).

A. *Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds...* (v2:12)

B. *They may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives* (v3:1)

1. Submission which is mentioned three times by Peter: to authorities, to earthly bosses, and to husbands. Its companion is HUMILITY which is urged upon all toward everyone (v3:8).

2. Purity (v3:2)

3. Reverence (v3:2)

4. Gentle and quiet spirit (v3:4): true inner beauty

5. Hope in God (v3:5)

6. Do what is right (v3:6)

7. Do not give way to fear (v3:7).

III. LISTEN FOR THE QUESTION (v3:14-15)

A. Christian living is unusual behavior

1. We share many of the usual decent behaviors with all kinds of people who believe in other gods or not gods at all.

2. But we have distinctive behaviors that are sharply in contrast with the generally accepted guidelines:

a. We strive to turn the other cheek.

b. We seek to do good to those who hate us.

c. We intend to go the second mile.

- d. We seek to love our neighbors.
- e. We even intend to love our enemies.
- f. We bless those who curse us.

3. Christian living is FEARLESS: *Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened* (v3:14). Peter says to the wives, “Do not give way to fear” (3:6). We live in faith, not fear.

4. Christian living is submission to Christ: *But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord* (v3:15).

- B. Such living prompts questions.
- C. We must always be ready to give an answer