

Ribless Christians

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of purity and setting a good example for others, particularly among youth.

Duration: 1:15:35

Scripture: Proverbs 5:3, 1 Timothy 4:12

Topics: "Courage"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of purity in the lives of believers. He warns against breaking the duty of purity that God has given to us and reminds us that we will be judged by God's words. The preacher encourages young people to set an example in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity. He emphasizes that our lives should be a pattern for others to follow and that even if we have made mistakes in the past, we can repent and be made new in Christ. The sermon concludes with a prayer for the engaged couple and a reminder to live holy lives until their wedding day.

Transcript

Shall we pray? Thank you Lord for this opportunity to gather together, meeting around your word. On this day of the engagement of your children. So that you would work and everyone who listens to this would hear your voice.

Amen. I'll ask those getting engaged to come forward. Manuel Bele from High Flats.

And Nonto Thibane. She is not from far, from close by. This ring signifies that he will keep himself till the day of marriage and she.

Let's pray. Thank you Lord for the lives of your children. That they have gone forward in the faith until this part of their lives.

Bless Lord there. Keep them Lord till the day, if it is your will, till the day of their wedding being kept holy. Spiritually.

In their souls. And even bodily. Amen.

Our text for today found in the first letter to Timothy. Chapter four. Verse twelve.

Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. I want to speak about just one of these words, purity. Purity.

It says. We can't speak about it all for it contains so much. Therefore I'll look at only one part of it, purity.

I'm thankful for the parents and the families of these young people. Blessed is the parent who has children who live lives of these young people. For it is not the privilege of every parent.

Let me explain a little. Both of them are teachers. I asked Emmanuel Mbele what that name means and he told me.

I thought of phoning the minister down there, Mr. Joe Newlands, to ask him how the life is of this young person. But this morning, I bumped into him. Got a letter.

He had brought a letter along. Which says. It's from the doctor.

Which says. This letter serves as a confirmation that Mr. Emmanuel Mbele. Is pure.

Pure young man. Well. I have a privilege.

That you bring such a letter. Well. Lady, you have a privilege.

Doctor's letter saying that he is clean. So I thought, let me speak a little bit about your life, teachers. As I said, he's from the high flats area.

But worships there in Donnybrook. He's from Inkwazela. I asked him to tell me how he met with the gospel.

He said, I was at school. I was learning in the higher levels. And young people from here, from Siza Bantu, came and held services.

And I surrendered to the Lord. I've never drunk. I've never boozed.

Or used drugs. Never had a girlfriend. And.

But he had determined to keep himself virgin and pure till he's finished grade 12. To grade 12. But in his 12th grade, the gospel came with such force like an eagle snatching a chick.

From that time on. He has lived a sparkling life. I asked him, have you ever had a girlfriend? He said, no, I don't know what that is like.

One person said, that is exceptional. In these days. And his life really impressed me and I was glad.

Let me tell you a secret. He said. He said, he came to me and said, you know, I feel in my heart that I should get married to Miss Nonto.

Could you please speak to her? Okay. So I'm just a postman. I'm the post boy and I cannot determine a yes or a no.

So I went to her. To this young lady. And I said.

And I said, there is a teacher down there in Donnybrook. Who would like to get engaged to you. Now remember.

She'd been at the college. She was in the first year, still had three years to go. I'm telling you a secret today.

She said. She said. I would like you to tell him that I'm not even going to pray about it.

I am at college. I'm only in my first year. I need to finish the four year degree.

So I'm not even going to pray. You inform him that. So I brought that letter back to the young man.

And he was silent. Wasn't troublesome in any way. Because some might say, no, go back to her, go back.

But all these years. He never came once to trouble me with this matter again. Now she then finished.

Her studies. And now. The engagement has come about.

That's no small matter. Yeah. He met with the gospel in 1996 while studying grade 12.

And the young lady. Was. Young.

All these years. She insisted. Nothing is going to interfere with my studies.

I need to complete my studies. And only after she had completed it. Then it went ahead.

You see that such a thing is a rarity. There is. So.

So. There's nothing to be compared to the gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ. which is able to renew a person, regenerate them so that they are made completely different in this corrupt and wicked generation.

No contacting each other with SMS's or phone calls or flirting around behind dark corners. Instead they led an exemplary life. We praise God for that.

We are not ashamed of such people. We would be ashamed of people who live a cheap life. They are spoiled before marriage and they are spoiled and even have children before marriage.

Illegitimate children. That is very sad. Such children have such a difficult life.

They are like orphans. We were in East London. We were in East London where they would like us to take over a mission and they have 69 orphan children there.

How heart breaking. Children without parents. One little child as I walked by, I put my head just in passing as I went by and the child embraced me, embraced my leg and my heart was so sore thinking this child has no parents.

No father. So many children have such difficulty because of being born into such a situation. All those children have been referred by the court.

They vary in age from the age of about 3 to about 18. I was very impressed with the white people. The people who are carers there who treated the children and the blacks like fellow human beings and such a wonderful spirit among them.

people and they turn around on the catwalk.

And he said, And that man told me that we have to walk so carefully and with such circumspection because we are being watched continually and woe to us if we fall into something wrong because the gospel is despised. He said, we win people by the lives we live. If that is what we are modelling, if we do not show that and we are not walking as we should, then don't refer to your conversion on such and such a date, get converted today.

To be an example. An example means to show, to show off, to set the pattern. Pattern setters, as you know, pattern is what describes how an article of clothing should be.

And so our lives should be setting patterns. You have seen the example of these young people, a good example? Maybe somebody here, somebody listening says, but I am spoiled already. I have messed up already.

But I have good news. Even so. Repent and come to your redeemer because the Bible says anyone who is in Christ is a brand new creature.

You can be made anew, born again. Then set the pattern so that you set the pattern through your conduct for old and young as to how a Christian should live. As I pondered upon the meaning of an example, I thought of Joseph.

Not everybody is a washout. There are those who are upright in the Lord. Sold into slavery in Egypt, symbolic of the land of sin.

You know what cities are like. He was sold to that owner of that property and after not a very long time, the owner saw that the hands of Joseph were blessed. He handed over one department after another to Joseph and then eventually the master key because he was more trustworthy and did things better than even he could do.

So it is a rarity to find a worker who is so trustworthy. And so he, Potiphar, entrusted everything to Joseph because he saw that his hands had more blessing than his own. Jesus said, the true shepherd lays down his life, denies his own life for his sheep.

When David was still young and he was shepherding his father's sheep, a bear came, snatched a lamb, chased it, caught it, hit it. He was able to pluck that lamb out of the mouth of the bear, put himself in harm's way because a bear is a dangerous animal, not a dog. One day a lion came, snatched a lamb.

He chased it too. Until David caught up with it, grabbed it by the mane, plucked out the lamb and saved the life of the lamb. That is dangerous.

And an owner is like that. And so no wonder that Joseph was eventually like the king. And so instead of a wage, we received as brothers an inheritance.

And look at the brothers, my brothers, they have far more than a person who just works for wages. It doesn't mean that you shouldn't be working for wages, but learn the lesson from this. It doesn't mean that you shouldn't be working for wages, but learn the lesson from this.

The hired person, though, has no feeling for the work, and he'll just leave whenever he wants to go. At five o'clock he's off. But the person who owns it has a different feeling.

He cares for it day and night. You might say, but things have changed. Yes, indeed, they have changed.

But that's why things are as they are in this world now. Potiphar, a heathen of Egypt. He had such confidence in Joseph that he entrusted all the keys.

He knew that everything was safe in his hands. Though he was a slave, he had a wonderful appearance and was strong. Is there any place in your life where Satan has put his dirty foot and the smell of the pig's thighs upon you? Then the wife of Potiphar.

Potiphar's wife, though, came speaking words that were out of place, and so she began to flirt with him. Then one day, when Potiphar had gone on a journey, and she thought, well, we're all alone now with Joseph, and she grabbed him by his coat. Remember, it was Egypt after all.

Things were depraved. And it's bad when men flirt around with girls, but even worse when it's the other way around. And when a wife flirts with a boy.

Now, something that was said by Solomon. I'll mention soon. Now, Potiphar's wife then grabbed his coat, but he slipped out of it.

Out of his hands, out of her hands, like an eel. Let me use another illustration. Like wet soap in your hands.

Even though other men were depraved, we can say, Joseph, you set the pattern. You are our example. You man of men.

And though she had the garment in her hands, and he slipped out, he said to her, what, can I do this against God? You see, he feared God and said, never. And he fled. That afternoon, the evening when Potiphar came back.

And now the wife, the slippery tongue, the cunning of that woman, how she spoke. She said to Potiphar, look, I have the garment of Joseph. He was trying to rape me.

Here's the evidence. He was furious. He was furious.

He was furious. He said, what, Joseph, to whom I had entrusted everything, he tried to rape my own wife. No, even though I need him, he must go.

He was imprisoned under that accusation for years because of lies. What an example he is to us. And though he was in jail for years under a false accusation, eventually he had the keys, not just of Potiphar's property, but of the whole nation.

You keep faithful, you stay faithful to the Lord, even if you're in difficulty now, the Lord will reward you one day. Now, that's the first point, being a good example. Now, secondly, a bad example.

Let me speak of Solomon, one who was wise, so wise that no one before him or after him was wiser. I don't, of course, include our Lord Jesus Christ. I'm speaking of other human beings.

Look, for example, at the wisdom found in Proverbs. Read it from the beginning to the end and see there the diamonds, gold, the pearls of wisdom. And he wrote that while he was still young, he had just received his being the king, but only later did he write then Ecclesiastes.

Read from there to understand the difference between a good and a bad example. He wrote and said, my son, beware of the flirtatious woman whose tongue drips honey. And her mouth, though, is a two-edged sword, destroying any who listen to her.

And those who are deceived by her, it said in Proverbs, they end up in the pit, in perdition. And Solomon said, everything is just in vain, it is an empty tin. But in the beginning, when he was still young, he said, you see the flirtatious woman, she has nothing inside, nothing to offer you.

You buy that tin of goods, but in fact, when you open it, there's nothing there. Read the Proverbs of Solomon and see his dire warning to young men. And he said, if you fall into her pit, it will be a bitter experience.

Stay far from her, don't even get close. As the Bible says, flee youthful lusts. Don't just flee in your thoughts, flee even physically, get rid of her presence, stay away from that temptation.

Sad though that this man of such wisdom, who was such a mighty king, nevertheless fell into that very same pit. Had a wife, then a second one, a third, five, ten, then thirteen, then a hundred, two hundred, three hundred, four hundred, five hundred, six, then he had finally seven hundred wives. From Adam, God took one rib and made Eve.

But from Solomon, seven hundred ribs were taken out. He eventually was just skin and bones, he had nothing, no backbone, and I speak spiritually here. He had seven.

He had seven hundred wives. And he then eventually landed up with these seven hundred wives. And I speak using a Zulu word which means not real wives, but just cheap women.

He took princesses of others. But even that did not satisfy him. He even had three hundred concubines on top of it.

So altogether he had a thousand women. And this king... He had a thousand concubines on top of it. And all the exuberance and life and all the glory of his early kingdom by the end of it when we find him in the Ecclesiastes, he is full of despair.

You too can end up like that. Be careful. He who preached to others did not heed his own sermons.

Eventually he had no ribs. Eventually he had no ribs. And she would read missionary stories to him as a boy, but he grew up not being converted.

Don't assume that because you're a Christian, your children are automatically converted. Remember, God doesn't have any grandchildren. He only has children.

When he was then grown up and about to leave, his mother, who was weeping, Oh his mother, so wise. I respect such wise women, those who are not models and examples in that way. I respect such wise women, those who are not models and examples in that way.

Don't deserve respect. There are some women who you would think were married to their children. They side with their children in evil, and it's like they are married to them, but you'll reap what you sow.

She said, Robert, and in their parting, Robert, I want you to keep just one thing, I want you, I'm going to tell you something, I want you to keep it till death. He said, I can't promise anything where I don't know what

you're going to say. She said, no, it's nothing bad, it's something good.

Robert, promise me you'll read a page of the Bible, a chapter of the Bible every day, just one chapter a day for the rest of your life. He promised her and said, Mother, I don't. That was before.

That was before his conversion. You see, if you read the Bible continually, you can't but get converted. When he was old, an old man, he could testify, I didn't let one day go by without reading a chapter of the Bible.

What are you doing? What are you teaching your children? What milk are you nursing your children with that they should be as they are? Or are there other things that you're busy reading and watching and looking at? God says here, be an example. That is a, we are tied to it. And it's your duty as well.

This is our God-given duty. Woe to you if you're not an example to everyone, to your fellow blacks, whites, coloreds, Indians, whatever you're like. Remember that man from that Muslim country who said, woe to us who've become Christians if we are not an example and are careful in everything.

That's your work, your duty, your responsibility, your task. It's woe to you if you're not faithful in that. Whether you like it or not, you are hell bound.

Don't laugh at me and say you're going to heaven. This is your God-given duty. Otherwise, if you do not keep this at the end of your life, you will also say vanity, everything is vanity.

And I'm not even speaking about these other aspects in this verse about being an example, but just about purity, sexual purity in particular. Are you an example there? A young man who's got engaged, do you hear? Young lady, do you hear? Your work. This is your work, this is your duty.

Woe to you if you do not keep this in purity till you meet the Lord who, if you don't keep it, will say this was your duty. You come to me for wages, you get nothing. You didn't keep.

Jesus said it's not I that will judge you, but my words will judge you. And these are words from the Lord. Woe to you if you break his duty that he's given to you.

Time has gone on and I'm closing. Do you hear or not? Will you listen or won't you? In listening. In listening.

Are you going to keep? Skipping over a few things. Woe to you if you do not listen for this day will be judgment for you. But it is good if in listening you keep what you've heard today.

And if you don't obey, this service will condemn you. You'll be damned because of it. It would have been better that you wouldn't have come into the service.

Shall we bow our heads? The Lord is with you. Lord, grant that we would hear what you say as you speak to us. That we would also listen and obey and heed what you have told us.

Lest we go down to that pit because of a foreign woman. Amen.

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