**Speaker:** Henry Williams SR.

**Speech Type:** Religious/ Sermon

**Speech Preface:**

 I am sure you have a few small personal stories that are going to lead into the beginning of this speech for your audience. Feel free to break the following speech up into smaller bits so you can dive in to detail or add your own spin on everything. I know with religion each ministry can have their own spin on what an actual verse means, so for the purpose of trying to make sure this caters to all audiences the spectrum will be very wide, but it should still work. You can take what I have written and add your own personal stories to it to make it catered towards your specific audience.

**Speech:**

The verse that I wanted to bring up today is one that I feel really caters to all people. Now, I low some one you might be thinking, it’s the Bible… doesn't all of it cater to all of us? Yes, but specifically I believe this is a verse that no matter how old you are, where you are in your life or what is going on in your personal life, this is one that when you take the time to actually read it and think about what God is telling us it can really help us get to the next level. The verse I am speaking of is 1 Timothy 4:12, if you have your Bibles with you I encourage you to look it up.

(pause for a second so people can look it up, Make a few jokes such as: if you need a hint, it’s near the back of the Bible) Alright, if you are ready say “ready” (let them say ready) if you aren't ready say “Wait for me” (should get a few people to laugh)

Alright, here we go. 1 Timothy 4:12 reads: "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and purity.”

Now, as we look at what is written there it would help to know a little bit about this verse. 1 Timothy was written by the Apostle Paul, and in this book most of it is spent giving council to his younger colleagues. See why I picked this verse, there is a method to my madness.

If we focus just on the first part of that verse, “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young” I think we can all honestly say we have been there before. Whether it was at work, you know, maybe you thought you were up for that next promotion, but they gave it to someone else. Maybe you were spending some time with friends and someone was looking for advice and they dismissed your input because they thought, how could they have any experience in what I’m talking about. Am I right, have we all been there in some way, shape or form? It’s no fun, it’s tough, it hurts when people don’t respect you. God says though, Don't let anyone look down on you… Now what God isn't saying is to go punch them in the nose and say “You listen here…” sure we might feel like that sometimes, but what God is saying is to show them just because you are young, or a man or woman… or what ever adjective you chose to put in there, just because of that doesn’t mean you’re not qualified.

I know some of you might be thinking, “well hey, you just said I wasn’t allowed to punch them in the nose, but then you told me to show them you are qualified… aren't you contradicting yourself?” I’m glad you were all thinking that, that’s why the rest of the verse is so important, because we were given the recipe on what to do. It reads: “but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and purity.” I know, those were a lot of verbs to follow along with, have no fear though we will go through each of them.

Lets start with the first one: SPEECH. What a lovely thing speech is. it’s how we communicate with each other on a daily basis. It is how you tell someone you are happy, sad, content or frustrated. Speaking too much can get you in trouble, and not speaking enough gets people worried about you. What a funny thing speech is right? What I am taking out of this is that through speech each and every one of us has the ability to do great things, we can lift someone up when they are down, we can make someone feel good about themselves if they are having trouble… really the possibilities are endless. And yet, I feel so many times in our day and age that isn’t what we end up doing. What God wants us to focus on his knowing that everything we say can do one of two things, it can help, or it can hurt. Yes, sometimes it might make us feel real good to yell when we are frustrated or angry, but put yourself in the shoes of the person you are yelling at. Did that help them?

Next let’s look at CONDUCT. there are so many different directions we could go with this one. When I think of this one, there is one thing that just jumps in my mind and it was something I heard growing up. It has stuck with me my entire life and I hope it will do the same for all of you.

This is what I was told when I was younger, “We will never LEAD well if we haven’t learned to FOLLOW well.” Yeah, let that sink in for a second. SO often in our lives we want to share our two cents, but maybe others won’t listen. I think this speaks volumes to why sometimes people don’t want to listen. They think well that person has never been through this, so they couldn't possibly know. That isn't always true, sometimes it helps to just hear what others are saying and relate it to what is going on in your life. Each and every one of you has unique qualities about yourself that no one else can share, and that’s what makes you all so great.

Next one on the list is LOVE. Now, what could God mean by saying don’t let others look down on you, but set an example with Love? I think this one might be one of the easier ones to explain. We have all heard the expressions, “kill them with Kindness” and “ love your neighbors and your Enemies” and I think both of these are great examples of setting examples with Love. It is easy to be mad at someone for something they have done, that doesn't take strength, what truly shows how sting someone is, Both physically, emotionally and mentally is being able to forgive someone, being able to tell the person that maybe did some wrong towards you that it’s okay and that you still care about them.

Next we have FAITH on the list. Now with this one, this one is something that we all are working on. It is why we are all here today. To work on our faith, oh and how our faith gets tested sometimes doesn’t it? It is so easy for us to blame God for something happening, or something not happening. And yet, what humbles me every time I begin to think like this is the question, “who knows better about what is going to happen, Me or God?” Usually when I ask that very quickly my stance changes to “god, i’m not sure what you’re doing, but I bet if I hang in there long enough I will see what and I’ll appreciate it.” How many of you can agree with that? Something happened, and you were the first to blame, God or someone else for it. Then you looked back at it now and realize a lot of good came out of it.

I think the point I am trying to get across to all of us here today is that we each have our struggles, we each have our unique situations that God has planned for all of us, and that is what makes us all so extremely special. Despite your age, that is something that we often times use as an excuse to limit ourselves, but God has the ability to fill us with wisdom, and that is something that is not limited by age. God has put each and everyone of you on journeys that have shaped you in to who you are today. Each of those journeys has been compiled of many things, including Speech, Conduct, Love and faith and that is what makes you all special in being able to bring uniqueness to the table. There is something each and everyone of you knows, that other people here today don’t know. There are things that each and everyone of you can do, that others here today can’t do. So when God says, don’t let anyone look down on you, remember that… remember that you’re special and prove it to whom ever might be looking down on you. Don’t show them in a boastful way, don’t run up to them and throw it in their faces that you're special… but rather, and this is the last thing I want to leave you all with today…

Live the Christian life consistently, and in time everyone will learn to respect you.