

A Witness in the Home

1Peter 3:1-7

Let me draw your attention to what we've been studying in 1Peter.

Peter points out three relationships we have in which we must be a good witness for Jesus.

One is our relationship with civil government. He said in chapter 2:13 "Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him.... Be subject to the governing authorities. Just because we are Christians, and our citizenship is in heaven does NOT mean we are to rebel against the government. Christians are not to be rebel rousers, rioters, and a part of the crowd that fights against the government. We render to Caesar that which is Caesars; and we render to God the things that be of God. We obey the laws of the land. However, if the government puts down a law for us to obey and it is in contradiction to God's law, then we are to obey God rather than the government. We are to obey God rather than men. We are to be model citizens living in subjection to our governing authorities which is ordained by God. By doing good and being submissive even if the ruler, or authority over us is unjust, we can put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. This is the point Peter makes.

Another relationship we have is in the workplace. It's the employee and employer relationship. The workplace can be an unfriendly place for a Christian. Peter says to "servants" or the same as an employee, be subject to your masters, or employer, or you might say the boss. Be subject not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust.

But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. ²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. (1Peter 2:20b-21)

The third relationship to be a witness for Jesus is in the marriage relationship. That's where we've stopped last time. We come now to chapter 3, verse 1.

Let's read vv.1-7

Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands..... Notice the word "subject"... Peter already said, be subject to the governing authorities.... And he said, "be subject as slaves to your master, that is, employee be subject to the employer, or boss.

It's important we keep this in context with the larger discussion as to how we WIN OTHERS TO CHRIST. **Our conduct matters!** Whether it's our governing authorities, or our employers, how we behave goes a long way in pointing others to Christ.

And it is very important in the home with the relationship between wives and husbands.

Peter makes it very specific as to what he's talking about: (see v.1)

This happens so often. A married couple in time may be on different sides when it comes to faith in God. One spouse may come to know Christ, while the other one has no interest. This has potential for conflict in the relationship. So, what does a believing wife, or a believing husband do in such cases? The believing spouse may think, it's time to get out of this marriage. Paul writes about this and we'll look at in in a moment.

Peter, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, tells us how the wife should conduct herself, and how the husband is to conduct himself.

Let's look first at the Christian Wife.

I. A Christian Wife

A. The Wife's Submission

(1) This is by God's Design

The wife's subjection to her husband refers to her role in the marriage. God designed the marriage to have a leader- He put the Husband in charge. Back in Genesis where we read of how the devil tempted Eve to take of the fruit of the forbidden tree; She went against God's will and sinned by eating of that forbidden fruit; and she gave it to Adam. He sinned.....

God came to check on Adam and Eve..... Adam and Eve heard God coming.

⁸ And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the **LORD God called to the man** and said to him, "Where are you?" (Genesis 3:8-9)

God came to the MAN OF THE HOUSE! God came calling on ADAM!

Sure, it was Eve who first took of the forbidden fruit, but God came looking for Adam.

God laid the responsibility of what was going on at the feet of the husband – Adam. Both Adam and Eve were culpable of their transgression. It was, however, Adam's transgression that plunged the entire human race into sin and death.

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 1Cor. 15:22

GOOD NEWS - IN CHRIST.....all be made alive... We submit to Christ...He is OUR HEAD.

For Wives to submit to their husband is to complement the Headship of Christ over His Church.

Listen to Eph 5:22-24

²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

This is by God's design.

Colossians 3:18 Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord

WIVES AND HUSBANDS ARE TO BE SUBMISSIVE TO CHRIST. The fruit of that submission to Christ (for the wife) is submission to her own husband.

IT'S IMPORTANT to see this - that submission is to her OWN husband....not to men generally speaking. Not to all men....**only** to her own husband.

Commentator Matthew Henry wrote, "The woman was made out of Adam's side. She was not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be loved."

NEXT POINT.....

When the Christian wife recognizes the headship of her husband, and submits to her husband, it can have a powerful influence on the husband who is yet to be a BELIEVER in Christ.

Look at the Last part of v.1 -

so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, ² when they see your respectful and pure conduct.

(2) Her subjection can have a Sanctifying Influence

...they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, ² when they see your respectful and pure conduct. KJ – WHILE THEY BEHOLD YOUR CHASTE CONVERSATION (THAT MEANS LIFESTYLE) COUPLED WITH FEAR (REFERRING TO REVERENCE AND RESPECT)

"without a word" Without badgering their husband with endless reminders as to what he needs to do....or slip Bible verses constantly where he can read them....like on the frig. Or where he washes and shaves.... IT'S not so much as WHAT the Wife SAYS, as to HOW SHE LIVES....HER conduct and behavior makes all the difference. **When they see your respectful and pure conduct.**

This is how many husbands have come to be saved. Testimonies have been given as to how their spouse demonstrated the life of Christ. Their behavior was that of love, patience, compassion, respect and submission to their husband. The greatest impression for Christ comes by being the submissive wife. This has a sanctifying influence on the unbelieving husband.

so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives,² when they see your respectful and pure conduct.

1Corinthians 7:12-16

¹² To the rest I say (I, not the Lord) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. ¹³ If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. ¹⁴ For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. ¹⁵ But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace. ¹⁶ For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?

This Sanctifying Influence; influencing an unbelieving husband toward Christ... comes powerfully in the home when the Christian wife LIVES in submission to her husband.....as long as that submission is not to do something SINFUL.

Constantly badgering the unbelieving husband, verbally threatening, and throwing Bible verses at him is NOT what Peter is saying.... Women preachers are not allowed in the church; and Peter is clear they are not to do their preaching at home, either.

The respectful and pure conduct....the godly behavior of the wife has more to win the husband's heart than anything else.

B. The Wife's Adornment (vv.3-4)

For the wife to win her unsaved husband, Peter gives the most important matter to pay attention to. First, it's not the OUTWARD Adornment, not the external adornment:

LOOK at V. 3

³ Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear—⁴ but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.

What Peter is NOT saying... When it comes to the outward adornment of braiding the hair... fixing up your hair.... NOT saying it's wrong to do that....

Not wrong to put on jewelry....gold jewelry...some people go too far and say it's wrong to have cosmetics, jewelry, ..

It's clear - Peter says - the emphasis, the concentration and major attention should not be on these things, but rather on the ADORNMENT OF YOUR HEART.

(1) Inward adornment

Look at v.4 ----but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit.

The most beautiful women are those who by the world's standard would never make the cut in a beauty contest, but they are those whose beauty is described as a **gentle and quiet spirit**.

In the world's eyes --- such a lady is overlooked. **But in God's eyes** they are very precious.

Notice v.4 ".....which in God's sight is very precious"

The inward adornment requires inward grace. Both Husbands and wives need "inward" grace. All of us need God's help that we might have a calm spirit, a gentle spirit, a quiet spirit. WE live in a very troubled world. Things happen that affect our families. We can easily become disturbed, frustrated, aggravated, and lose our cool. The Holy Spirit dwells within us and by being filled with the Spirit we will have the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness.

The Gentle and Quiet Spirit in God's sight is very precious.

1Timothy 2:9 Likewise, *I want* women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments,

To have the greatest impact on winning a husband to Christ comes from the beauty on the inside. This is in God's Sight very precious.

C. The Wife's Role Models vv.5-6

Is there a good example for the wife to follow? This is what Peter gives in vv.5-6. Go to the ladies in the Old Testament. **This is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands.**

The example Peter gives is Sarah. **As Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.** This is something Sarah did on her own free will. She willingly called her husband, Abraham, "lord". With a small "l" by the way. Not capital "L" for our Lord God. She didn't have to do this, but there was something about her commitment to Abraham that brought this out.

Sarah obeyed Abraham. Abraham was called by God to leave his family, his own mother and father, and kinfolds to travel to a place where God would show him. Abraham obeyed God and by faith left his home land not knowing exactly where he was going. Guess who else was "obeying"? Sarah obeyed Abraham and went with him.

Sarah was not perfect.... She at one point tried to exert LEADERSHIP over Abraham....the results was the birth of Ishmael through Sarah's handmaid, Hagar..... Sarah couldn't get pregnant, so she has

this plan to allow Abraham to have a son through her handmaiden. NOT God's Will.....and historically that hasn't turned out too well.

For the most part....Sarah was a good role model of submission.

Abraham was afraid for his life because he thought some king might take Sarah away from Abraham. When Sarah was 65 years old the Pharaoh of Egypt did just that. Abraham lied about their relationship saying Sarah was his sister. Never read of Sarah.... Abraham, you are dumb! We are not going to play this charade of me pretending to be your sister. NO, she went along...submissively.

Abraham did this again with Abimelech, King of the Philistines. Sarah was 90 years old. NO doubt Sarah was very beautiful in her old age. In her old age she had the SON OF PROMISE. Isaac.

Her physical beauty is not what is remembered. She was so beautiful inwardly with a gentle and quiet spirit that it made the marriage so strong. Abraham loved Sarah greatly. The Bible tells us Sarah died at the age of 127, and Abraham wept for days and days.

You are her children - what does that mean? We call Abraham our Father in the Faith. We are by faith Abraham's children. Romans 4:16 "who is the father of us all,"

And in **Galatians 4:26** it is implied that Sarah is the mother of us all.

If Christian wives will follow her example...do good and **do not fear anything that is frightening.**

It can be frightening for a wife who becomes a Christian and begins to do good, and display the spirit of submission. She may be afraid of being taken advantage of; of becoming a victim of abuse. There is this intimidation from the world for a godly wife to not be this way. The feminist movement has pushed women to throw off all restraints and demand their independence. Submission to one's husband is seen today as archaic, outdated and some think it's abusive. Peter says, "do not fear anything that is frightening" That is, Don't be intimidated by the culture which makes fun of godly, submissive wives.

The culture tells women to look to successful women of the world. Those who excel in sports, or politics, and business....these are the women to follow after. Peter says....take a look at Sarah. Don't be frightened, don't be intimidated by the pressure of the feminist crowd to be free from biblical womanhood.

II. A Christian Husband v.7

A. Be Submissive

v.7 **LIKEWISE**, husbands..... What does that mean? Just like the wife, there is "submission" on the part of the Christian husband. (**LIKEWISE**) Not only are Christian wives to be submissive to their own husbands, Christian husbands are to be submissive to their wives. In a different way.

Ephesians 5:21 "submit yourselves to one another". The way submission is carried out with the husband is different. Peter goes into detail.

Live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

The Christian husband's submission is different. It's not a submission to the leadership of the wife. She's not the head of the husband. The Husband is not submitting to his wife in this way. Here's how the husband is to submit to his wife. **He is to submit to meeting the needs of his wife.**

Verse 7 Peter show us what that looks like. Keep in mind the main point is how a Christian husband can relate to his wife who is not a believer. Just as the Christian wife relates to her unbelieving husband by being submissive, respectful, and displaying the inner adornment of a gentle and quiet spirit, the Christian husband in order to win his unbelieving wife should display submission in a certain way.

How is it done? HIS ATTITUDE toward His WIFE must first of all be one of understanding.

He is to meet her needs by BEING UNDERSTANDING.

B. Be understanding. Live with your wife in an understanding way - that means to be thoughtful, considerate, less of yourself, and more about her.

Notice the verse again --- live WITH your wife ! ! ! Husbands, don't live OUTSIDE of the Home. Don't be like what my dad told me one time... I was 19 or 20 ...had license to drive...owned a car...treated house like a hotel...Mom and Dad paid for the electricity and groceries...I had less and less engagement with mom and dad...and I was coming and going when I wanted to...

LIVE WITH YOUR WIFE.....

Understanding means **knowledge**; live with them according to knowledge. To do this requires being kind, considerate, sensitive to their needs. This includes physical, emotional needs.

A Christian husband might think, I can't connect with this woman because I'm a Christian and she's not. Even though she's not a Christian, yet she has needs. Live with your wife according to knowledge.

Ephesians 5:25-30

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body.

JUST LIKE CHRIST LOVED the Church and gave himself up for the church...in the same way husbands should love their wives. Just as Christ nourishes and cherishes the Church, so the husband should be the same toward his wife.

C. Be honorable. Showing Honor to the woman as the weaker vessel

Showing honor and respect to the wife and making sure you protect her, watch over her. Instead of allowing the wife to pick up heavy items, go ahead and make that easier for her. SHOWING HONOR to the WOMAN AS THE WEAKER VESSEL. Open the door for her, do things for her showing honor to her. **I'm not perfect in this...I'm still working at it...**

the weaker vessel The woman is the weaker vessel. So what does that say about the husband? He's weak. She's weaker, but he's weak

The wife needs to feel secure, guarded, protected. Even if a wife is not a Christian, showing honor to her by her Christian husband can be a powerful witness.

D. BE United Together - are heirs with you of the grace of life

What is the "grace of life"? Two things it means....

#1 - I think MARRIAGE is implied here.

they are heirs with you of the grace of life - Peter is talking about how a Christian husband is to relate to his unbelieving wife. They can't be said to be "heirs together of Eternal life" since one of them is NOT a Christian.

They are, however, heirs together of the GRACE of life. "Grace" means "gift". Other than salvation, you can say the greatest gift God has given for mankind is marriage, and all the blessings that come from that.

BE TOGETHER. Enjoy life together. Be best friends. Talk together. Do things together.

THEY are HEIRS with YOU.... they are Companions with You...

This was a NEW THING when Peter wrote this... Wives, and women in general were in the background, had no say in matters, treated more like property than persons.....and a Christian Husband with an Unbelieving wife might think he can treat his wife as an inferior person.

The Gospel change all of that....

Galatians 3:28

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

That comes to the 2nd meaning that this phrase "grace of life" means...

When the Wife becomes a Christian, or the Husband becomes a Christian..... both husband and wife can be said to be HEIRS TOGETHER OF THE GRACE OF LIFE.... ETERNAL LIFE... BOTH ARE SAVED AND ENJOY THE GRACE OF LIFE THAT CHRIST GIVES TO THEM.

Why is it important for a **Christian Wife** to be the kind of wife God has designed her to be for her unbelieving husband?

Why is it important for a **Christian Husband** to be the kind of husband God has designed him to be for his unbelieving wife?

Here's the answer: LAST Part of v.7

so that your prayers may not be hindered.

You are praying for the salvation of your spouse. If the spouse is saved, it will be by the grace of God. It will be by the power of the Holy Spirit in changing their heart. God answers prayers.

We are to pray, even as Paul prayed... Romans 10:1

Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.

I pray we will all be good witnesses for Christ in the home.

Pray for the salvation of our spouses; pray for the salvation of our children and grandchildren.

Prayer.