

# *Christian Conduct as Wives and Husbands*

## **1 Peter 3:1-7**

### PART ONE

#### **Introduction**

The first rule of right interpretation by asks: *what is the overall context?*

In a word, “submission.”

“Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation” (1 Peter 2:11-12).

*Christian submission while under the authority of unbelievers.*

The main reason—the only reason—God has us on this earth: *to witness the gospel of His Son Jesus Christ.*

- I. **Submission is an Obligation (v 1a)**
- II. **Submission is an Opportunity (vv. 1b-2)**
- III. **Submission is an Ornamentation (vv. 3-6)**

#### **Three reasons why submission is important:**

##### **I. Submission is an *Obligation***

*“Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands” (v1a)*

*First*, God commands it and Christ Jesus is the supreme example of it.

*“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:5-8; emph. added).*

*Second*, in His infinite wisdom, God knows this arrangement is best for marriage. After all, He designed it, He should know.

*Third*, submission is not just the wife’s calling. Both husband and wife are called to submission in Christ.

*“thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Ephesians 5:20-21).*

*Fourth*, the only acceptable motivation for any Christian duty is *love from a pure heart*.

“All will be right where love commands and love obeys” (Leighton).

**What the text does *not* say:**

1. It does not say that the wife is *inferior* to her husband.

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28).

Submission has to do with order, structure, and authority—*not superiority*.

Submission has to do with *function*, not worth.

2. It doesn't tell the wife to leave her husband.

“If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband.... 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” (1 Corinthians 7:13-15).

3. It does not tell her to preach at him, pressure him, or argue with him about the Christian faith.
4. It does not encourage her to demand her rights.

**What the text *does* say:**

1. *Be submissive*. Allow him to lead—even when you doubt his judgment or think differently.
2. *Be silent*. Resist the temptation to argue, nag, or cajole him into the kingdom.
3. *Be respectful*. Being disrespectful is a good way to destroy your gospel witness.
4. *Be pure in conduct*. This not only destroys your Christian witness, it can destroy the marriage.
5. *Dress modestly*. Remember, you want to draw their attention to Christ, not yourself.
6. *Adorn the heart*. Win them to Christ with *character*, not clothing.
7. *Have no fear of man*. Don't be intimidated by a spouse with a forceful, domineering personality.

## II. Submission is an *Opportunity*

*“so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives—when they see your respectful and pure conduct”* (vv. 1b-2a).

“Wife, how do you know whether you will save your husband? Husband, how do you know whether you will save your wife?” (1 Corinthians 7:16).

A Sunday sermon lasts an hour or so. The chaste, submissive, and respectful life of a godly wife is a sermon that lasts a lifetime.

God’s will for *all* Christians: “For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness” (1 Thessalonians 4:7).