

## How Should Husbands Treat Their Wives?

[1 Peter 3:7](#)

1 Peter, Day 14

*Likewise, husbands, 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.*

- 1 Peter 3:7, ESV

Sometimes, perspective is everything - understanding how things look from our own perspective and how different they look from someone else's. When we read the passages about husbands and wives in the New Testament, what stands out to us as unusual is the teaching that wives should submit to and respect their husbands. That strikes us as odd in our cultural context. For the original audience in the ancient world, the opposite would have been true.

In the ancient world, it was universally accepted that wives should submit to and respect their husbands. What was not widely taught was that husbands had obligations to love their wives and treat them with honor. In the ancient world "*showing honor to the woman (or wife)*" would have been much more shocking and counter-cultural than "*wives, be subject to your own husbands.*" And while women today may balk at the phrase "*the weaker vessel,*" 2,000 years ago, many men were shocked to be told that wives were fellow heirs with them of the grace of life.

Christianity laid the groundwork for the equal dignity and worth of men and women through these kinds of teachings, even while the Bible maintains that men and women are different from each other. So, men are told to live with their wives in an understanding way, which involves treating them as equals while also acknowledging differences.

Men need to be gentle and kind toward their wives, because women are physically weaker than men. So husbands shouldn't treat their wives roughly. As a father of a daughter, I am concerned by our culture's insistence that women are just as physically tough and rugged as men. I don't think this does our daughters any favors in how they're likely to be treated by men.

Yet men should not treat their wives as inferiors. They are fellow heirs of the grace of life. They are worthy of honor. Peter is so serious about this point that he tells his readers their prayers will be hindered if they treat their wives roughly and unfairly.

God cares deeply about how husbands and wives treat each other. Our marriages are to be a testimony of the power of the Gospel to transform hearts and lives. People should see the way Christian men treat their wives and see honor, respect, gentleness and true love. Ultimately, we do this because this is how Christ treats His church as His bride.