

Series: 1 Peter

Title: Submitting to the Lord

Text: 1Peter 3: 1-7

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Every office of authority in this earth is set up by God to glorify God in the salvation of his people. It is good to consider why God has set up the order and offices he has in this earth.

The institution of the family—particularly marriage—is one of the most beautiful and simple ways that God has communicated unto the believer the relationship we have together with God in Christ in his church.

It is on our lips as we pray, sing, and address each other and this is our hope. God is our Father, Christ Jesus is the Son of God, the faithful Son over his own house, whose house we will prove to be if we are found trusting him to the end. Christ is the Husband of the church and the church is his bride. She is the mother of all his children—through the church the gospel is preached, and every child is born of Christ, of the Spirit of God, of the incorruptible Seed. Every child of God calls each other brother and sister for we are. God's church is his family. Our text is 1 Peter 3, but read Ephesians 5: 22-33, first.

Ephesians 5: 22: Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23: For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24: Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in everything. 25: Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26: That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27: That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28: So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29: For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31: For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32: This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33: Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife *see* that she reverence *her* husband.

I. THE PRINCIPLE

Most of our text today is using the wife as the illustration, but the principle given in this exhortation is to both the husband and the wife.

1 Peter 3: 1: Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands;... 7: Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; The last phrase is the key to the whole passage—that your prayers be not hindered.

Proposition: The text is assuming we have a spouse who is disobedient to the word of God—**v1: if any obey not the word.** It may be an unbeliever or they may be a believer who is not obedient to the word. It may be the husband or it may be the wife. Whichever place we hold, our prayer to God is that GOD MIGHT BRING our spouse to submit to Christ our Husband in the heart. Then let us, ourselves, reverence, submit to Christ our Husband, by filling the responsibility he has given us—whether we are the husband or the wife—that our petition is not hindered. God honors those who honor him. But this is certain, rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing will do nothing but hinder our spouse in that for which we petition God and certainly will not honor our heavenly Husband. This is so in all the offices we hold in this life: whether we

are the king or under him, in authority at the workplace or under authority, a husband or a wife, a parent or a child, a pastor or church member.

1 Peter 3: 1: Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands

It does not say “let” the husband rule—that is not the attitude of a true believer toward Christ. Anti-christ religion is teaching sinners to usurp authority of Christ the Husband of his bride by preaching up man’s will and preaching down God’s will, by preaching up the sinners works and preaching down the finished work of God in Christ. We do not let Christ do anything. We submit to Christ as his bride because he has made us willing in the day of his power. Christ has done all for each sinner he saves. He has robed us in his righteousness. Truly, respect your husband because the office God has put your husband in glorifies Christ your Husband.

This is not speaking of exceptions (extremes)—if a wife or her children is being abused by her husband. If that is the case, get you and your children to safety immediately. This is speaking of a normal husband and wife relationship.

II. THE REASON

The reason we submit ourselves to Christ—which is what we are talking about here—is for the glory of God and the good of the spouse. Peter is using the wife as the illustration, but just the same way and for the same reason, the husband is to fill his responsibility in loving his wife and giving himself for her.

1 Peter 3: 1:...that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives. 2: While they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear.

This is not suggesting that a sinner will be saved apart from hearing the truth of Christ. But whether you are a wife with a husband who does not believe on Christ or you have a believing husband who may not be obeying the word of God—this is certain—neither will be won by a war of words or by disrespect. The wife is to submit to her husband and the husband is to give himself for his wife.

If we do battle, everything we say may be scriptural but a wife usurping authority over her husband discredits her professed spiritual union to Christ. This same principle applies with a husband to his wife—he should not cease loving and providing all for his wife though she may not be honoring God in her office as his wife—same between servants and masters, citizens and governors, children and parents, and so on.

Legalists, Pharisees force. The ungodly way of man is to force by fleshly power and might. God is the only one who can give a new heart. The might and power of the flesh will never win a sinner’s heart.

James 3:1: My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation....18: And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

Illustration

Scripture on a street sign—the scripture is true, but desecrating public property discredits the professed subjection of the one who put it there.

Conduct which reverences your earthly husband honors your heavenly Husband. The conduct of husbands which honors your bride honors Christ our Head and his relationship to us.

III. THE MOTIVE

The inward heart which desires to honor God--Christ our Husband--is true beauty and of great price in the sight of God.

1 Peter 3: 3: Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; 4: But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

Understand the spirit of this exhortation. This does not *forbid* wearing jewelry and makeup or plaiting your hair—those things are relative from age to age, from society to society, from culture to culture.

Illustration

The Mennonite thinks the Pentecostal dresses like a harlot and the Pentecostal thinks the Methodist does and so on.

If God told us precisely how much to wear that is exactly what folks would do and think they were holy thereby. You might make yourself so plain you look like a mud fence on a rainy day but thinking you are holy thereby is just more outward fake jewelry.

The key here is the HEART! This has to do with spiritual adornment, a gentle and quiet spirit. Believing women should not so much be concerned about the adorning of their bodies and the outward signs of beauty as they should be concerned with the beauty of a godly character, attitude, and personality. The beauty of the heart is the real beauty of every believer—of Christ's bride.

The hidden man of the heart is NOT corruptible—it is of God, born of his Spirit, of his creating—not like jewelry which is man-made. Far better to be known for the inward beauty of a meek and quiet spirit which lasts eternally than to impress people for a while with corruptible ornaments and outward beauty that will soon fade and wither away.

Luke 16: 15: And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

Matthew 23: 25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. 26 *Thou* blind Pharisee, cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. 27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness. 28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

The spirit created of God the Holy Spirit does all because it is precious in the sight of God. Whether I am offended or not is not the matter—what matters is this—it is precious to God. God has only done that to us which is right and good. The God-created desire of a faithful believer to his/her Husband in that which he says is right and good.

IV. THE EXAMPLE

Sara is the example set forth for the wives. Sara is used by Paul in Galatians as the allegory of Sara and Hagar as a picture of the church, Jerusalem which is above, the mother of us all. Christ' bride is his church and we are following him in spirit and in truth even as Sara followed Abraham.

Peter 3: 5: For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: 6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

Sarah went with Abraham wherever he went. She did the things he asked her to do. She is the example set before us of a faithful wife. This is true peace in the heart with God.

Illustration:

A woman who is continually defending her womanhood by desiring the authority God has given the man—is really miserable—she has no peace with God in her heart. And that is the case with every sinner—male and female—by nature. THE PROBLEM WITH SINNERS IS “I WILL NOT HAVE THIS MAN REIGN OVER ME!”

The wife who has Christ for her Husband understands something of the responsibility God has given her husband because she knows what Christ did for her. And the believing husband knows of the weakness of his wife because he knows what a miserable sinner he is and yet Christ washed him and purged him by laying down his own life.

The wife, who reverences God, will reverence her husband. Sara revered Abraham. She called him lord because she had a heart reverence for her LORD God—she treated her husband as she would the Lord himself. You wives who are married to Christ your Husband can submit to your own earthly husbands trusting that God is God over your earthly husband, even he is God over you.

Titus 2: 3: The aged women likewise, that *they be* in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; 4: That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, 5: *To be* discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

It is a great responsibility which comes with much difficulty to be the head of a household. But a wife who is a helpmeet truly is an encouragement to her husband in every way. He will acknowledge his mistakes much sooner when he knows he has the respect of his wife.

1 Peter 3: Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life;

Sara is the example for the wife to consider, but husbands, Christ is our example.

Ephesians 5: 25: Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26: That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27: That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28: So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29: For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31: For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32: This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and

the church. 33: Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife *see* that she reverence *her* husband.

‘Dwell with your wives according to knowledge.’ Christ is our Wisdom. How does Christ govern his bride? By grace or by the letter of the law? Christ fulfilled all righteousness on our behalf and is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes. Remember Hosea and Gomer? So husband’s, dwell with the wife, in the same manner.

‘Give honor to the wife.’ The wife was crowned by God to be a helpmeet. She is a man’s wife—no one above her on this earth (Gen. 2:24). She was crowned by God to be a mother (Gen. 3:20).

Illustration: What a gift of God to a man!

Remember she is the ‘weaker vessel;’ that is, treat her with tenderness, gentleness, and kindness remembering this: Eve was first in the transgression. When sin entered in, God said that the woman’s desire shall be to her husband. Just as every sinner by nature desires the seat that belongs to God, the natural desire of the woman due to sin, is to have the authority that God has given to the man. Remember, what the sin-nature is in the flesh. Remember it is still with your wife, even as it is with you. Yet, remember that when we were without strength—without strength because we thought we *had* strength, without strength because we ‘would not have this man reign over us’, weak and undone by sins dominating reign over us—yet Christ came forth, lived and laid down his life for his bride and overcame the sin that is in us by his goodness toward us which leads his bride to repentance by the invincible power of the Holy Spirit. So treat your wife as Christ treated his bride.

Illustration:

Jacob interceded for Rebekah that she might have a child. Zachariah interceded for Elizabeth. The Lord made both to have children. So Christ ever lives to make intercession for his bride. It is by our Lord Jesus Christ that his bride bears fruit—not only literally children—but fruits of righteousness.

Ps 113:9: He maketh the barren woman to keep house, *and to be* a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.

Galatians 4:27 For it is written, Rejoice, *thou* barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

So, husbands, though the wife may be in error at times, remember why she is the weaker vessel, petition the Lord, and continue to rule over her in love, laying down your life for her with the same tenderness that Christ has and does toward you.

‘As a joint-heirs with you of the grace of God.’ If that wife is a believer, she is to be looked upon as a joint-heir with you of the grace of God. Though she sin, remember that as a child of God’s mercy, she is a daughter of our blessed King. The same is true of a wife, whose place it is to submit to her husband.

APPLICATION

God honors those who honor him. If it is the Lord’s will, your good God-honoring conduct may cause your unbelieving husband or wife to be won so as to ask you “of the hope that is in you” so that they hear the word of Christ in truth. The believing husband or wife will be more apt to win each other’s affection by honoring God in our respective offices. But this is certain, rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing will do nothing but hinder our spouse in that for which we petition God and certainly will not honor our heavenly Husband. As truly as Romans 13 says, we reject God when we reject those in *other* positions of authority, so

it is with husbands and wives. If any obey not the word—wives submit and husbands lay down our lives for them—**that your prayers be not hindered.**

AMEN!