

STUDIES IN 1 PETER (17)

Understanding Husbands

1 Peter 3:7

We have been addressing various relationships of submission. This is a key principle Peter is emphasizing as we live in a world that is often contrary to God. In our last lesson we discussed the submission of wives to their husbands. In this lesson we will notice Peter's instructions to the husband.

I. What is the role of the husband?

- a. He is to love his wife – Ephesians 5:25-27 – even as Christ loved the church
- b. He is to care for his wife as he would his own body – Ephesians 5:28 – even as he cares for himself
- c. He is responsible to provide for his wife and the family – 1 Timothy 5:8
- d. He is to be the head of the house – Ephesians 5:23-24. This is a responsibility entrusted to him by God. It's not an option. We live in a time where gender roles are confused in more ways than one. As Christians, we often lament the influence of feminism in our society. We express our concerns for a failure of wives to submit. And while that is a problem, we have an equally great problem with men who refuse to stand up and honorably take the lead in their homes. I firmly believe that if men would properly carry out their role as husband, following God's plan, more women would gladly submit to their husbands. OUR TEXT gives us direction as to how to do this.

II. Our text

- a. **Likewise** – this word ties this to the previous section.
 - i. While Peter addressed wives being submissive, that is not the point here. The point has to do with honor, which Peter will directly spell out. Notice vs. 3-6 as the chaste conduct of the wife is described. She has an inner beauty and honors her husband.
 - ii. We find a sense of equality in our text. Understand that to God, women are NOT inferior – Galatians 3:27-28.
 - iii. Notice that the Biblical view of women and wives is MUCH higher than society, as found in numerous books of that period. For example:
 1. Josephus, in his book Antiquities said of women as, *But let not the testimony of women be admitted, on account of the levity and boldness of their sex,*¹
 2. In his book Against Apion he says, *It also commands us also, when we marry, not to have regard to portion, nor to take a woman by violence, nor to persuade her deceitfully and knavishly; but demand her in marriage of him who hath power to dispose of her, and is fit to give her away by the nearness of his kindred; (201) for, saith the Scripture, "A woman is inferior to her husband in all things"*² These are but 2 examples that show that in Roman and Jewish society, women were treated as less valuable than men.
- b. **Let him dwell with her with understanding** –
 - i. The idea of understanding is to learn about her.

¹ Josephus, F., & Whiston, W. (1987). [*The works of Josephus: complete and unabridged*](#) (p. 117). Hendrickson (Antiquities of the Jews, 4:8:15)

² Josephus, F., & Whiston, W. (1987). [*The works of Josephus: complete and unabridged*](#) (p. 806). Hendrickson. (Against Apion, 2:25)

1. Gain **knowledge** (KJV) that will help him lead her and the family in the best way possible. Seek to understand what her needs are, how she is different, her strengths and weaknesses, etc. And to CONSIDER these in his dealings with her.
 2. This is something that is not learned overnight but takes years to fully grasp.
 3. Consider again, how he cares for his wife as his own body (Ephesians 5:28-29). You know what you need and you take care of yourself based upon that.
- ii. He needs to understand submission properly –
1. Remember that he too is submissive (in our text to governing bodies, and possibly a master or employer).
 2. Consider 1 Corinthians 11:3 – just as the man is head over the wife, so Christ is head over man AND God is head over Christ (think about that – even Jesus learned submission – Hebrews 5:8 – as a Son He learned obedience (see also Philippians 2:8); Ultimately, the man (husband) submits to Christ.
 3. Also consider 1 Corinthians 7:2-5 – which shows a submission to each other.
 4. When a husband understands what submission is about, he realizes it is not about dominance, selfishly having your will over her, nor freedom to abuse and do whatever you want.
 5. Thus he sees the respect that is to accompany both parties involved in the headship/submission roles.
- c. **Giving honor to his wife** –
- i. The word for honor here is a word that means to show high respect and to revere, a word associated with great value.
1. The word is often translated price (1 Cor. 7:23, 6:20) or value (Acts 19:19) indicating of great worth.
 2. The word is used of how we seek to be viewed by God in judgment (Romans 2:7), respect for those due honor (Romans 13:7), our respect for God (1 Timothy 1:17), the respect elders are to receive (1 Timothy 5:17), how Christ was crowned by God (Hebrews 2:7-9); how we desire our faith to be viewed at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:7), and how Christ is precious to us (1 Peter 2:7), etc.
 3. Consider Proverbs 31:10-11 – he trusts his wife. Vs. 28 she is praised by him and her children.
 4. Husbands are to honor their wives – treat her with dignity and appreciation. Let her know how much she is worth to you – she ought to be of greater value to you than anyone or anything else (other than the Lord – and if you honor Him, you WILL honor her!).
 5. Thought: Often, as time goes on, BOTH the husband and wife view each other with a sense of familiarity and this honor begins to fade into something common and routine. We begin to take each other for granted. This is often where marital infidelity and other problems begin to develop. One way to prevent this is for the man to practice chivalry (and women need to allow it).
- ii. **As to the weaker vessel** –
1. First, contrary to what feminism would have you to say, in general women are physically weaker than men (it is a matter of biology). No amount of political correctness or philosophy will change that. Men ought to appreciate the woman for who she is. (And yes there are areas and ways that she is stronger than the man – we were created different by God). BUT, this has NOTHING to do with worth or human equality.
 2. Recall the illustration of a weaker vessel – it does not mean worthless, or worth less. In fact, some of the weakest vessels in our homes are of greater value. Think

of the crystal stemware that is kept in the China cabinet and only brought out for special occasions. And when it is brought out, it is handled with extra care because it is more easily broken. A husband ought to think of his wife that way – NOT as so delicate that she breaks easily, but as of such value that extraordinary care is exercised for her.

d. ***That they may be heirs together of the grace of life –***

- i. When God created Eve, she was intended as his help meet – Genesis 2:20-25. Created from his side to be with him throughout life.
- ii. Because of the nature of the marriage relationship, it ought to be the closest physical bond – we are there for each other in all areas. As Christians, we are ESPECIALLY there for each other spiritually. When the world attacks our faith, our spouse and home ought to be a refuge where we can go for strength to overcome.
- iii. This is in essence Paul's point in 1 Corinthians 7:12-14 and 1 Peter 3:1-6 – while these deal with unbelieving mates, imagine what they would mean with a fellow Christian.

e. ***That your prayers be not hindered –***

- i. A godly family will pray together often. We are reminded of the power of prayer – James 5:16, 1 Peter 3:12, etc. 1 Corinthians 7:5 speaks of taking time to pray to God, notice in the marriage relationship this is offered as an act with respect for one another as husband and wife.
- ii. A husband that is abusive or neglectful of his wife has a problem with God (and vice-versa)! Again, be warned, 1 Peter 3:12 – His face is against those who do evil. Matthew 5:23 finds Jesus telling us to make amends BEFORE we go to God with our “gift”, which would include our prayers (cf. Hebrews 13:15).

And thus, we see the encouragement of Peter to husbands and wives. Again, recall the message of this book – it is encouragement to remain faithful even in times of trouble from the world. We need each other as brethren AND in our homes. Does God rule in your home? Think about it!