



### ***Submission to Husbands***

*3 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,<sup>2</sup> when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.<sup>3</sup> Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—<sup>4</sup> rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.<sup>5</sup> For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands,<sup>6</sup> as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.*

### ***A Word to Husbands***

*<sup>7</sup> Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.*

### **Overriding Truth about a Man's Need and a Woman's Need**

The Apostle Paul gives us a great truth in Ephesians chapter five. He says, *<sup>22</sup> **Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.** <sup>23</sup> *For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.* <sup>24</sup> *Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.* <sup>25</sup> **Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,**". These verses give us tremendous insight into what are the greatest needs of both men and women.*

A man's greatest need is respect.

A woman's greatest need is love.

Paul never tells a woman to change her husbands into what she thinks he should be. Nor does he tells a man to change his wife into what he thinks she should be.

**There is an order of things in the universe.** God designed us and planned us to function best when we follow His design plans. Tonight, we'll look at instructions concerning the relationship between a husband and a wife. When there is order in the home, there is peace. When there is disorder, there is chaos. We are not to find our roles of marriage from the world. That will end in chaos. Harmony exists in a marriage when a husband and a wife operate by the guidelines of scripture. God knows best what we need.

There is more instruction here for the woman than the man. Why would that be? I think maybe it's because a woman deals with more challenges in marriage than perhaps the man. It can be challenging for the woman because she is called to follow someone whom she knows is full of weaknesses. It is hard for a woman to submit to a man that she sees as having his own problems. Husbands are called to lead, but we sometimes don't do such a good job of it. The fact of the matter is that often women make better leaders, but God has called the man to step up and assume that leadership role whether he's comfortable with it or not.

Peter begins speaking to the wives. He begins by telling wives to "*be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives*". Note that this says the wife is to be submissive to her own husband, but not to all men. The Greek word for submission comes from a word meaning to line up (like the military) under a leader that knows how to fight. Part of a man's role in the marriage is to fight the battles of life and stand up to the world. Society bristles at the thought of a woman standing by her man. I suppose, because without the governance of the Lord on a man, he is prone to be an abuser. A husband is never told to lord over his wife with supremacy and domination. He is ordered to be a leader. Unfortunately, many men have abdicated the role of leadership. When a woman sees this leadership void, she is insecure and induced to fear. Fear opens up all kinds of dysfunction, and the temptation to right the ship and assume the leadership role is overwhelming.

This passage does not call women to suffer any kind of abuse. Instead, it is a fleshing-out of what it means to be a "helpmeet" as mentioned in Genesis 2:18. A man and a woman should be in harness together. "Helpmeet" is an old English word meaning "suitable". The New King James says that the wife is a "helper comparable to him". God saw that Adam needed some help, and He sent him Eve. Adam was incomplete without Eve. This doesn't mean that all men have to have a woman. The Apostle Paul even says that celibacy is a good thing for a man who is in Christian service. It also doesn't mean that every woman must be a "completer" of some man". This is just pointing out that God made these two sexes, and when they are married to one another, there is an order that should be followed to get along, to procreate, to nurture, and to rear children.

Again, this doesn't speak to every Christian man and woman, but it sets a standard for how those that do marry are to function together best.

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In a good marriage, a man and a woman work at **being in harmony** and being suitable for one another. When my wife and I sing together, we do not sing the same notes, but we sing in harmony. If I am singing in the Key of D, she sings complementary notes to the key of D. **This way we are living a harmonious life with each other that is not in constant conflict. We have different roles but we make good music together.**

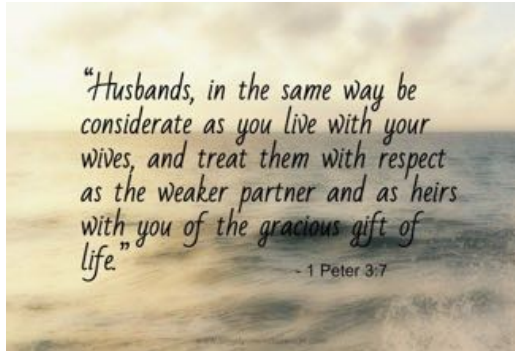
Peter is telling the believing wife that her conduct has great spiritual significance. It has significance even if her husband is failing to walk in obedience. Our wives have a way of knowing when we're going through some weakness or stumbling. However, notice that the text has her focusing on her own conduct instead of trying to change her husband. This way he can be "won over without a word". Many husbands and wives waste productive years trying to turn their spouses into something they think they should be. Don't work on your spouse. Work on yourself. Peter then describes a woman who focuses greatly on her inner beauty.



*<sup>3</sup> Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—<sup>4</sup> rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.*

Don't compete with your husband. Don't denigrate your husband. Don't cut him down in front of others. Don't point out his faults to others. Many woman go to the beauty shop regulary to have their hair done and their nails done. They are particular about their adornments and clothing, but they can easily neglect the thing that will most win over their husbands, that "hidden person of the heart, with incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit". THAT is what is precious in the sight of God.

There is no doubt that a woman who has her hair done, and who has on some nice clothes can turn a head. Men are just driven by vision. However, a wise man can figure out very quickly if a woman's beauty is only skin deep. Peter is not saying that women shouldn't be beautiful on the outside, instead he's saying that a woman should give as much attention to the inside. Peter ends the part about women, saying that such were the wives of the patriarchs of old. Abraham had Sarah. Jacob had Rachel. Isaac had Rebecca. Then there was Queen Esther. These are the woman with inner beauty of whom Peter speaks.



## Instructions for Husbands

There are four things that Peter tells husbands:

- 1) Dwell with them with understanding. This is the hardest for me because I don't think like a woman.
- 2) Honor her. Make her first.
- 3) Recognize her as a weaker vessel and joint heir.
- 4) How I treat my wife has an effect on my

prayers.

Peter then turns toward the husband instructing husbands to "dwell with them in understanding". What in the world does that mean? It means to treat them like a woman and not like a man. So guys, what does that look like?

For one thing, women are relational; they like to talk to others about their problems. They like to express their frustrations and difficulties to a trusted ear. And guess what? They're not looking for a solution. This is so far outside of the realm of a man's thinking that it's not even funny. Men are operational, and they share their problems with others for one reason; to get a probable solution. So, men, part of "dwelling with them in understanding" means that even if something makes no sense to you, just try to understand what their care and frustration is. Don't even THINK ABOUT offering a solution until she's had a chance to vent.

Another area of "understanding" involves her idea of being loved. I had been married for fifteen years before I realized that a woman's greatest need is for affection followed directly by security. I just figured that her greatest need was the same as my greatest need at thirty years old, and I'll leave it at that.

Peter instructs us to give our wives "honor". So how can I honor my wife? It means I am to value her above all others. That is my calling in Christ. Well, again this means not talking down to her or denigrating her alone or in front of others. You may not understand exactly what I mean by denigrate, so let me define it for you.

1 : to attack the reputation of : [defame](#) denigrate one's opponents

2 : to deny the importance or validity of : [belittle](#) denigrate their achievements<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/denigrate>

To lower the reputation of your opponent. This should set the alarm bells off. Your wife is NOT YOUR OPPONENT. She is NOT YOUR COMPETITION. This is followed telling husbands to NEVER DENY THE IMPORTANCE OR VALIDITY OF YOUR WIFE'S ACHIEVEMENTS.

Sandy will take 10 hours to make twelve jars of pickled okra. I may not understand that exchange of time for product, but I never tell her "Hey I can buy all of that at Costco for eight dollars". Instead I say, "Wow. That's incredible. You know how to do stuff my great-grandmothers probably knew how to do, and I LOVE PICKLED OKRA". Now a comment like that; it'll get you hugged! And, I really mean it. She is to be validated because that deserves validation. It is part of who she is and what she is programmed to do.

Peter tells husbands not to take advantage of their usual larger size and strength. It opens things up to bullying. A Christian man should never ever lay a hand on his wife in anger. My dad wouldn't let me physically hurt my sisters in any way (even if they slapped me, bit me, etc). I should see my wife as a fellow-heir, with her precious position in Christ. She is my total equal in her standing in Christ, and she is a joint-heir. There is an order to our marriage, but she is my co-equal before the Lord. <sup>28</sup> *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.* <sup>29</sup> *And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:28-29)*

Peter says that if we husbands don't live in this way, our "prayers are hindered". That means that how you treat your wife, and how you deal with your wife will affect your relationship with God. It means that you are accountable to the Lord for how you deal with your wife.

### How this Can All Happen

There is only one way that these heart attitudes can prevail in a marriage. That can happen ONLY if the husband and the wife are submitted to the Holy Spirit of God. It's the same formula we keep seeing over and over. A tranquil life is a Spirit-Filled life. A quiet life is a Spirit-Led life. A life submitted to the Lord will have a better time of getting along with government, with others in the market place, and in our marriages. On Sunday, we'll get specific instructions on how to get along with others in the Body of Christ.

Let us pray.