

SUBMISSION:

WHEN IT IS DONE RIGHT



When it seems the world cannot get any more upside down than it already is, we wake up the next day to hear about another law that is passed, or another event occurring which takes us to a whole new level of absurdity. Our culture is being shaken and turned on its heels, from wars and rumors of wars, increased terrorism, economic instability, corporate and government corruption, to the disintegration of the institute of marriage and the home.

And then we turn to the pages of Scripture to seek sanity and peace, only to find that what we read is now considered radical, controversial and countercultural. The very words of Scripture are inflammatory. Often it flies in the face of contemporary practice. It is offensive to the world and

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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”

1 Peter 3:1-7

even shunned by some Christians.

When I perform a wedding ceremony I often say,

“Marriage is a holy institute. It is ordained and sanctified by God. In our day, the fundamental elements of this institute are being challenged. The very idea of marriage is sometimes called old fashion, unnecessary, and too narrow. Even the biblical nature of marriage is being redefined and reshaped into something God never intended or sanctioned. With these changes, God’s design and order for society is being undone. That’s why it is important for us to understand some key elements that make up a biblical marriage.”

I know that in most crowds, there are those who hold to biblical concept on marriage – that is, one man for one woman in a pure and faithful relationship. This may even include the biblical model of the divinely assigned roles for a man and a woman.

However, in growing numbers, there are others in the crowd who have in varying degrees set aside biblical values. Which leads me to our text this morning. It once was a passage that was widely regarded as common teaching on the subject of marriage; whereas today it is considered offensive.

IT HAS TO DO WITH SUBMISSION.

“Likewise, ye wives be in **subjection** to your own husbands . . .” -1 Peter 3:1;

“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; that your prayers be not hindered. 1 Peter 3:7 and

“Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren . . .” 1 Peter 3:8.

1. In 1 Peter 2:13, 18; 3:1 the terms “submit”, “subject” and “subjection” are from the same Greek term ὑποτάσσω (*hoop-ot-as'-so*), meaning, “to submit to,” or “to rank under.” Examine each use and discuss what this type of submission should look like in real practice.

a. 1 Peter 3:1 – “Likewise, ye wives be in subjection . . .”

It is the same word in

1) 1 Peter 2:13 – Submit

2) 1 Peter 2:18 – Subject

3) 1 Peter 3:1 – Subjection

It is a present middle voice verb emphasizing the **voluntary submitting of oneself.** Literally, the term means, “to submit to,” or “rank under.” This submission does not imply any moral, intellectual, or spiritual inferiority in the family, workplace or in society. Rather, it is God’s design for roles necessary to mankind’s well-being.

It is along the same lines as a commanding officer to his troops. He is not necessarily superior in character to the troops under him, but his authority is vital to the proper function of the unit.

- b. As Peter exhorted every one of us to voluntarily submit ourselves to the civil authority or to those who are over us in the work place; so should wives voluntarily submit to the authority of their husbands over them. Note, this authority is not based on personal superiority but rather is rooted in an authority granted by God. Therefore, everyone granted this authority will be held accountable to God.

2. Discuss the cultural differences between the roles of men and women in the first Century and now. Since our cultures are two millenniums apart, is 1 Peter 3:1-7 still relevant or was it just a cultural directive for Peter's day? If you think it is still relevant, then explain in what ways it is still applicable.

- a. Note that the passage does not end with only the wives submitting:
 - 1) 1 Peter 3:7 – Likewise, ye husbands
 - 2) In other words, as the wife is voluntarily submitting to her husband, the husband is also voluntarily submitting certain rights.

You see how this passage is meddling. It was meddling then in Peter's day and it is meddling still in our day.

- b. **IN THE FIRST-CENTURY GRECO-ROMAN CULTURE** women received little or no respect. As long as they lived in their father's house, they were subject to the father's power. The man also had life and death power over his wife. Under these conditions, a husband could take grave offense when his wife came to know the Lord. Hostile conditions in the marriage could result in severe abuse, or death. So Peter instructs women in how to live with their husbands under potentially volatile circumstances. Their godly conduct could win their husband's to Christ.
- c. **IN OUR DAY** the pendulum has swung to the other side of the spectrum. Husbands no longer have life and death power over their wives and children. Nor is abuse legal. When uncovered, it can and should carry with it serious penalties. Furthermore, submission is misunderstood and biblical roles are often ignored and in some instances reversed.
- d. **HOW IS THIS PASSAGE RELEVANT IN BOTH CULTURES?** *(First, it is God's word, so it is always true in every age.)* Second, at one time this passage taught 1st Century Christians how to move from abusive pagan practices to create a biblical home where love and grace thrived and where biblical order and function built up the family unit. Now this passage is instructing our out of control society with all its ME-isms and selfish individual rights how to stop the erosion of biblical values before we move head long back into paganism. It teaches every generation how to have Spirit-filled homes where love and grace thrive. But will we listen?

3. **According to 1 Peter 3:1-6, what are the key responsibilities of the wife?** - Proverb 11:22; Isaiah 3:16-24; Genesis 12:11f & 20:2f

THE WIFE'S RESPONSIBILITY

It involves six verses to the husband's one, probably because of the serious issues faced by the women in the 1st century. However, the instruction given is not cultural. Nor is it to be dismissed as not relevant today. Rather, the passage presents timeless - biblical instruction. It tells us how to cultivate a godly home where love and grace thrive and children can be nurtured.

a. **A GODLY OUTWARD ATTITUDE** - 1 Peter 3:1-2

- 1) A disobedient husband is one who rejects God's word.
- 2) The wife can win her husband to Christ without a word. It is all in her conduct. Conversation in the KJV means conduct.
- 3) 1 Peter 3:2 - While her husband sees her "**chaste conversation**" – her life composed of irreproachable and pure conduct toward God and her husband.
- 4) It is coupled "**with fear**" - Respect for God and respect towards her husband as unto the Lord.

b. **GODLY MODESTY** – 1 Peter 3:1-6

- 1) **Hairstyle** - *Not by* "the outward adorning of hair"
- 2) **Jewelry** - *Not by* "Wearing of gold"
- 3) **Clothing** - *Not by* "Putting on of apparel"

Nothing is wrong with styling hair, or with these outward items. But these are surface. Proverbs 11:22 – "As a jewel of gold in a **swine's** snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion."

Isaiah 3:16-24

"Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: ¹⁷ Therefore the LORD will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover their secret parts. ¹⁸ In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, ¹⁹ The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, ²⁰ The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, ²¹ The rings, and nose jewels, ²² The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins, ²³ The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils. ²⁴ And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and

instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty.”

c. **GODLY HEART - Instead, they are to cultivate the inward man** – 1 Peter 3:4

1) Meek = Gentle

2) Quiet = tranquil spirit

Those two items “in the sight of God *is* of great price..”

Such was the spirit of holy women of old – 1 Peter 3:5

d. **EVEN AS SARAH** – 1 Peter 3:6 (See Genesis 12:11f & 20:2f for her example).

4. According to 1 Peter 3:7, what is the responsibility of the Christian husband?

The Husband’s responsibility

The biblical role includes a believing husband who submits by serving his wife in three areas.

a. **CONSIDERATION** – 1 Peter 3:7a

“dwell with *them* according to knowledge” – 1 Peter 3:7a

This speaks of being sensitive and considering the wife’s deepest physical and emotional needs. “Dwell with them,” refers to living with them by cherishing them and nurturing them in the bond of love and grace.

b. **CHIVALRY** – 1 Peter 3:7b

1) He should also be chivalrous by realizing that she is someone who is physically weaker. Not inferior in character or intellect, or spiritually but physically weaker. Col 3:19 – “Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.”

2) He should protect his wife. Husbands are the sacrificial providers and protectors of their wives. Eph. 5:25 – “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it”

c. **COMPANIONSHIP** – 1 Peter 3:7c

“and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”

1) Marriage is a divine providence given to man regardless of his attitude towards the Giver. The intimate companionship in marriage is the richest blessing of this life. It was a foreign concept to the pagan culture of Peter’s day. Husbands were generally uninterested in friendship with their wives. However, in the Christian home the husband is to cultivate all the richness God has designed for marriage.

2) The husband is to honor His wife in loving consideration, chivalry and companionship.

d. **SO HIS PRAYERS BE NOT HINDERED.**

5. **Why do so many people in our day find the idea of submission in marriage difficult?**

6. **For married couples and those single:**

If you are married:

a. Take a few moments and write down what you can do in your marriage that might further reflect our passage. If comfortable, relate your thoughts to your group.

If you are single:

a. Take a few moments and write down what areas you might find difficult to do. What steps can you take now that would prepare you to biblically submit to one another?

b. What should you look for in a “dating” / “courting” relationship that would indicate your perspective mate would qualify as a godly candidate?