

Unto The Hills Ministries

Suffering Saints: A Study in First Peter

*A Need for Godly Relationships I:
1 Peter 3:1-7*

By

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1 Peter 3:1-7 *Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; 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. (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. (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. (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; that your prayers be not hindered.*

Introduction

When I came to this passage, there was a great temptation to just skip over it and start in verse eight. I just did not feel qualified to teach on this topic. I have never been married, but just the same God had told me to do a verse by verse study here. It felt like cheating to skip over this. So I sought God on this, “God I am not qualified to teach this please let me skip this section.” Well, I got that stirring in my spirit and felt that finally God may let me slide on one. When that still, small voice came to me the revelation was this: **You** are not qualified to teach any of this. Message received. I am not qualified to teach any of His Word, He is the One who qualifies me, I just need to be obedient. So here we are, talking about how right relationships will help us through the times of trials and sufferings.

Today we will look at how a right relationship between husbands and wives will help both of them through the tough times. The times of trials and sufferings will come but the source should of these times should not be the spousal relationship.

Instructions for Wives

I was wondering why there is six verses addressed to the wives and only one to the husbands? Have you ever known a man to read the instructions before assembly? :)

The Dreaded “S” Word

What is it with submission? Paul talks about it in Ephesians, Peter here! We need to understand what the Bible means by submission:

G5293 hoop-ot-as'-so From G5259 and G5021; to subordinate; reflexively to obey: - be under obedience (obedient), put under, subdue unto, (be, make) subject (to, unto), be (put) in subjection (to, under), submit self unto.¹

So it seems to mean exactly what we think it means. But this verse does not stand alone on the thoughts on this topic, I would like to introduce what Paul has to say on this topic, under the leading of the Holy Spirit:

Ephesians 5:22-25 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;

- The first and primary thought introduced here is that the wife's submission is a picture of the Christian's submission to God. So perish the thought that the man, and the head should just bark out orders and expect his wife to fulfill his every wish and whim. Let me know how that works out for you. Nor is this an excuse for abusive behavior. The thought is voluntary submission not slave. A man that would do that does not deserve the love nor respect of a woman. God does not force the submission of the Christian, but loves the Christian so much that we can trust He wants what is best for us and we know we can submit to him.
- That leads to the second thought here, love the wife like Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. God's love is unconditional, God's love is compassionate, God's love is sacrificial, caring about the other more than self. A woman who is loved like Jesus loved the church, is cherished like Jesus cherished each one of us, will feel safe enough to submit in the Biblical sense of the word.

As we now return to Peter, the situation here is a little different. There is a

¹ Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries, E-sword.

different reason for this submission. I see that it is talking about the saved wife and the unsaved husband.

1 Peter 3:1-2 *Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; 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.*

- If any obey not the word...any husband who is an unbeliever, has no love for the Gospel, and gives no credit to it, but despises, disbelieves, and rejects it.
- Without the word...without nagging, preaching, leaving tracts and open Bibles laying about for him to “find.” I remember the Pastor at the church I was saved in giving his testimony, as his wife was saved first: I knew something was different about my wife. She started to feed the dogs. She hated my dogs but she started feeding them anyway. She had disdain for my cigar smoking, but she started cleaning the ashtrays. He came to know the Lord during a Billy Graham telecast. His wife’s conversation, how she lived a godly example in front of him, softened his heart towards God.
- Chaste conversation coupled with fear. Clean, holy living along with respect. As the ESV translates this verse: 1 Peter 3:2 when they see your respectful and pure conduct. As most men will tell you, and I know from my own experience one of the worst things you can do to a man is disrespect him. This kind of living will attract a man’s attention.

1 Peter 3:3-4 *Do not let your adorning be external--the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear-- (4) but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.(ESV)*

- He condemns the unrestrained indulgences and excesses of women, and sets forth their true apparel, such as is precious before God, that is, the inward and incorruptible, which consists in a meek and quiet spirit.

1 Peter 3:5-6 *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.*

- This designation showed respect and submission. Women should

follow the example of Sarah, who might be designated as "the mother of those who are Abraham's children by faith."

- They were to be quiet, submissive, loving wives, but were not to be kept from Christian duty by "any fear" which might threaten because of their heathen surroundings.
- The why on this? There are two: 1) Just as a wife is chaste and submissive to her husband, we are the bride of Christ and these characteristics need to be evident in our lives as Christians being submissive to our Lord. 2) The submissive wife can win the rebellious husband to the Lord.

Instructions to Husbands

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

- Husbands were in like manner to dwell with the wife, their affections and relationships being governed by christian knowledge, and not by any human passion; honoring the wife, and walking with her as being heirs together of the grace of life.
- Dwell with them according to knowledge: that is knowledge first of the Word of God, governing our lives on Christian principles.
- According to the knowledge that they are different than we are and have different needs. They are the weaker vessel, therefore we give them honor: that is respect, love, compassion, comfort, and protection.
- I was privileged to grow up in a home where I saw this happen for 48 ½ years with a loving, respectful relationship between my mother and father. They loved each other and were devoted to each other. I learned one day in high-school just how great that love was. After school one day I saw my Dad's 1965 Chevy Impala Super Sport Convertible. It was strange because he had left for work early that morning. I got in the car, and saw he was upset. "Your mother called me crying this morning. You have better never do that again." The look that I gave must have shown the confusion I felt. "Don't you look at me like you don't know what happened. You know what you did and you have better never do it again." To this day I honestly have no idea what I did (maybe I am just the typical thick skull kind of male), but you have better bet I gave my mother all the respect and love I

could from that day on. I did not want my Dad missing work to come talk to me again! I got the feeling the next time it would not be for a talk! As much as he loved me, and I know he did, his first and greatest love was for my mom, his wife.

The Need

The importance of the relationship cannot be understated. There must be a right relationship between the husband and the wife. First is both must be believers. The goal of the submission of the wife to the unsaved husband is to draw him to Christ by her life. The goal of loving a wife like Christ loved the church to the unsaved wife is to draw her to Christ.

2 Corinthians 6:14-16 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? (15) And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? (16) And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

The thought of an unequal yoke would be to have an ox yoked with a donkey. They would go in circles, the weaker one would slow down the stronger. The stronger would drag the weaker one to death. There would be a constant battle, strife, struggles, and suffering in such a relationship. (this applies to all relationships, not just marriage. A Christian's best friend should not be unsaved. A Christian should not have an unsaved business partner, etc.) For a relationship to prosper, to be a source of strength, both must be going in the same direction, have the same worldview, worship the same God.

The spiritual application here is that we must be the chaste, pure bride to the Bridegroom, Jesus. Only then can we have the peace, comfort, strength, and assurance of His love and protection in times of suffering and trials.

Conclusion

So if we want to have relationship that is a source of strength in times of suffering, we must make sure it is a right relationship. Right that in both

partners are saved. Right in the fact that both partners are living Godly lives in the roles God gave. I know a lot of this part is “preventive preaching,” that we are not there yet, but hopefully the seeds are sown for when that time in your life comes.

To have that spiritual relationship that will be a comfort in the time of storm, We first must be part of the Bride of Christ. He will not be unequally yoked. We must be saved. We must be fulfilling the role of a bride, being chaste and pure (obedient to God, not putting anything in our lives before Jesus), we must be submissive. Give due honor to our Lord and King. Not looking good on the outside (and I know many a man that spends way too much on things like clothes and jewelry, making himself look slick, good, whatever) and ignore the inner man. That is where the emphasis should be. building that “gentle and quiet spirit.” That will carry us through many sufferings and trials. That will amaze others as they watch, that will be a light from God to draw the lost to Himself.