JETS Class (6 Dec 2001) Dr. Rick Griffith

IBC Honolulu (9 June 2010) Message 1 of 1

NIV 30 Minutes

**How to Cherish Your Wife**

***1 Peter 3:7***

**Topic:** Marriage

**Theme:** Why does God require you to submit to your wife?

**Thrust:** Considering and respecting her protects your prayer life.

**Purpose:** Husband listeners will treat their wives in a submissive manner in one new way.

**Meditation:** Ephesians 5:21

**Reading:** 1 Peter 3:1-7

# Introduction

### Interest: Marriage since Eden has always been challenging due to sin, but I wonder why there are even more marriage problems today. What could be the reason?

#### Does society put on too much pressure on marriage?

#### Wives aren't submitting to their husbands (Eph. 5:22-24)?

#### Husbands aren't loving their wives like Christ loves the church (Eph. 5:25-33)?

### Need: How are we all doing in this area of treating our spouses?

### Background/Text: All I've said so far today is only background to our real text in 1 Peter 3. Peter is talking about husband-wife relations.

#### Wives must submit to their husbands (3:1-6).

#### Wives had a despised position in Roman society. The typical practice was that mistresses were for sex while wives existed only to bear legitimate children. It was surprising at a party to find a man with his wife rather than his mistress!

#### In contrast to societal norms, husbands must treat their wives well (3:7).

### Theme/Preview: Today we will focus on the husbands. Here in 1 Peter 3:7 we will see *three reasons that us husbands should treat our wives well*.

### Transition: The first reason you should treat your wife well (in the first part of the verse) is to…

# I. Accommodate her because she is weaker in some ways (7b).

**[Take care of your wife since you're stronger than her.]**

## Explain: What does it mean to be considerate with your wife?

### Literally this means "dwell together with knowledge." A husband should genuinely know his wife. Many a man lives with is wife but is totally insensitive to knowing how she feels, what her preferences are, etc. The NASB renders this "in an understanding way."

### Peter doesn't specify what kind of knowledge is noted, but it probably includes any kind of knowledge that is beneficial to the husband-wife relationship (Grudem, 143):

#### Knowledge of God's principles and purposes for marriage

#### Knowledge of the wife's desires, goals, and frustrations

#### Knowledge of her strengths and weaknesses in the physical, emotional and spiritual realms, etc.

## Prove: "Weaker" here probably refers to three areas.

### It is easy for a husband to abuse his wife physically or sexually since he is stronger than her. "Vessel" literally refers to a piece of pottery and figuratively of the human body in Scripture (1 Thess. 4:4; 2 Cor. 4:7).

### Women are weaker in terms of authority in their marriage (3:1, 5-6), so husbands must be sure they do not abuse this authority over them by using it for selfish ends.

### Women are typically more emotionally vulnerable than men too. Wives are often more deeply hurt by marital conflict than their husbands or by inconsiderate actions by their husbands.

## Apply: Do you treat your wife in light of her weaknesses?

### Application #1 (Physical): Do you expect her to do the heaviest work around the house? I always try to carry the laundry basket at my home.

### Application #2 (Authority): Do you abuse your leadership by saying, "Just do this because I am the leader and you are supposed to submit!"? (God never told *husbands* to make sure that their wives submit! This command is always directed to wives.)

### Application #3 (Emotional): Do you plan your calendar with an understanding that God has given her an emotional cycle each month? I try not to schedule hospitality or guests for dinner when my wife will experience pre-menstrual stress.

# (We've seen that we should be considerate to our wives because of their weaker status physically, emotionally, and in authority. The next phrase tells us a second reason to treat our wives well.)

# II. Honor her because she is equal spiritually (7c).

**[Respect your wife since she's saved just like you.]**

**[Esteem her since you are not better than her in Christ.]**

## Explain: There are many differences between men and women, but there is no difference in respect to salvation. Women are saved in the same manner as men—by grace!

### What does it mean to respect your wife? Literally it means to "apportion her honor." What does “giving her honor” mean? It means to respect her.

#### Peter said to honor the king in the same context of respecting him (2:17).

#### One would never slander or make fun of a king in his presence, so husbands should never put down their wife—publicly or privately, in words or deeds.

#### The NT often attributes honor on those who are weak or last or least in the eyes of the world. Paul applied this to the indispensable but unseen spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:22-24). Elsewhere, the weak are honored (Matt. 18:1-4, 10-14; 19:30; 20:16; 23:11-12; 25:40; Mark 9:33-37; 10:42-45; Luke 14:7-11; cf. 1 Pet. 5:5-6; Michaels, 170).

### Does being "an heir of the gracious gift of life" mean physical life or salvation (Davids, 123; Grudem, 145; Michaels, 170; Stibbs, 127)? The idea of salvation is more likely than saying that she is a living being like the husband. None of the commentaries surveyed saw this as relating to physical life.

## Prove: Galatians 2:28 says that in Christ there is “no Jew nor Greek, male nor female, slave nor free man.” This means that there is no difference between men and women in respect to salvation.

## Apply: Honor your wife by treating her as a spiritual equal in practical ways:

### Encourage her to give family devotions to the kids.

### Pray with her as an equal in Christ.

### Encourage her to use her spiritual gifts in the body.

# (What is the final reason to treat your wife well?)

# III. Treat her well so nothing will hinder your prayer life (7d).

**[Caring for your wife keeps your line open to God.]**

**[Mistreating her affects your communication with the Lord.]**

## Explain: Why would God answer the prayers of a man who mistreats his wife?

### How will an improper relationship with my wife hinder my prayers? Does this mean God won't answer my prayers? Or does this mean that I won't able to pray?

#### Many passages note that our horizontal relationships can disturb our vertical relationship with God:

##### Matt. 5:23 says not to offer a gift to God unless we are right with our brother.

##### Matt. 6:15 notes, "if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins."

##### Paul notes in 1 Cor. 11:33-34, "So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for each other. If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment."

#### Therefore, Peter is warning husbands that lack of respect for their wives can hinder their prayer life in many ways.

### Does "your (plural) prayers" refer to prayer by the husband (Grudem, Davids) or both husband and wife (Michaels, 171)?

#### While this phrase does end the section dealing with both spouses (3:1-6), the nearer context directly addresses husbands (7a) so that they would more likely be the ones whose prayers are hindered.

#### Also, one would wonder why a husband's mistreatment of his wife would hurt *her* prayers since she is not at fault.

#### Proverbs 28:9 says, “God detests the prayers of a person who ignores the law” (NLT). God’s “law” in 1 Peter 3:7 is to understand and honor your wife! For the man who doesn’t care for his wife, “even his prayers are detestable” (NIV).

## Prove: Jesus said that horizontal relationships must be repaired prior to vertical worship and prayer (cf. Matt. 5:32).

## Apply: Have you stopped prayer with your wife? Is God not answering one of your prayers because of a hindered relationship with your spouse?

# Conclusion

### Did you notice that what God is actually saying here is for husbands to submit their wishes to their wives?

### Peter is talking about submission in this section of his letter (chapters 2–3).

#### We should submit to government (2:13-17).

#### Slaves must submit to masters (2:18-25).

#### Wives must submit to their husbands (3:1-6)

#### Now the first phrase of verse 7a says that husbands must treat their wives "in the same way." In the same way how? In a submissive manner!

### The idea of a husband's submission is also taught in other texts.

#### This is how Ephesians 5:21–6:9 begins—with mutual submission!

#### Philippians 2:3-4 says the same thing: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."

### **Theme:** Why does God require you to submit to your wife?

### **Thrust:** Considering and respecting her protects your prayer life.

### **Restate Theme:** Why shouldn't you demand your way with your wife?

### **Restate Thrust:** Accommodating and honoring her keeps your communication with God open.

### How will you submit to her in a new way (applications)?

#### What decision are you trying to make in your marriage where you are stubbornly following your own will rather than really responding to your wife?

#### How can you better be a “hedge of protection” for her?

# Preliminary Questions (Step 1)

# Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?

### Submission to governing authorities is the focus of chapter 2:13-17 and of slaves to masters in 2:18-25.

### Submission of wives to their husbands immediately appears before verse 7 in 1 Peter 3:1-6.

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

### When Peter wrote his letter it this was a very difficult time to be a Christian.

### Persecution of Christians was commonplace and this certainly affected the marriages of believers.

### Wives had a despised position in Roman society. The typical practice was that mistresses were for sex while wives existed only to bear legitimate children. It was surprising at a party to find a man with his wife rather than his mistress!

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

### The way husbands treat their wives would be certainly be affected by persecution. Peter wants his readers to see that the watching pagan world see this.

### More importantly and in line with the context is the truth that a husband's effectiveness in prayer will be directly affected by how he treats his wife.

# Questions

### What does "in the same way" mean? The same as what?

#### Some commentators note that Peter does not specifically say that husbands should submit here (e.g., Grudem, 142). Therefore, the sense is "also" or "continuing on the same area of discussion" (BAGD 568; 1 Pet. 5:5). Grudem notes, "Peter does not command submission to, but rather considerate use of, authority" (Grudem, 142). Michaels (WBC, 167) agrees by saying that "likewise" "functions only to connect related sections of the household duty code, not to point our any real analogy. In this case the relationship is reciprocal: 'in turn,' or 'for your part' (cf. 5:5)."

#### But there exist two problems with not seeing it referring to submission.

##### The context is not simply one of consideration, but of submission!

##### This phrase is used repeatedly to refer to *submission* (3:1 looks back on 2:18 with this phrase). A husband's submission may have been counter-cultural but this is consistent with Ephesians 5:21.

### What is meant by "submission"? The Greek u`pota,ssw means "to arrange, appoint, or order under." It is used in 2:18; 3:1, 5. A similar word (u`pota,ghte) is used in 2:13.

### Does submission indicate that one is lower in authority? No. This question isn't answered here but submission only means voluntarily placing one's higher position below that of a subordinate—not *losing* this position but rather not claiming the authority it entitles.

### Is this verse talking about how a husband should submit to his wife? Some say it does refer to a husband's submission (Peter Davids, 122). It notes two ways that he can submit to her by:

#### being considerate with her and

#### treating her with respect.

### What does it mean to be considerate with your wife?

#### Literally this means "dwell together with knowledge." A husband should genuinely know his wife. Many a man lives with is wife but is totally insensitive to knowing how she feels, what her preferences are, etc. The NASB renders this "in an understanding way."

#### Peter doesn't specify what kind of knowledge is noted, but it probably includes any kind of knowledge that is beneficial to the husband-wife relationship (Grudem, 143):

##### Knowledge of God's principles and purposes for marriage

##### Knowledge of the wife's desires, goals, and frustrations

##### Knowledge of he strengths and weaknesses in the physical, emotional and spiritual realms, etc.

#### "Living with" includes the total marital relationship, often with sexual overtones (Davids, 122; cf. Michaels, WBC, 168).

##### It appears only here in the NT, but the LXX OT it appears 8 times: Deut. 22:13; 24:1; 25:5 are more sexually toned than Isa. 62:5; Prov. 19:14; Sir. 25:8; 42:9; 2 Macc. 1:14.

##### Paul used the expression similarly regarding the bedroom or other activities of marriage (1 Cor. 8:1-13; Phil. 1:19; Col. 1:9-10; 3:10 [cf. 2 Pet. 3:5-6]).

### Does the reference to the wife as a weaker vessel point back to the first verb ("live with") or the second ("respect")? Grammatically it could refer to either verb and thus provide a reason for living with her in an understanding way or respecting her because of her weakness (Michaels, 168).

### What does it mean for the wife to be a weaker vessel? spiritually? emotionally? mentally? morally? physically? all of these? The notion of women being weaker in many respects was common in the ancient world, but is that true here? What all can agree upon is that women in general are more physically weaker than men. The previous text (verses 2 and 4) note how women are capable of feats of moral and spiritual strength (Davids, 123). Probably three types of weakness are indicated (Grudem, 144):

#### It is easy for a husband to abuse his wife physically or sexually since he is stronger than her. "Vessel" literally refers to a piece of pottery and figuratively of the human body in Scripture (1 Thess. 4:4; 2 Cor. 4:7; Michaels, 169).

#### Women are weaker in terms of authority in their marriage (3:1, 5-6), so husbands must be sure they do not abuse this authority over them by using it for selfish ends.

#### Women are typically more emotionally vulnerable than men too. Wives are often more deeply hurt by marital conflict than their husbands or by inconsiderate actions by their husbands.

### What does it mean to respect your wife? Literally it means to "apportion her honor." What does giving her honor (timh) mean? It means to respect her.

#### Peter told his readers to honor the king in the same context of respecting him (2:17).

#### Just as one would never slander or make fun of a king in his presence, so husbands should never put down their wife—publicly or privately, and in words or deeds.

#### The NT often attributes honor on those who are weak or last or least in the eyes of the world. Paul applied this to the indispensable but unseen spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:22-24). Elsewhere, the weak are honored (Matt. 18:1-4, 10-14; 19:30; 20:16; 23:11-12; 25:40; Mark 9:33-37; 10:42-45; Luke 14:7-11; cf. 1 Pet. 5:5-6; Michaels, 170).

### Does being "an heir of the gracious gift of life" mean physical life or salvation (Davids, 123; Grudem, 145; Michaels, 170; Stibbs, 127)? The idea of salvation is more likely than saying that she is a living being like the husband. Paul notes in Galatians 3:28 that in matters of salvation there is no difference between men and women. None of the commentaries surveyed saw this as relating to physical life.

### Does "your (plural) prayers" refer to prayer by the husband (Grudem, Davids) or both husband and wife (Michaels, 171)?

#### While this phrase does end the section dealing with both spouses (3:1-6), the nearer context directly addresses husbands (7a) so that they would more likely be the ones whose prayers are hindered.

#### Also, one would wonder why a husband's mistreatment of his wife would hurt *her* prayers since she is not at fault.

### How will an improper relationship with my wife hinder my prayers? Does this mean God won't answer my prayers? Or does this mean that I won't able to pray?

#### Many NT passages note that our horizontal relationships can disturb our vertical relationship with God:

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##### Paul notes in 1 Cor. 11:33-34, "So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for each other. If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment."

#### Therefore, Peter is warning husbands that lack of respect for their wives can hinder their prayer life in many ways.

# Tentative Theme/Thrust Statements (Step 5)

***Exegetical Idea (CPT)*: The result of a husband submitting to his wife due to her physically weaker but spiritually equal condition is that it will not hinder his prayer life.**

• This is too long as an EI and won’t preach.

Submit to your wife because of the benefits it provides.

• No, this isn't good because the text only talks about one benefit—which is prayer.

**Theme:** Submit to your wife (by accommodating and respecting her)

**Thrust:** because she is weaker physically, equal spiritually, and able to affect your prayer life.

**• This is accurate but too long to preach.**

**• It also probably overemphasizes the subordinate clauses (**weaker physically, equal spiritually)

**Theme:** God's way for you to treat your wife

**Thrust:** is to submit to her desires in practical ways.

**• Good, but the text doesn't actually mention practical ways besides consideration and respect.**

**• Also, "treat your wife" is less specific than submission, which is in the context.**

Consideration and respect for your wife will improve your prayer life.

• This is good but lacks the idea of submission.

**Theme:** Why should you submit to your wife?

**Thrust:** Consideration and respect for your wife will improve your prayer life.

• Hey, I think I'm finally getting it! A bit long, but still good!

**Theme:** Why does God require you to submit to your wife?

**Thrust:** Considering and respecting her protects your prayer life.

• This is finally it!

# Possible Illustrations

### Arguing over washing the dishes (counseling James and Shevanthi)

### China cup versus a coffee mug

# Possible Applications

### How do you decide which house to live in?

### Who has the final say in decorating the house (Steve's insistence that the duck picture be the centerpiece of the living room)?

### Make plans in light of your wife's monthly cycle

**LARGER CONTEXT EO…**

***Exegetical Idea (3:1-7)*: The reason wives and husbands should submit to each other is to show the true grace of God in their relationships (cf. 5:12).**

# I. The reason a wife should submit to her husband by inner qualities of beauty is to win him to Christ (3:1-6).

## The reason a wife should submit to her husband is to win him to Christ (3:1-2).

## The way a wife can show her submission to her husband is by inner qualities of beauty—not external ones—like Sarah did to Abraham (3:3-6).

# II. The reason a husband should submit to his wife is because she is weaker physically but equal spiritually and able to affect his prayer life (3:7).

## The way he should treat his wife is by submitting to her (7a “likewise”; cf. Eph 5:21).

## The reason he should submit to her by giving her consideration is because she is weaker physically (7b).

## The reason he should submit to her by respecting her is because she is equal spiritually to him (7c).

## The result of his submission to his wife is that it will keep from hindering his prayer life (7d).

**How to Treat Your Wife**

***1 Peter 3:7***

**Exegetical Outline**

***Exegetical Idea (CPT)*: The reason a husband should submit to his wife is because she is weaker physically but equal spiritually and able to affect his prayer life.**

# I. The way he should treat his wife is by submitting to her (7a).

# II. The reason he should give consideration to her desires is because she is weaker physically (7b).

# III. The reason he should respect her is because she is equal spiritually to him (7c).

# IV. The result of a husband submitting to his wife is that it will keep from hindering his prayer life (7d).

**Homiletical Outlines** (Both in cyclical form)

# Option 1: Deductive noting submission

# Introduction

### Interest: I wonder why there are so many marriage problems today. What could be the reason?

#### Society puts on too many pressures on marriage?

#### Wives aren't submitting to their husbands (Eph. 5:22-24)?

#### Husbands aren't loving their wives like Christ loves the church (Eph. 5:25-33)?

#### Maybe the real problem is that husbands and wives are not submitting to one another (Eph. 5:21)?

### Need: How are we all doing in this area of submitting to others?

#### This is how Ephesians 5:21–6:9 begins—with mutual submission!

#### In fact, Philippians 2:3-4 says the same thing: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."

### Answering Objections:

#### "OK, preacher, are you saying that God wants husbands and wives to submit to *one another*?" No, *God* is saying this—in Ephesians 5:21 and Philippians 2:4-5.

#### "Does submission mean that I have no God-given authority over my wife?" No, Jesus submitted Himself to the cross for the sake of His bride but His authority as Head of the church was never in question as a result.

#### "Does submission mean I then have no rights?" No, submission means that you voluntarily give up your rights to demonstrate your love for your spouse—just as Christ sacrificially loved the church.

### Background: All I've said so far today is only background to our real text in 1 Peter 3. Peter is talking about submission in this section of his letter (chapters 2–3).

#### We should submit to government (2:13-17).

#### Slaves must submit to masters (2:18-25).

#### Wives must submit to their husbands (3:1-6)

#### Now the first phrase of verse 7a says that husbands must treat their wives "in the same way." In the same way how? In a submissive manner!

### Text: In fact, today's passage in 1 Peter 3:7 talks about why us husbands should submit to our wives.

### Theme: Today 1 Peter 3:7 will give us ***three reasons that us husbands should submit to our wives***.

### Transition: The first reason you should submit to your wife in the first part of the verse is to…

# I. Submit to her because she is weaker physically (7b).

# II. Submit to her because she is equal spiritually (7c).

# III. Submit to her so nothing will hinder your prayer life (7d).

# Conclusion

### **Theme:** Why does God require you to submit to your wife?

### **Thrust:** Considering and respecting her protects your prayer life.

# Option 2: Inductive emphasizing general treatment (submission noted only in conclusion)

# Introduction

### Interest: I wonder why there are so many marriage problems today. What could be the reason?

#### Society puts on too many pressures on marriage?

#### Wives aren't submitting to their husbands (Eph. 5:22-24)?

#### Husbands aren't loving their wives like Christ loves the church (Eph. 5:25-33)?

### Need: How are you all doing in this area of treating our spouses?

### Background/Text: All I've said so far today is only background to our real text in 1 Peter 3. Peter is talking about husband-wife relations.

#### Wives must submit to their husbands (3:1-6)

#### Husbands must treat their wives well (3:7)

### Theme/Preview: Today we will focus on the husbands. Here in 1 Peter 3:7 we will see ***three reasons that us husbands should treat our wives well***.

### Transition: The first reason you should treat your wife well in the first part of the verse is to…

# I. Accommodate her because she is weaker physically (7b).

# II. Honor her because she is equal spiritually (7c).

# III. Treat her well so nothing will hinder your prayer life (7d).

# Conclusion

### Did you notice that what God is actually saying here is for husbands to submit their wishes to their wives?

### Peter is talking about submission in this section of his letter (chapters 2–3).

#### We should submit to government (2:13-17).

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#### Now the first phrase of verse 7a says that husbands must treat their wives "in the same way." In the same way how? In a submissive manner!

### The idea of a husband's submission is also taught in other texts.

#### This is how Ephesians 5:21–6:9 begins—with mutual submission!

#### In fact, Philippians 2:3-4 says the same thing: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."

### **Theme:** Why does God require you to submit to your wife?

### **Thrust:** Considering and respecting her protects your prayer life.

### How will you submit to her in a new way (applications)?

# Discussion Questions:

1. Does this mean that the wife always wins when her desires conflict with her husband's?
2. Is there a better way to express this concept besides using the word "submission"? Even Peter did not specifically use this word in verse 7.