

## 21S24 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:1-7 Husbands & Wives

Hello everyone. Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. I hope everyone is doing well. Today we are continuing our series on 1<sup>st</sup> Peter with 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:1-7.

The author of this letter is the Apostle Peter. Most scholars believe this letter was written sometime in AD60-64. The main theme of 1<sup>st</sup> Peter is “Where does our Hope come from?” for those suffering persecution. This letter was written to Christians living in the Roman Empire and facing persecution because they follow Jesus.

I’m reading from the International Children’s Bible (ICB) again today, I like the plain English in this translation. But of course, you can use whatever translation you choose.

Before we start today, these next seven verses have been yelled about and argued about for many years. In our culture in the United States, women don’t like this scripture, but I think it is because we don’t understand this scripture.

Let’s read 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:1-7 (ICB) *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. <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.*

Okay ladies, I hear you. But let’s look at this closer. First, historically. In the culture when this was written women had few rights. A wife was more like a possession of the husband. Whatever the husband said would happen. Husbands, commonly beat and neglected their wives. I’ve read some historical accounts that say, servants and hired workers were often treated better than the wife. I’m not saying this is right. I’m only saying this was the culture in Bible times. So, when it was written the more controversial part of this scripture is actually Verse 7. I want to look at Verse 7 first. *<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.* (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:7 ICB)

So please keep the culture in mind when reading this so we can gleam God’s message for us today. So, Peter is telling husbands to treat their wives with understanding, honor their wife. Peter is telling husbands to value their wife; she is your equal partner in

marriage. You have different responsibilities but equal importance. Honor her for her hard work, patience and opinions. Hear this men. Your wife's opinion is important and should be valued. Honor her. You cannot honor her as a dictator. You honor her by sharing, listening, and valuing her thoughts and opinions. Peter goes further. We are all heirs of the grace of life. We are children of God. Hear this husbands, your wife is a daughter of God.

So again, please keep the culture in mind when reading this so we can glean God's message. Verses 1-6 are titled, "Submission to Husbands" in the ICB Bible. But let's look at these verses again more closely based on what we have already studied. Read verses 1-2 again, *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.* (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:1-2 ICB)

Yes, Peter is telling wives to submit to their husbands. But what does this really mean. The word "be submissive" is translated from the Greek word *upotassomenai* which means to place yourself under, obey or to submit. The question you have to ask is why.

My wife is a very strong and opinionated woman. When I met her she would say things like "I'm my own person." or "People can't tell me what to do." Yet she respects me as her husband and I honor her as my wife. She allow me to at least think I am in charge of the big decisions. I honor her by involving her in every decision. What this means is we often do things I don't want to do. Yet I choose to do it because I love my wife. She would say the same thing. We often do things she doesn't want to do, Yet she chooses to do it because she loves me. That is respecting each other, loving each other. It's being married to each other.

First, according to the Bible the husband is the head of the household. There are responsibilities the husband is traditionally supposed to do. And there are responsibilities the wife is traditionally has to do. This is how any partnership works, successful partners have specific responsibilities. In Bible times, the husband was the one who worked outside the home. He was responsible for provide a home and food for the family. The husband had to make money and deal with the other men in the community. The wife had household responsibilities. Also, remember the psychology of men and women. I can only speak for men. But we are creatures who need to have authority, we need support from our wives so we can make good decisions. Women have an amazing skill for supporting men. And we men need it. It's how we are made. I need to know my wife supports me. In fact, she has tremendous influence on my decision making. In fact, in my house we agree or we don't do. She would say she submits to my authority but in fact that is how our marriage works because I love her so I value her opinion. We share. But in doing so I get to feel in charge which helps my psychology as a guy and she gets to feel taken care of and loved. They may just be psychological but it makes both of us feel good. A Good Partnership

*"that even if some do not obey the word"*, this means if the husband is not a Christian. Then read on. *"without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, <sup>2</sup> when they*

*observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.*” With their behavior, a wife can influence the husband in very powerful ways.

The key concept for us is live like Jesus wants us to. Husbands treat your wife with love and honor her, respect her thoughts and opinions. Remember your wife is God’s daughter. Wives treat your husbands with respect, support them and their decisions. Don’t openly shame them in front of others. Remember your husband is God’s son. Likewise, if your husband or wife is not a believer, treat them with respect even if they don’t act respectfully. Even if they hurt you or shame you. If you act respectfully and loving towards them, they maybe won to Christ by your behavior. This is not a promise, it is a maybe. In reality we are told other places in scripture not to marry non-believers. But, it still happens or maybe you were not a believer when you got married. Bottomline for us as Christians, act accordingly. Let your behavior and speech be pleasing to Jesus, then leave the outcomes up to God. Don’t insult those who insult you. Speak truth in love. Be respectful even when they are not respecting you. Love them even when you don’t feel like loving them. This is the message Peter is trying to tell us in these scriptures.

Let’s Review,

- 1) **Why should a wife submit to her husband?** Yes, I know. Many women I know start squirming at this phrase. Okay it comes from the Bible. This is more about respecting each other. Wives give your husband the respect a husband deserves regardless of whether your specific husband deserves it or not. This does not apply to all women to all men. This is specifically husbands and wives. And it does not apply to dating people. Just to be clear.
- 2) **Why should a husband honor his wife?** This is really the same answer. Husbands give your wife the respect a wife deserves, regardless of whether your specific wife deserves it or not. This does not apply to all women to all men. This is specifically husbands and wives. And it does not apply to dating people. Just to be clear.
- 3) **Why is it so important that Husbands & Wives respect one another?** Beyond the obvious, this is what Jesus told us to do answer. It is really two-fold. A marriage is a very special powerful partnership. If both spouses live as God directs us to live, we can face most of life’s problems with hope, joy and peace. If your spouse in not a believer, then living as God has directed us can be the thing that brings your spouse into a relationship with Jesus. And then second, the world is watching us as Christians. We are supposed to be different from the world. We live as God wants us to live, not according to the culture we live in.

Let me leave you with this today. The modern culture we live in and especially here in the US, tells us It’s about me, It’s about my happiness, It’s about me, me, me. But that is not how the Kingdom of God is meant to work. As Christians, we do what is right in God’s eyes, not according to the culture we live in.

We must live for Christ not ourselves if we are to have the fulfilling life God promises. Success and failure are really up to God. We don’t define right and wrong. God wants

everyone to come to Him. And almost every time He uses one of His children, that is us, the Christians, to demonstrate to non-believers what and who God is. God's top priority is not your comfort, He wants other to have what you have. A relationship with Him. Rejoice and be thankful in everything. Let God use you and your life to reach others including those closest to us, like our husbands and wives.

**Let's Pray.**

**Heavenly Father thank you for this letter from Peter. I know how many people struggle with these passages. Please help them to see your message for them. Help us to trust you with the outcomes, so we can focus on loving you and loving others like you love them. I pray this in your Name Lord Jesus. Amen**

I hope you are enjoying our study of 1<sup>st</sup> Peter. I hope you will join me for the rest of this series

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