

A Counter-cultural Marriage

1 Peter 3:1-7

Before we endeavor to unpack this passage, let us begin by simply saying that the Christian home, the Christian marriage, and indeed the Christian life are and have always been counter-cultural. The Christian view of marriage, family, and home life is to be governed and grounded upon Biblical principles rather than societal preferences.

- **Christian wives are called to be submissive to their own husbands. (3:1a)**
Most scholars agree that the opening phrase, “in the same way,” is pointing us back to the previous subject of submission. Peter now addresses submission within the marriage relationship.

This is plainly taught in Scripture, but also clearly abused and mis-applied in many marriages. Compare this text with that of Ephesians 5:18-24 or Colossians 3:18-20.

- **This is not addressing all women in general, but wives in particular.**
 - **This is not addressing the relationship of wives to all men, but only to their own husbands.**
 - **This issue of submission does not equate a lack of worth, value, giftedness, or significance.**
 - **The Christian home involves a mutual submission the Lord, and therefore to one another.**
 - **God designed the different roles and responsibilities; His design is good.**
- **Christian wives are called to display a spiritual adornment and inner beauty. (3:3-6)** We live in an age where women are evaluated and judged based upon the most shallow and base criteria.

Women are told by Hollywood and fashion magazines that they must be a certain size and look a certain way or they are less desirable. This is driven by a culture that makes value judgments based solely upon appearance. Someone has said, “beauty is only skin deep.” The true reality is this: Christlike beauty goes well beyond the skin, penetrating the heart!

- **Christian husbands are to demonstrate sensitivity, showing honor to their wives. (7)** Peter now turns his attention to the husband's role and responsibility. Here it appears that the Scripture deals with an issue often lacking in men: sensitivity, understanding, or compassion.

“Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way.” (ESV)

“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge.” (KJV)

Wayne Grudem, “According to knowledge, the knowledge Peter intends here, may include any knowledge that would be beneficial to the husband-wife relationship: knowledge of God’s purposes and principles of marriage; knowledge of the wife’s desires, goals, and frustrations; knowledge of her strengths and weaknesses in the physical, emotional, and spiritual realms.”

“Giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life.” (KJV) **“Showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life.” (ESV)** **“As with someone weaker, since she is a woman.” (NASB)**

Old and new translations of the Bible use the term “weaker.” Bestowing honor upon that which is weaker is expressed throughout the Scripture. (Read: Matt. 5:3-12; 1 Cor. 1:26-30; James 2:5; 4:6 or 1 Peter 5:5)

- **Christian couples, in a sacred covenant are a powerful team. (3:7b)** Why should Christians strive for marital harmony and unity in the marriage? For the benefit of their prayer life!

Application questions: Who should determine the roles and responsibilities with the Christian home? Society or Scripture?

Am I seeking to serve my Lord by serving and honoring my spouse? Are we striving to work within God’s divine design for our marriage?

Are we a mighty force as we pray together for God’s will to be done? Or are we divided due to a strained relationship?