

How to Do What Is Precious in God's Sight

1 Peter 3:1–6 (NKJV)

1 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, 2 when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. 3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—4 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. 5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, 6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.

Do we dare even begin this message?

How often today do you think this topic comes up in churches across America?

It used to be that it was the fourth word here that would raise the dander of some people.

But now it is the first word.

Even the word women is taboo today.

It's "Child bearing person".

But that is not what I want to talk about.

I want to talk about things that bring a blessing.

Don't we all like blessings?

John wrote to his constituents in 3 John 4.

3 John 4 (NKJV)

4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

Walking in truth sets us free from the things that would enslave us.

John 8:31–32 (NKJV)

31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Can we take God's Word for truth? Yes we can, we must.

I. Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands,

A. Likewise, in the same way.

1. This refers to what has been talked about before concerning submission.
2. Of slaves and to government and the rest.

3. . . . in the same way. Peter has just been writing about the attitude of Christ, and though we make a chapter division, Peter did not. His readers are to mark the spirit of Christ in this. The distinctive behaviour from the wife (and later from the husband, v. 7) is evidence of their relationship to Christ. *Derek Cleave, 1 Peter, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Ross-shire, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 1999), 84.*
4. In that society when women, who were viewed as inferior to men, became Christians without their husbands also becoming saved, the likelihood of his being embarrassed and shamed by what was viewed as an act of defiance by his wife, was predictable, as was the conflict subsequently generated. *John F. MacArthur Jr., 1 Peter, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2004), 176.*
5. How did we get this problem?
6. **After the Fall.** The wife has been rebellious, and no wonder; the husband has been a tyrant, and no wonder.
7. **After the Coming of Christ.** Christianity aims to restore the husband and the wife to the right relation. It requires the husband to love his wife (Eph. 5: 25, 28; Col. 3: 19) as a companion, a helper, an adviser; and it aims to make the wife worthy of such love. It aims to bring to an end (1 Cor. 9: 5; Gal. 3: 26-28) that separation of interests which has so marked domestic life since the fall, and to make the interests of the husband and the wife as completely one ' as that between Christ and the Church. . . ."Authority, kindly exercised, and subordination, quietly acknowledged, promote the development of the affections, to which there is nothing more dangerous than rivalry." (Hugh Davey Evans, LL. D.); *Epistles of Peter by Nathaniel Marshman Williams, D. D., An American Commentary on the New Testament. Edited by Alvah Hovey, D.D., LL.D. P42*

B. **Submission is an obligation** (v. 1a). God has commanded it because, in His wisdom, He knows that this is the best arrangement for a happy, fulfilling marriage. Subjection does not mean that the wife is inferior to the husband. In fact, in 1 Peter 3:7, Peter made it clear that the husband and wife are “heirs together.” The man and woman are made by the same Creator out of the same basic material, and both are made in God’s image. God gave dominion to both Adam and Eve (Gen. 1:28), and in Jesus Christ Christian mates are one (Gal. 3:28). *Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 408.*

1. 1 Peter 3:7 (NKJV)
 - a. 7 and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

C. Jesus is our example of submission in that He always did what the Father wanted Him to do.

1. John 13:1–17 (NKJV)

2. 1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. 2 And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray Him, 3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, 4 rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. 5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. 6 Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, “Lord, are You washing my feet?” 7 Jesus answered and said to him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.” 8 Peter said to Him, “You shall never wash my feet!” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” 9 Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!” 10 Jesus said to him, “He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.” 11 For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, “You are not all clean.” 12 So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

3. Christ came to serve others and we are to imitate him in all our relationships and not least in the home. What better role model could we have? *Derek Cleave, 1 Peter, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Ross-shire, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 1999), 84.*

D. This has nothing to do with inferiority as some would have us think.

1. So submission in these verses does not in anyway suggest an inferiority of women and it certainly does not imply that she is to be the man’s doormat. How could that be so if these women are God’s elect? Later Peter refers to both husbands and wives, if both are believers, as being heirs ... of the gracious gift of life (v. 7). *Derek Cleave, 1 Peter, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Ross-shire, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 1999), 85.*

2. All Christians stand on the same level in relationship to each other in Christ.
 3. Galatians 3:27–28 (NKJV)
 - a. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
 4. But this verse does not nullify what Paul and Peter wrote in other places. All Christians are equals but there is still a matter of authority and submission as a matter of order.
 5. What is remarkable about this list is that nowhere did Peter or the rest of the New Testament teach that women are inferior to men, that they are intellectually substandard, or that they are more prone to wickedness. Indeed, Peter emphasized that wives are coheirs with husbands of eternal life (1 Pet 3:7), implying the fundamental equality of men and women. *Thomas R. Schreiner, 1, 2 Peter, Jude, vol. 37, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), 150.*
 6. The address is not to women in general but to wives as the words “your own husbands” *Thomas R. Schreiner, 1, 2 Peter, Jude, vol. 37, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), 148.*
 7. Peter makes it clear that this is not a general instruction for all women to be subject to all men. By saying ‘to your husbands’ he means to their own husbands. *Derek Cleave, 1 Peter, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Ross-shire, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 1999), 85.*
 8. 1 Corinthians 11:3 (NKJV)
 - a. 3 But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.
- E. Isn’t this just accommodation, Peter is following the customs of the day just to not bring Christianity into reproach culturally.
1. In Ephesians Paul connects the relationships between husband and wife with those between Christ and His church.
 2. Ephesians 5:22–33 (NKJV)
 - a. 22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. 24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in

everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. 28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. 30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 31 “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

3. It is clear from Eph 5:22–33 that submission of wives to husbands is grounded in theology—in Christ’s relationship with the church. It is not an accommodation to culture. The submission of wives to husbands mirrors the church’s submission to Christ, and hence it should be accepted as a norm that transcends the culture of the first century. *Thomas R. Schreiner, 1, 2 Peter, Jude, vol. 37, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), 151.*

Jesus has come to break down walls.

Ephesians 2:14–16 (NKJV)

14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, 16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

Paul is here referring to the Jews and the Gentiles. But Jesus came to unite all the major divisions through His sacrifice, through faith.

The enemies of God have come to divide us.

Romans 16:17 (NKJV)

17 Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.

1 Corinthians 12:25 (NKJV)

25 that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.

that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,

Submission is an opportunity (vv. 1b–2). An opportunity for what? To win an unsaved husband to Christ. God not only commands submission, but He uses it as a powerful spiritual influence in a home. This does not mean that a Christian wife “gives in” to her unsaved husband in order to subtly manipulate him and get him to do what she desires. This kind of selfish psychological persuasion ought never to be found in a Christian’s heart or home. *Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 408–409.*

See Wiersbe for more.

Peter is therefore instructing wives who find themselves in this difficult position to follow a similar blueprint, though their husbands may not be believers. *Derek Cleave, 1 Peter, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Ross-shire, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 1999), 85.*

Christian wives should beware of arguing with, or ‘nagging’ unsaved husbands, which may serve to drive them further away. *Derek Cleave, 1 Peter, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Ross-shire, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 1999), 86.*

2 when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.

3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—4 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.

5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands,

6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.