



Bearing Witnesses in Marriage (5)

(1 Peter 3:1-7)

Finding Hope in a Hopeless World

Biblical Model for Marriage Relationship

Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the **behavior** of their wives, when they see the **purity and reverence** of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. Rather, it should be that of your **inner self**, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. **Husbands**, in the same way be **considerate** as you live with your wives, and treat them with **respect** as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers (1 Peter 3:1-7).

Christian Families Matter to God

- God created family (Cultural mandate)
 - God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground” (Genesis 1:28).
 - That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh (Genesis 2:24).
- We are family in Christ
 - Christ designed his church to be a family (the household of God, Ephesians 2:19).
 - All believers become children of God, united as brothers and sisters in a spiritual family regardless of their earthly backgrounds.
- Family reflects God’s own nature
 - Family was initiated by God as part of His plan for humanity, which is a foundational, divine institution to express love, teach His principles, and prepare people for eternal life.
 - The family is central to God's plan for humans to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the earth, and to participate in His purpose to have children to pour His love into.

God's Command to Wives

- Biblical commandment to wives
 - Wives, in the same way **submit** yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives (1 Peter 3:1-2).
 - Wives, **submit** yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior (Ephesians 5:22-23).
- Principles of submission
 - Submit to your own husbands;
 - Submit with behaviors (not words);
 - Submit by demonstrating the purity and reverence of their lives;
 - Submit by cultivating an inner self (with a gentle and quiet spirit);
- Why to submit?
 - God appoints husbands as a head of a house.
 - Wife's submission leads an unbelieving husband to Christ.

Wrong Views on a Wife's Submission

- Are women inferior to men?
 - God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them (Genesis 1:27).
 - There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28).
 - Scripture testifies that men and women bear God's image to an equal degree and have equal value and worth in God's sight.
 - God designs them to have different roles in the marriage relationship and to function in different ways. (I will make a helper suitable for him, Genesis 2:18).
- What submission is not
 - It doesn't mean agreeing with everything your husband says.
 - It doesn't mean putting the will of the husband before the will of Christ.
 - It doesn't mean following your husband into sin.
 - It is a wife's disposition to honor her husband's authority, affirming his leadership, and helping him carry out that leadership through her own unique giftedness.

How To Cultivate Submission?

- Know the biblical principles how God established marriage
 - God appoints a husband as a head of the household.
 - For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church... (Ephesians 5:23).
 - A husband takes ultimate responsibility for his household's welfare, leadership, and spiritual direction. A wife's submission is an act of respect and trust in her husband's Christ-like leadership.
- Cultivate inner character
 - It should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight (1 Peter 3:4).
 - Submission is a voluntary choice to follow her husband's leadership, rather than a forced or coerced act.
 - Fostering unity by cultivating a gentle and quiet spirit: The inner attitude and heart which is at peace, capable of trusting God and releasing control.
- The consequences of submit
 - Husbands are won to Christ.
 - Husbands are shamed by Godly behaviors.
 - Inheritance of a blessing.

Sarah: Model of the Submissive Wife

- Sarah called Abraham lord
 - like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear (1 Peter 3:6).
 - Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, “After I am worn out and my **lord** is old, will I now have this pleasure? (Genesis 18:12).
- Sarah’s submission
 - Sarah's respectful submission is seen in her willingness to leave her home, follow Abraham into unknown territory, and embrace their nomadic lifestyle.
 - God eventually changed her name from Sarai (bitter: a contentious wife, Gen 16:6) to Sarah (Princess, Gen 17:15).
 - Sarai was bitter because she did not have a son, she constantly fought with Abraham. Since God promised her, she believed it. The anxious, bitter woman became a beautiful woman.
 - God to Abraham: Do not be so distressed about the boy and your slave woman. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned (Genesis 21:12).
 - Throughout her life, Sarah respects Abraham's role as the respected head of their household, and a sign of her affectionate submission.

The Command to Husband

- Respect his wife
 - Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers (1 Peter 3:7).
- Two commands to husbands
 - Be considerate (Live in an understanding way, according to knowledge): Husbands need to study the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs of their wives.
 - Treat with respect (Show honor; price, precious, value, esteem) her as the weaker partner: Giving of respect because a wife is precious to her husband.
- Two reasons
 - Wives are heirs with them: They are equal heirs of heaven.
 - Your prayers may not be hindered: Husbands who fail to live with their wives in an understanding way, giving due honor to her will face an interruption in their spiritual lives.

Why are Husbands' Prayers Hindered?

Disrespectful Treatment

- A husband is abusive, belittling, dishonest his wife.
- God will be defied; Sin blocks his prayers.

Ignoring as a coheir of God

- Sinning by ignoring a wife as a coheir of God is considered a serious spiritual failing.
- This kind of behavior will hinder a husband's prayers from being answered.

Broken Unity

- Failing to live in harmony with wife can hinder the unity.
- It makes it difficult for a husband's prayer to be answered.

The Goal: Everlasting Holy Joy

- Marriage is a binding, lifelong commitment
 - Unlike a contract, which is conditional and easily dissolved, marriage is a covenant which is an irreversible, unconditional promise made before God.
 - Marriage is an act of love and sacrifice: The biblical model of marriage involves the husband leading by sacrificing and giving himself for his wife, just as Christ gave His life for the Church.
- Responsibilities for husbands
 - Honor wives as fellow heirs: Treat your wife with honor and respect, recognizing her value as a fellow heir of God's grace and the gift of life.
 - Avoid Abuse of Authority: Do not use your strength and authority to intimidate or control your wife; instead, use it to support and lift her up
 - Intercessory Prayer: God will not listen to the prayers of husbands who do not honor and care for their wives.