"How to Win the Heart of Your Spouse"

(A Message to Help Your Marriage)

I Peter 3:1-7

2-2-2022



INTRODUCTION:

***You can win the heart of your spouse if you are an honorable wife or a considerate husband!**

How?

I. Wives, Give Your Husbands a <u>SUBMISSIVE SPIRIT</u> (v. 1-6)

A. A Godly <u>MOTIVE</u> for Submission (v. 1b)
(Winning your husband to God's Word)

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(*"Holy women. . . Sarah")*

II. Husbands, Give Your Wives <u>THOUGHTFUL CONSIDERATION</u> (v. 7)
How?

A. Be <u>SENSITIVE</u> toward her (v. 7a)

B. Give <u>HONOR</u> to her (v. 7b)

1. Value her as you would a <u>delicate antique</u>

2. Value her as an <u>equal partner</u> in the grace of life

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ILLUS: The great effort put into winning the heart of a boyfriend or girlfriend

Sad to say, this effort diminishes or dies off after marriage.

Although this message may be foreign to our society--a "hot potato" to handle--there was never a time when it was more needed in America.

Perhaps the reason Peter focuses on the submissive spirit of the wife and the thoughtful consideration of the husband is because there are the two areas we have the most trouble with.

***You can win the heart of your spouse!**

How?

I. Wives, Give Your Husbands a SUBMISSIVE SPIRIT (v. 1-6)

V. 1

"Likewise" -In the same way as previously described

"Submission" is a key theme in this context:

Note: Christian citizens to their government (2:13)
Christian servants to their masters (2:18)
Now: Christian wives to their husbands (3:1)

"Ye wives" - the wives Peter addresses are Christian wives who have become new creations in Christ with a capacity to live righteously (2:24).

They are women who (like all of us) once went astray but now have been caused to return to the lord (2:25).

The world has no desire, capacity, nor ability to fulfill their roles as God ordained.

The truth about Biblical submission: Biblical submission is:

1) A matter of <u>role</u>, not worth
(a difference of function not essence)

"Hupotasso" - To take your place under the headship of your husband, recognizing that God has given him the responsibility to lead the family (I Cor. 11:3).

2) A matter of <u>choice</u>, not coersion

The <u>middle</u> voice participle indicates that submission is to be a willing, voluntary choice of the wife. God never commands the husband to make her submit. If submission is not done willingly, it is not done at all!

3) A matter of <u>obligation</u>, not option

The participle carries imperitival force.

This command, because of its vital importance to domestic harmony, occurs several times in the New Testament.

Eph. 5:22-23 - *"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the savior of the body."*

Col. 3:18 - *"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord."*

Cp. I Tim. 2:11-12; Titus 2:5

4) A matter of <u>attitude</u> as well as action

This attitude is the inner beauty of a *"gentle and quiet spirit"* (v. 4)

Many women might say: "But, Pastor, you don't know my husband. He is lost, unsaved, has no regard for the Bible, etc. I can't submit to him."

Notice, God is giving this command to wives who have husbands who are *"disobedient to the Word,"* men who have no regard for God's ways.

Implied in the command to be subject is the expectation for the husband to lead, to give loving leadership, direction, and protection to the wife and family.

A. A Godly MOTIVE for Submission (v. 1b)
(Winning your husband to God's Word)

***"That"* -**in order that, for the purpose that. God now gives a practical reason for the wife's Godly submission

***"If any obey not"* -** if any husbands are unpersuaded and unconvinced of God's Word, they can be convicted and won over to the truth by the Godly submissive conduct of the wife.

Ladies, submission shows your faith in God more than almost any other thing you do. A wife who submits to her husband is showing that: She trusts God to work through the decisions of her husband. She trusts God to protect her and direct her as she in faith relies upon the authority (husband) that God has placed over her.

Note: You are never more like Jesus Christ than when you submit to authority (note how He submitted to the will of the Father - John 8:29). You are never more like the devil than when you refuse to submit to the authority over you (Is. 14:13-14)

***"Won"* -** to be won over from unbelief to belief.

Here is domestic "soul winning" in its purest form!

God is saying that an unsaved (or backslidden) husband can be won to the Word without "a word" from the wife!

***"Without a word"* -**The disobedient husband can be won without a sermon from the wife; without notes taped to his beer can saying "Repent!"; without cryptic notes in his lunch box; without nagging, yelling, and screaming for him to get his act together.

When a woman nags, she may manipulate and force a temporary "decision" out of him; but she will never truly win him over to her point of view.

"In her zeal to win her husband to the Lord, she may drive him away." (Barbieri, p. 59).

***"Conversation"* -** her conduct or behavior (her attitudes, actions, words)

"Your walk talks, and your talk talks, but your walk talks louder than your talk talks."

How you live speaks so loud that people can't hear what you say (if what you say and what you do don't match).

To be won without a word shows the potent power of a life lived for Christ.

An unsaved man would rather <u>see</u> a sermon from his wife than <u>hear</u> one any day!

B. A Godly <u>MEANS</u> of Submission (v. 2-4)

1. Right Actions - A Biblical Lifestyle (v. 2)

"Behold" - to observe

Men are more convinced by what they <u>see</u> than by what their wives <u>say</u>.

What should they see in their Christian wife? What is it that will convince them of the validity of your Christianity?

"Chaste conversation" **=** clean conduct; pure behavior; a holy lifestyle.

What does a wife of moral purity look like?

--She doesn't <u>flirt</u> with other men (her heart is devoted to one man)

--She isn't absorbed in <u>soap operas</u> (her mind isn't filled with emotional fantasy)

--She doesn't use <u>vulgarity</u> (rather, wholesome words)

--She doesn't dress like a <u>harlot</u> (rather, modestly)

--She is faithful to reading God's Word, seeking God's face in prayer, and fellowshipping with God's people at church

--She respects God, His truth, His ways (***"coupled with <u>fear</u>"*** - deep reverence)

Your life is constantly being scrutinized by the world. The unbeliever continually watches the believer. In no relationship is the genuineness of one's profession more clearly seen than in the intimate relationship of husband and wife.

2. Right Attitudes - A Beautiful Spirit (v. 3-4)

V. 3

"Adorning" - *kosmos* (cosmetics) referring to that arrangement of things, the way things are put in order.

Many attend to the external adornment simply to draw attention to themselves. Hence, the admonition: I Tim. 2:9-10 - *"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array. But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works"*.

"Plaiting the hair" - meticulous braiding of the hair (some women spend more time on their hair than on their soul).

A woman's long hair is a glorious covering showing submission to her husband (I Cor. 11:15), but it is not to be the preoccupation of her life.

She should not look like "the wreck of the Hespis"; she should look good for her husband, but this is not her primary focus (Prov. 31:30).

"Wearing of gold" - This does not mean you can't wear a wedding ring or necklace, but no Christian woman should look like a "walking jewelry store." Some women (and men) concern themselves more with the gems on their wrists than the gem of their hearts.

In actuality, jewelry is vanity. It serves no purpose but to please the eye or to impress.

"Putting on of apparel" - For modesty's sake, we all should cover ourselves with clothing, but not be preoccupied or obsessed with the style, fashion, or quality of the fabric or design.

Rather than spending an hour trying to decide what to wear to church, pull something modest out of your closet and spend the remaining 45 minutes in prayer before church!

Don't dress to impress! Again, this is worldly vanity. Rather, focus on what really matters.

The external beauty is nothing compared to the internal beauty of a female. No one is more beautiful than a woman whose faith in her heart shines forth int he light of her eyes, or whose purity in heart manifests itself in her character and mannerisms; or whose peace in her heart gives her a gentleness of spirit; whose love in her heart gives her a warmness of personality.

This is not to say that wives should look like "Plain Jane," "Wanda Wallflower," "blah." You should look your best for your husband.

***"The hidden man of the heart"* =** the inner, unseen person of the heart. Anything of true worth is not valued by the packaging but by the contents; not by the cosmetics but the quality; it's not the style but what's under the hood.

V. 4

"Not corruptible" - that which will not get old, decay, tarnish, wrinkle, rust with time, or perish.

Your hair will turn gray; your gold will eventually be lost, stolen, given away, or burned up at the Judgment; your clothes will either fade in color, become worn or ripped or moth eaten in fabric; or be outdated in style. But the inner you can get more beautiful day by day.

***"Meek"* =** gentle (she has strength under control; very calm, mild).

***"Quiet"* =** tranquil (she is not a brassy, bar room, loud-mouthed, obnoxious type like the harlot Solomon warned about. Prov. 7:11 - *"She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house")*

"In the sight of God" - What He sees and approves of matters most.

"Great price" - very valuable; extremely precious or costly. The same word is used of Christ's blood and translated *"precious"* (1:19).

Where does God place value? Not where the world does (EX: models). The Lord views a gentle and quiet spirit in a woman as being truly desirable, truly exquisite, of *"great price."*

Note: Only the Holy Spirit can make you this way (Gal. 5:22). Yield to Him daily. Let the Lord transform and control your Spirit.

C. A Godly MODEL of Submission (v. 5-6)
(*"Holy women. . . Sarah")*
V. 5
We often support a point or standard by referring to the "old days." This is what Peter does.

The holy women he refers to were adorned with a meek and quiet submissive spirit, because they ***"trusted in God."*** It was their faith in God and His standards and roles for women that motivated such submissiveness.

V. 6
Just as Abraham is the father of the faithful (Rom. 4:11-12, 16), so Sarah is called the mother of the submissive.

Sarah obeyed (lit. listened to; or paid attention to) Abraham. She did what he said (even to the point of telling Abimelech that she was his sister.).

"Calling him lord" - (Gen. 18:12) the Old Testament word is not a title of deity but of authority. It has the idea of "master," a term of deep respect, like the Spanish word "Senor."

Sarah had the attitude: "Abraham, he is my man! He is my leader! My head! Underneath God, he is my master."

"Not afraid with any amazement" - Wives should not be fearful to perform their roles as wives.

--Many are afraid of what other women will think about their old-fashioned behavior.

--Many are afraid that "old Charlie" will take advantage of their submissiveness.

You may feel taken advantage of, used, unjustly treated, but remember, so was Jesus (2:19-24). People and circumstances should not thwart or change our obedience to God.

II. Husbands, Give Your Wives THOUGHTFUL CONSIDERATION (v. 7)

How?

A. Be SENSITIVE toward her (v. 7a)

"Likewise" - in the same way as the wife, the husband must take his place in rank and fulfill his role.

"Dwell" - to be at home with - speaks of a "close togetherness."

"Knowledge" - not academic knowledge or general knowledge (EX: blond hair, blue eyes, weight, height, where she likes to go for dinner, etc.). Anyone could know this of her.

"A Christian husband needs to know his wife's likes, moods, feelings, needs, fears, and hopes" (Wiersbe, p. 410).

A husband needs <u>insight</u> into his wife's needs. A conscious sensitivity is so rare among husbands.

<u>Know</u> your wife -

Be sensitive and considerate of her feelings and needs.

Women have unique differences from men (that need to be comprehended by the husband)

The husband "must not treat her in the same way he thinks of himself. God made her different, and her husband needs to recognize, accept, and appreciate that" (Anderson, RBP, p. 52).

Women have different needs in the areas of:

1. Emotions - Women generally function more based on their "heart" than head (more emotional than rational); she cries more easily; is more sensitive (touchy); easily offended.

2. Communication - women speak 20,000 words a day whereas men speak 5,000 (?)

3. Romance - Women generally require more "I love you's" hugs, flowers, cards, etc. than men.

4. Role Responsibilities - Her "nest" is her home. What interests her is anything surrounding the home, family, children. Many men get lost in their jobs (careers), recreation, or hobbies, etc.

B. Give <u>HONOR</u> to her (v. 7b)

"Giving honor" - to treat with <u>value</u>; to make her feel <u>prized</u>, <u>special</u>.

We need to swallow our pride and put our wife on a pedestal, treat her as a queen, elevate her.

<u>Honor</u> your wife -

Treat her as valuable, as precious, of great worth, as special!

Honor her because of the worth she has in God's eyes. Let His value of her affect yours.

That which your honor, you like. In other words, you will come to appreciate her if you value her.

How do husbands give honor to their wives?

1. By treating them like you did when you first met.

2. By talking to them like you did when you first met.

3. By providing for, protecting, being considerate (EX: opening doors, respecting in front of the children).

   Be a gentleman, try to be conscious of the little things, the small courtesies of life. (Wiersbe, p. 410).

Two ways to honor your wife: Treat her as -

1) A delicate antique
2) A fellow inheritor of eternal life

1. Value her as you would a delicate antique

"Notice Peter does not say that she is a 'weak' vessel, but that she is 'weaker.' That means that both the husband and the wife are weak and need the Lord's strength in their lives." (Barbieri, p. 61)

The man is generally physically stronger and emotionally less sensitive.

"Weaker vessel" - a fragile jar (a delicate antique)

Women should be handled with care because they often are prone to have special emotional needs. (such emotional needs can be frustrating to the husband who is insensitive or too "bull-headed" to try to understand that she is a finely-tuned instrument).

Her emotions are a special gift from God which make her more sensitive to people's feelings and needs and more warm and loving (she balances out the man's lack of emotion - often men are cold as

stones).

"The husband should treat his wife like an expensive, beautiful, fragile vase" (Wiersbe, p. 410).

2. Value her as an <u>equal partner</u> in the grace of life

A saved couple not only has a physical tie (oneness), but also a common spiritual bond.

"Heirs together" - we both have inherited God's gracious gift of eternal life (in Heaven,t he male/female genders will be null and void).

I should honor my wife because of her value to God!

I am of no more value to God than she is. We are of equal worth. We are together both equally vital to God. Her submission does not make her a second-class citizen of Heaven.

Headship and submission is simply a matter of <u>structural order</u> while living on earth, a matter of taking your place and performing your god-assigned job in the home relationship.

A practical reason why husbands should honor their wives is so that God will hear their prayers.

"Hindered" - cut off, thwarted. When husbands do not love their wives this way, they are in sin. When we are in sin:

1) We don't feel like praying

2) Even if we do, our prayers don't get answered.

CONCLUSION:

This passage <u>works</u>! It will revolutionize your marriage!

Here are some questions based on what Peter wrote:

1) Are we satisfied with the roles God gave us?

2) Are we the right examples for unbelievers?

3) Are we majoring on the external or internal?

4) Is our life soothing or abrasive to those around us?

5) "Are we sensitive to each other's feelings and ideas, or taking each other for granted?

6) Are we partners or competitors?

7) Are we seeing God answer our prayers?" (Wiersbe, p. 411)