

# Message Transcript

MARRIAGE TRAINING FOR EXILES | WE STAND FIRM

AARON BROCKETT | AUGUST 30, 2025

It's so good to be with you across all of our locations, those of you who may be joining us on a long, three-day Labor Day weekend, wherever you may be traveling. We're glad that you've taken some time to jump online with us as well.

If you have a Bible, go head and grab it and find 1 Peter, chapter 3. 1 Peter 3 is where we are going to be together today. We're just going to cover seven verses, but these seven verses are packed with so much goodness and truth. Several years ago I was sitting in my office in between meetings, catching my breath, watching out the window to gather my thoughts as I often do. And I noticed that my wife was walking out the door of the church, away from me. I didn't expect her to be at church that day so I picked up my phone and texted her. And I was like, "Hey, babe. Watching you walk out to your truck right now. You look gorgeous." She texted me back and she said, "Thank you but I'm at home right now."

I don't know if any of you have ever had a moment that goes in slow motion, that was it for me. And my impulse was to run back to the window and look. And I was like, "Well, if it's not her, I can't look again." So, I'm kind of panicking in that moment. And then the little bubbles came over the phone and she texted me one word, "Gotcha."

Now, for those of you who may or may not know my wife... After I finally calmed down and was able to change my underwear, I was so proud of her for that humor because, "That was so unlike you. Way to go. That was amazing." And I'm glad that we can laugh at that. In fact, if you've been in our church for a while you've heard me tell that joke. And they reason why is because it's one of our favorites.

After 26 years of marriage, the single, most important thing that God has used and is using to shape me is my relationship with my wife. He speaks through her in ways that nobody else does. She sees things in me that I'm often blind to, areas of my life where after 35 or 40 years of following Jesus I still haven't fully submitted that to His Lordship.



For that reason, marriage is a tremendous blessing. For that exact same reason, marriage can be a tremendous challenge. So, this subject is what Peter draws our attention to in our passage today from chapter 3, verses 1 through 7.

If you are just now joining our church, if you are new here, we are about halfway through this message series where we're just working our way through, verse by verse, this little letter at the end of the New Testament called 1 Peter, in which Peter is writing to a group of Christians spread out all over Asia Minor, encouraging them to stand firm for Jesus in the midst of a cultural climate that was not making it easy for them to do. There are a lot of similarities between what they were facing and what we are facing today so there is a lot of application for us.

And a lot of their friends and family would not have understood the change, "Man, what's going on with you? You still look the same. But you are not the same. The way you say things is different. Your values and the way that you are spending your time, your money is different."

That wasn't always welcomed. I think you can relate to that. The way that they were living their lives was different and distinct from the way that they had been living before. So, because of that, oftentimes they were being criticized and being canceled for their faith. People were mistreating them saying all kinds of things that were untrue about them.

Last week we even walked through a short list of what some of those things were. This world was no longer their home. And as a result, Peter keeps calling them, referring to them with these two words: foreigners and exiles as they reoriented their lives around Jesus, not just as Savior, that's the easy part—but also as Lord, that's the hard part.

And the analogy I've been using in this series is that the Scriptures say, "Behold I stand at the door and knock." And when you open up the door of your life to Jesus as Savior, He comes in but He doesn't want to just stay there. He wants to go into every room inside your heart to do some renovations. That's Lordship.

And there's a problem if after following Jesus three, five, 15 years He's still standing in the breezeway, the doorway of your heart, with His bags and you haven't welcomed Him on in. There are still rooms that He wants to renovate.



I like how C.S. Lewis described this in his book Mere Christianity. He uses the same analogy. He says:

Imagine yourself living in a house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what he is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on; you knew that those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently he starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make any sense.

What on earth is he up to? The explanation is that he is building quite a different house from the one you thought of—throwing out a new wing there, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards. You thought you were being made into a decent little cottage; but he is building a palace. He intends to come and live in it Himself.

That is a great description of Lordship. In addition to that it's a tremendous blessing. And the process of that is tremendously challenging.

Last week Peter walked us through chapter 2. And we were all challenged to make room for God to move by submitting. And we said that the Greek word for submit is to place yourself under, meaning nobody can force you to submit. If somebody tries to force you to submit that is not submission. You willingly put yourself under. And then he said this, "To ruling authorities and unjust masters," not because they are right, not because they deserve it, but, "as unto the Lord."

In other words, make room for God to move in the midst of circumstances that you can't change and let go of those things to God, who can change them.

I got a number of DMs and text messages and emails from last week. My favorite though was from a young woman who texted me and she said, "Pastor, I was facing a really difficult situation at work, it was building up. I was going to have a meeting with my boss on Monday. Then you preached that sermon on Sunday."

She was like, "I was ready to fight my battle. I was ready to go in and get into an argument with him and fight for my rights." And then she said, "I listened to that message and I was convicted that I needed to make room for God to move in the only way He can. I didn't want to."

None of us ever want to.

She said, "I went into the meeting on Monday with my boss and I was ready to submit." She said, "The first words out of his mouth were an apology." She said, "And he's not the apologizing type."



Hey, listen. I know it doesn't always work out that way but when it does you've got to recognize that maybe God is just waiting for you to make room for Him to move and do what only He can. Your honorable response in the way that you live your life might silence someone or it might soften a stubborn heart toward Jesus.

I said this last week. I'm going to say it again. We don't want God to move; we need God to move. Like, we need God to show up because there are so many things that we can't do on our own.

So, listen. You might write this down:

**If dependence is the goal, then weakness is the advantage.**

And if that is not countercultural I don't know what is. Culture never says that. Culture says, "Man, you rise up. You get what is yours. You fight for your rights. You do you." And here it says, "Man, if dependence is the goal, which it is, then weakness is the advantage." Jesus would say that all throughout the gospels. He would say, "Man, if you want to be first, be last." "I've come not to be served but to serve and to give My life as a ransom for many."

So, now Peter is going to continue that same line of reasoning from chapter 2. This is so important, if you didn't catch last week's message, if you're watching online. Stop right now. Go back and listen to last week's message, then go on and listen to this. If you are here live and you didn't listen to last week's message sorry. Catch up later.

What he was talking about last week in chapter 2, he's going to continue that on into a different topic. He applies the same principle to marriage. That's the most painful remodeling project of all.

One of the reasons why I love teaching straight through a book of the Bible is because it forces us to cover things we'd be tempted to avoid. Some of you may be like, "Why are we talking about this today? Well, because it's what's next. We let the text set the agenda.

If it was up to me, I would just circle back to three or four of my favorite topics or I'd just try to guess the felt needs that everyone wants to hear about or what you'll agree with and say amen to. But no. We go and we find this stuff in the Bible that the Bible addresses and we just let the Bible determine what we need to hear.

One of my favorite definitions of preaching is simply this:

**Preaching: "giving voice to what God wants said"**



I just simply want to amplify what God already has and is saying in His Word. His Word is living and it is active, which means that you can go back to the same text that you thought that you knew and He'll give you a fresh word from it.

Please, those of you who have been in church for a long time and you come across a text that is familiar, don't tune it out. Don't say, "I already know what this is." No you don't because the Holy Spirit can take that, breathe new life into that because it's living and it's active.

So, as we jump into the text today, I just need everybody to look right at me for just a second and I need you to listen to me. What we're going to read are not the words of a secular culture or a corrupt patriarchy, these are the words of a living God who designed you, who loves you, who sees your set of circumstances and He wants something better for you. That's what these words are. Alright?

I'm glad you're clapping because you may not be here in a hot minute. Alright? Okay, let's look at the text:

"Wives, in the same way,"

You might underline those words in the same way that's the first of two times he mentions that phrase in this text. We'll come back to that in a minute.

"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." (NIV)

So, he says, "In the same way." What that is is it is an indication of the continuation of what he was saying in chapter 2 about other earthly relationships and institutions in which we find ourselves in, just this impossible situation which is unfair and it is unjust.

He's writing to a group of women in the first century who found themselves in marriages, in impossible situations that maybe were, quite possibly, unfair, and unjust. And he's applying this to them. And you might have bristled at those verses that we just read for any number of reasons, of which I wouldn't blame you and I could probably anticipate what some of those reasons are.



Which is why before we unpack it we just need to kind of pull out for just a minute and I want you to understand that when it comes to any topic that we could look at, we've got to ask ourselves, "Okay, there is a lens by which the world sees it and the lens by which the Word sees it and I've got to ask myself, 'Am I looking at it through the lens of the world or the lens of the Word?'"

So, when it comes to marriage—the way that husbands and wives relate to one another, you've got to ask yourself, "What does the Word say? What does the world say?" And I just want to present this to you before we push this topic and these verses aside. Is the world's way of doing marriage working? And I think the answer to that is, unequivocally, it is not working. Divorce is sky-high. I heard a new term a couple of weeks ago from a Christian therapist in Colorado Springs: starter marriages. There is a younger generation who have starter homes, not forever homes. It's just the first one they're going to get in to. And they are kind of referring to marriage that way. This isn't a forever marriage; this is a starter marriage. We're just going to figure out who we are, what we like, and what we don't like. And then if we don't like it we'll just ditch that marriage and go find a more long-term one. And you want to talk about emotional heartbreak? Let alone if there are kids involved.

Many are just opting not to marry because they've seen their parents go through messy divorces. They don't want that, "Let's just live together and have all of the benefits of marriage without making a covenant—easy in easy out."

Well, you might push back on me and say, "Pastor, wait a second. The divorce rates are just as high inside the church as they are outside the church." And if you've heard that, actually that's not true. A lot of people call themselves Christians devoid of Lordship, which skews the stats. A lot of people call themselves Christians, which doesn't mean that they are following Jesus.

Actually, if you take this at a bare minimum, when Christian couples pray, read their Bibles, and attend church regularly, which is just kind of like entry level stuff, divorce rates plummet by as much as 30 to 40 percent.

What if we were to say, "You know what? The world's way of doing this isn't working, what if we tried God's way that we've dismissed because of legalism or harshness or maybe somebody misapplied the truth. Maybe we came back to it again and say, "Well, what does God really mean by this?"

God has established three things. They are all His idea. Therefore He gets to define them and tell us how they work best. He came up with three things: Marriage and family, Genesis 2; the church, Acts 2; the government, Romans 13. And He designed all three for His glory and our good. What does that mean? Ordered lives, ordered society.



Now, we mess up all three because of our sinful nature, but it doesn't mean that these aren't good things that God has designed and created.

So, marriage is God's idea designed to reveal Himself, which is why throughout the New Testament you'll oftentimes hear that Jesus' relationship with the church is described as a marriage. The church is the bride of Christ.

And, practically, for us a marriage is designed to provide stability for society. And when marriages go wrong, society suffers. Would you not agree with that? The stats point this out. I'll just run through these really briefly. Non-Christian statistics here say:

When kids don't have both a biological mom and dad in the home:

Twice as likely to drop out of school

Twice as likely to live in poverty

Kids whose parents divorce before the age of 5 earn 13 % less by age of 27 and face higher risks of teen pregnancy, incarceration, and early death

Kids are twice as likely to experience emotional or behavioral problems

66% of kids in single-parent homes live in poverty vs 10% in two-parent homes

A two-parent home boosts the odds of college graduation by 163%

Now, none of those stats should surprise us because marriage and family are God's idea designed for the flourishing of society. By the way, can I just say this? For those of you who have experienced divorce or are a single parent, none of those statistics are meant to shame you. Listen, man. Nobody is beyond the reach of God's grace. There isn't anyone who God can't redeem your circumstances and your situation.

We have single dads and moms in this church who are doing an incredible job by God's grace and mercy. So, we come around you and we encourage you. Those statistics are not meant to put a boot on your throat. We want to come around you and love you.

But if that is the situation where you find yourself, in a single parent home, "I've been divorced," listen. God specializes in redeeming from the ashes. But He would prefer to keep you out of the ashes. And I bet you would prefer that too.



Can I just say this? For those of you single moms raising a teen-aged son in our church, getting him in a small group, mentored by a strong, godly man is not just a good idea. According to those stats, it's essential.

And if you are a strong, godly man God's Kingdom needs you to wake up and start mentoring other young men—spiritual fathers. In fact that's one of the biggest needs in our church right now.

I said this last week, statistics right now are saying that young men are running back to the church in droves—praise God! You know who we need now more than ever? Older, godly men to go to camp and to be counselors and to lead small groups and to father them and mentor them. Guys, we need to spend less time on the golf course and more time mentoring young men. Alright?

And I'm not against golf. I'm not against golf. Do not email me. I won't read it. I'm not against golf I'm just saying, man, reprioritize some things and say you're actually at a stage of life where you need to start investing in other young men. Society and the big "C" church is dependent upon it.

Listen, man. I said this last week. If Satan wanted to take down the move of God right now in our nation, he won't just get you to disbelieve, he'll slip behind enemy lines and he will start chipping away at the building blocks of society, which are relationships, marriages, and families.

Satan hates marriage. God designed it. It's the first thing he went after. We'll get to that in a minute. He hates your marriage, if you are married. And if you're not married, he hates the marriages that impact you, that somebody has. See, we shouldn't be indifferent to divorce rates because when marriages get destroyed we all suffer directly and indirectly because they affect society.

So, I want to go back to the text and notice that what Peter says here, he is addressing wives not women. He's not telling women to submit to men, but wives to their own husbands. So, really quickly, let me just kind of go into what submission is not before we go into what submission is. A few things, really quickly, that submission is not:

**Submission is not:**

**Involuntary**





We established that from last week. This is you willingly putting yourself under. Nobody can force you to do that.

### **Without exceptions (it is not absolute)**

If your husband asks you to do something unbiblical, immoral, unsafe you are not obliged to submit to that.

### **A power play**

It is never a power play where somebody flexes up on you.

### **Someone's "right" or "wrong."**

It's not a somebody is right and somebody is wrong kind of a thing. Like a defeat kind of a thing.

### **Done out of fear**

It should never be done out of fear.

### **Inferiority**

And it does not mean inferiority.

A wife is never meant to be subject to physical, mental, emotional, or sexual abuse. And it doesn't mean that you cannot express your perspective, opinion, or feelings within your marriage.

A godly husband should honor, care for, and nurture, and protect. He will seek out counsel. Listen to and keep the perspectives of his wife. The Bible is clear. There is a higher authority than them, Acts 5:29.

So, what does it mean? Well, we've got to go back to the created order in Genesis 2. When God created a male and a female, He placed His image upon them. They were equal image bearers of God and they were both equal in value and worth. Listen. Distinct in role.

Now, the world's way of looking at that would be, "Nope, there is no difference between the two of them." God's way of looking at it is, "No, there is a difference between the two of them in the best possible way. They both image Me uniquely and they complement one another.



One of the Hebrew words for man is:

“bara” meaning “built”

I love that. What I love even more than that is one of the Hebrew words for woman is:

“banah” meaning “crafted”

I think I love that even more. So, listen. He built a man and saw that it was not good for him to be alone. And isn't that true? My wife has been out of town for the last couple of days. It is a miracle that I'm on this platform fully dressed.

So, He built a man and He's like, “It's not good for you to be alone.” So, He crafted a woman and brought them together in marriage—which is a covenant, not a contract—equal in worth and value as image bearers of God, yet distinct and different in roles and the way they see things that complement one another. And we need each other—equal in worth and value but distinct.

It's kind of like the difference between a Jeep and a Ferrari.

Men are kind of built like a Jeep. Hit a few potholes, who cares? Take it off road, get it muddy, beat it up—no big deal. Kind of looks better that way. You would never put a lavender air freshener in a Jeep.

Ladies, on the other hand, they are more crafted like a Ferrari. And that is a thing of beauty. You're not fully sure what all of the bells and whistles are for, but you want to be seen next to it.

God has built men and crafted women differently in roles yet equal in value and the submission and the sacrifice that He calls us to, which, by the way, submission in marriage is never one way, the Bible says it's mutual submission in Ephesians 5, “Husbands and wives submit to one another out of reverence toward Christ.” And then you sacrifice.

And this submission and sacrifice to one another mirrors the relationship of the Trinity. One God, three persons: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All equally God, distinct in role. And they are all pointing to the other.

When Jesus said He came to submit to the will of the Father, He said, “I only do what the Father tells me to do.” That doesn't mean that Jesus was less important, it means He understood what His role was that complements the Trinity.



A husband is to sacrificially lead out to provide, to care for, to protect and a wife is to be a helper, that is the term. It is not a demeaning term because the word for wife as helper is the same word used for the Holy Spirit who is our helper, by the way.

How many of you have ever asked the Holy Spirit to help you? How many times has the Holy Spirit said, "No. That's demeaning."? Hopefully never. See, the Holy Spirit wants to be a Helper, He's honored to be a Helper. And He understands that He provides that. It's not meant to be a demeaning thing at all.

I don't do this often, but I want to read a little excerpt out of the New American Commentary as it relates to this text. It's so clear. It says this:

Peter rejects the notion that women are unequal to men. Nor is there any indication that he equates submission to inequality. Men and women are equally made in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27), have equal access to salvation (Galatians 3:28) and share the same destiny (1 Peter 3:7).

Similarly, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is equal to the Father in essence (1 Corinthians 15:28), revealing that He has a different role. The submission of wives, therefore, does not imply their inferiority. A different function does not suggest that they are lesser beings. Those who argue that a different function implies inequality portray a secular worldview that identifies worth with stature and the exercise of authority.

Now, some of you may push back and say, "Well, my husband isn't God. He doesn't deserve my submission." And if you thought that, you would be 1,000 percent right. He likely doesn't, which is why Peter said back in chapter 2, then he says it again, and it also says it in Ephesians 5: as unto the Lord. Your husband likely doesn't deserve it, but Jesus does.

Somebody once described it this way:

**"Submission is ducking so God can punch my husband!"**

I don't know if that is true or not, but I think there might be some truth to that. Listen. Submission isn't about what women can or can't do. It's about what men are called to do and often do not.



Both men and women have a core sin issue that is equally sin but it is distinct to the gender and it's traced back to Genesis 2. And the core sin of a man is passivity, he's just checked out, or aggression. And if you are a man, you see that. I see it in me. I hate it in me. I fight against it in me. But that's the core sin of a man. And it shows up in marriage. So, submission is not about saying that a woman can't do these things, she can. She's capable. It's about what men oftentimes are called to do but they sit this one out.

See, understand. Peter isn't trying to do a full treatment of this topic in this text. He just hits this briefly. Ephesians 5 gives us a fuller explanation of this topic. So, you've got to ask yourself, "Well, why is Peter bringing it up here? And why does he only spend seven verses on it?"

Well, understand that the women who are in these churches that he is writing to, they had allowed Jesus into every room of their hearts as Lord and their husbands hadn't even let Jesus in the front door. That's who he is writing to.

And you've got to understand the condition that these women found themselves in. The Greco Roman, pagan world, at the time, was brutal on them. The pagan world, at the time, outside of the church, viewed women this way and I quote, "Inferior, lacking capacity to reason, ruled by their emotions, given to poor judgement, immorality, intemperance, untrustworthy, and contentious. They were treated like property."

Wives were expected to adopt the religion of their husbands in the Greco Roman world. Historian Plutarch said this"

A wife should not acquire her own friends but should make her husband's friends her own. The gods are the first and most significant friends. For this reason it is proper for a wife to recognize only those gods whom her husband worships and to shut the door to superstitious cults, and strange superstitions.

That was the pagan world outside the church at the time. And Jesus and His church, in contrast, offered a radical, countercultural idea that they never would have heard of before, that women had infinitely higher value and worth than that as equal image bearers of God. And as a result, women in the first century flocked to the church, while many of their husbands stayed home or were out on the golf course.



See, they were putting themselves in significant danger and they were likely being criticized and slandered at home for being part of the church. And maybe some of you can relate to that. Maybe on your way out the door today to come to church your spouse didn't come with you, he stayed home and on the way out the door he was sort of criticizing you or passively, aggressively muttering something under his breath about you coming here today. Maybe you understand well what that feels like.

See, these women were countercultural rebels and they were faced with an option in the midst of this injustice. They could leave or defy their unbelieving, jerk of a husband or as Peter suggests they could do something radically countercultural, something that might soften his calloused heart, just maybe.

He wants them to set the example of a godly woman without even using words. That their behavior, their honorable life just might soften their husband's hearts to be open to Jesus. That's never a guarantee, but God could do it.

Some of you might know the names Phil and Mary Jo Wright. They have been in our church for decades, well-loved around here. Mary Jo has been involved in our worship ministry over the years. Phil served as a deacon and an elder and later on staff and he continues to work in pastoral counseling.

When they first started coming to Traders Point, Mary Jo had rededicated her life to Christ and she was coming without him because Phil was an atheist. And he was working as a brick layer at the time. She got involved in the choir, which required her not only to come on Sunday but also two nights a week for practice. And he was getting annoyed with that.

He was also getting annoyed by the fact that she kept pushing Jesus on him and he didn't want to have anything to do with it. I just want to read his words:

One day I was at the job laying brick and I was supposed to get home early to watch the kids so Mary could go to choir practice. As the day wore on, I realized that I would be late and I couldn't be there so I called her to tell her the news.

She got angry with me and hung up on me. I got angry back. I decided that I had enough of this church stuff. I was going to put my foot down, go home, make her choose between me or the church.

So, I worked up a really nice, self-righteous speech on the drive home. When I got home she was in the kitchen doing dishes. I stomped into the kitchen ready to tangle.



When she turned to me she was crying. She told me she was sorry for getting angry and she was wrong for hanging up on me. And she said she would stay home with me, not only that night but also the next.

Without being the sharpest knife in the drawer, I told her she was right. She should not have become angry and hung up on me. And then I went into the living room and turned on the TV.

But the more I thought about how she responded the more perplexed I became. She didn't ask me to get home early very often and I know how much getting to practice really meant to her.

Quite frankly I understood and expected the angry Mary, as I would have been mad if the roles were reversed. What I could not understand was how or why she responded in such a selfless and kind manner.

I have always believed that this was the first time I allowed the Spirit of God to plant a seed in my heart as I asked myself, "Is there something real about this Jesus?"

That's what he is talking about. Well, verse 3 is not going to get any easier so buckle up:

"Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes."

And I know some of you are going, "No, he didn't just say that." He did, hold on: "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."

Now, I realize that I'm on thin ice so I'm going to talk fast. Actually, in all seriousness, I've heard this passage just butchered and misapplied in all kinds of unhelpful ways. And I think probably many times people meant well, they just couldn't help it.

See, once again I want to draw you back to this. There is the world's way of looking at something and there is the Word's way of looking at something and we've always got to ask ourselves—it's called worldview. So, there is the world's way of looking into areas and there is the Word's way.



What Peter is doing now is saying, "There is the world's way of looking at outward beauty and physical appearance and there is the Word's way." What he's trying to do is draw us to the Word's way. Now, the emphasis here is not so much on what you wear as much as where true beauty is cultivated and found in the eyes of the Lord.

So, listen. He's not forbidding you, ladies, to go get your hair done or to look nice, but he's drawing your attention to use some discernment and determine your motivation to do so because we have a tendency to look at outward appearance, but God looks at the heart (1 Samuel 16:7).

Let me just address a couple of things where I've heard this misapplied. It is nobody's job, ladies, to police what you wear, especially from a man who is not your husband or your father. However, you should be open to godly council from other trusted, older, Jesus loving women.

Second thing. Ladies, it is not your job to manage men's lust problems. The emphasis here is on cultivating inner beauty and character. And only you know your true motivation for why you wear what you wear. So, you submit those to the Lordship of Christ. You dress for an audience of One.

This is one of the distinctions between built and crafted image bearers of God. There is a certain power and distinction, ladies, that you have as crafted image bearers that is different and distinct from built image bearers.

What do you mean? Well, if you wear skinny jeans and a halter top, you are likely going to garner attention, and not the good kind. If I wear those things, you'll likely laugh or throw up. It's different. And we've got to acknowledge that it's different.

Ladies, can I just encourage you to be like Ruth in the Old Testament? You know what the Scriptures say about Ruth? She was a woman of noble character.

For you single ladies, can I just offer a word of pastoral counsel?

**The kind of bait you use will determine the kind of fish you attract .**

And if you have to wear something revealing in order to catch that guy's eye, then that is all that it will take to later turn his eye.



Then he offers an example of this principle in verse 5. Look with me at the text. He says:

"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." (NIV)

What he is talking about there is the Old Testament narrative of Sarah and Abraham. If you don't know anything about it, Sarah gave Abraham her full attention and energy as she followed him as he sensed he was being led by God.

And here's the thing about Abraham. He was kind of a knuckle head like a lot of men can be. He was always following God but he was making some dumb decisions. On two different occasions Abraham put Sarah in fearful and compromising circumstances and God acted both times to save her from the consequences of his poor leadership as the head of the house. In other words, Sarah made room for God to move. She ducked and let God punch him.

And now he turns his attention to the men. And, guys, it is a swift haymaker to the throat. Look at verse 7:

"Husbands, in the same way," there is that phrase again, "be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner,"

By the way, weaker does not mean inferior. It's a very practical term. You likely out-weigh her. And that makes a difference. It says:

"and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers." (NIV)

Now, men. You've got to understand that this was so countercultural because nobody ever told husbands in the Greco Roman, pagan, first century world that they should ever honor their wives. That would have been a revolutionary thought for them. They would never have heard that.

And notice that the text doesn't say, "Husbands, make sure you enforce your wife's submission." The text never says that. It says, "In the same way." You should never expect or demand this, especially fellas, if you are not submitting to the Lordship of Christ in your own life.





Men, if you are not following Jesus do not expect her to follow you anywhere. Remember, to be in authority you must be under authority. And God does not bless those who use their positions of authority to abuse those who are entrusted to their care.

Fellas, for those of you who have daughters, one of the things we like to joke about is, "Hey, yeah. When my daughter's boyfriend comes over I'll make sure that I'm in my muscle shirt clinging to my shot gun." We think it's funny. Listen. These are God's daughters. He's got a bigger shot gun than you do. That's what the text is saying. The way you treat women will affect your relationship with God.

The text literally says, if you are not being considerate of your wife He will stiff-arm your prayers. If you use your position to serve yourself and not your wife, why would God use His position to serve you? Your home and your marriage are like a mini church, man. When the healthy qualities of a church are lacking in a marriage, that marriage, just like that church will lose its effectiveness, its witness, and impact your ability to pray.

So, what is he calling husbands to do? Three things out of the text. Here's the first one. Take notes:

### **Be Considerate**

He says to husbands, "Be considerate." Literally translated it means to live in knowledge of your wife. To be involved in, take an interest in, to become a student of your wife. Remember the days you were dating. You were a student of hers. You know what her favorite restaurant was, and her favorite color, and you knew what she loved to do, and what her hopes and dreams were.

And then we get married and we have a tendency to no longer date her, actively pursue her, respect her opinions and feedback, and put her desires over your own. A wise husband doesn't make decisions or operate without the input of his wife. She isn't the Holy Spirit but so often when she speaks it sounds a whole lot like the Holy Spirit. So, be considerate. Number two:

### **Be Respectful**

Handle her with care as protector, not predator. I already drew your attention to it once, but weaker partner does not mean inferior in any way, shape, or form. It's just pointing out the fact that you likely out-weigh her physically so you be mindful of that.



You would never handle a Yeti like you would handle a wine glass. Those are different. They have different functions. If anybody ever tells you there is no difference between a Yeti and a wine glass, just go camping with wine glasses.

You never use your size, your strength, your voice as a weapon with your wife. Can I just say this? If you are emotionally and physically threatening or abusing your wife you need to stop right now and repent. Here's the third thing:

### **Initiate Spiritual Maturity**

Men, you initiate spiritual maturity. Your wife is a co-heir with you in the gospel of grace made available to you in and through Jesus. Tensions in marriage oftentimes the fault lines are around a man's core sin issue and a woman's core sin issue. And both of us have them.

A man's core sin issue, as I've already said, is passivity or aggression. What do I mean? If you go back to Genesis 2, God brought Adam and Eve together through marriage and what happened? Satan attacked their marriage.

The Serpent comes and is deceiving Eve. And if you read the narrative, it feels as if Adam was, physically, not there. But he was physically there. He was just emotionally and spiritually checked out. So, he was passive.

And then after the fall, Adam gets aggressive. And he says to God, "The woman You gave me." And we see that show up. We just have a tendency, I see this in myself, bouncing between passivity and aggression.

I'm not pinning the blame on Eve. Because I think Adam is more to blame. He abandoned her and gets aggressive with her, but women have a core sin issue as well. I wonder in the moment if things would have gone radically different, as Eve was talking to the Serpent, if she would have stopped for just a second and said, "Hey, could I introduce you to my husband?"

And Adam should have thrown himself between Eve and the Serpent and he should have stomped the head of that Serpent with his heel and said, "Over my dead body."

Thankfully, Jesus became that for us later on, on a cross. But, unfortunately our sin issues keep raising their ugly heads ever since.

And typically, just like in the first century, more and more women attend church and are involved. That's true in our church. Statistically, more women attend, more women serve, men lag. Now, thankfully, the statistics are starting to show a little bit of a change and young men are beginning to come back to the church. Man, praise God. I hope that continues.



But can I just say this? You do not need to dominate, you do not need to have all of the answers, you just simply need to initiate steps toward humility and spiritual maturity. So, you let your family see you go first. You let your family see you reach out. You let your family hear you say, "I'm sorry." And confess and repent.

You let your family see you worship in a way that maybe feels to be undignified. What I mean by that is as a big, burly man, a strong man who has a dependent stance toward God, you are in here arms raised, tears streaming down your cheeks, singing off key and horribly to God. Why is that so important? Do you need to be like faking it? No.

In fact, some of you guys are like, "Well, that's not me. That's not my personality." I totally get that. I'm just saying the same way that you react when your football team scores a touchdown, make sure that it at least matches that here. Because this is way more worthy.

I'll tell you this, man. I can tell how healthy a church is (when I walk into any church) by looking at the men in the room during worship. And if I see men checked out, holding their coffee, looking at their phones, groomsmen pose, bored out of their minds, that's a dying church, man. When I see big, burly, muscular, tatted up men hands in the air, eyes closed, oh man, that's a power keg and the Holy Spirit is getting ready to something there, man.

Here's why your wife and your kids need to see you worship like that, because they will say, "He may be bigger than me, but God is bigger than him. And he's submitting to God."

So, here's what we're going to do. Last week we opened up the altar and I just asked you if you are in an impossible situation to stop fighting your battle and let God fight for you. Come and just drop to your knees and ask Him to do what only He can. So many of you came forward. We want to keep the altar open, especially with this situation.

Maybe right now you've heard something that kind of made you mad. That's okay. Maybe right now you realize that you've had an attitude that you need to repent of. Maybe you've fallen into viewing men, women, and marriage through the world's lens rather than the Word's lens and you need to repent of that, "I've got an attitude. I've looked at this all wrong." Over correct.



Maybe you need some healing. Maybe you've had some bitterness in your heart toward your spouse or toward somebody else. Maybe right now you and your spouse's marriage is hanging on by a thread. Maybe you'd like to be married. It's not happening and you're trying to hold on.

I don't know what your situation is, but maybe it's time for you to make room for God to move.

Maybe, husbands, you reach over and grab the hand of your wife. I don't know how receptive she'll be to that. But you do it anyway. And you initiate. You lead her down front. You get on your knees and you say, "I'm a messed up, jacked up man. I've been too passive and I've been too aggressive and I really want to lean into the Lordship of Jesus."

Ladies, would you support him in that and not throw it back in his face?

Fellas, would you say you're sorry? Would you offer some words of healing? Would you be kind with her heart?

Hey, can we push back the gates of hell right now against the thing that he is trying to do to overwhelm and overcome us in this area and say, "Hey, man. Satan may be having his way in the world; he's not going to have his way in here."

So, there is something powerful about you moving your physical body when you feel prompted by God, whether you are by yourself or with your spouse or with some friends. We're just going to open up the altar and we're going to sing.

Would you come? Every hour we've had people come and just get on their knees and pray. Maybe it's time for you to do some business with God. Would you stand to your feet? Let me pray.

Father, thank You for Your Word that addresses things that I don't know that I would voluntarily want to preach on. But we know that that's oftentimes what we need to hear. So, Father, today I just pray that Your Holy Spirit would come into this space right now and that You would have Your way.

Do something supernatural. Bring some healing. Bring some repentance. Bring some confession. Bring some unity. Would You remove finger pointing? God, we don't want to get into a wrestling match, this is a dance. We're not trying to win something; we're trying to glorify You in all things.



So, Father, I know this is a tough subject. There is a lot of pain involved. But I pray that You would show up here and meet us where we are. I pray that we would be courageous enough to step out of our seats, come down the aisle. We don't care what anyone else thinks. We're doing this for You. We ask this in Jesus' name. And everybody said: Amen and Amen.

