

6 - THE NEW BIRTH AND THE FAMILY (1 PETER 3:1-7)

I. Instructions for Wives (1 Peter 3:1-6)

A. The Command (1 Peter 3:1a)

1. The Directive

- Peter commands wives to be submissive to their husbands.
- “Husbands” includes those who are not believers.
- Submission means “being under authority.”

Biblical Note: Submission

The command does not require women to be subordinate to men in general but to their husbands as a function of order within the home. A wife is to accept her place in the family under the leadership of her husband whom God has placed as head in the home.

Scripture Ephesians 5:22-24 (ESV)

²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

Scripture Colossians 3:18 (ESV)

Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

2. The Manner

- Wives must be submissive and respectful just as they would to earthly authorities.

B. The Purpose (1 Peter 3:1b-2)

1. A Witness to an Unbelieving Spouse (1 Peter 3:1b)

- Their submission may be used to reach their husband for Christ.

2. A Silent Testimony (1 Peter 3:1b-2)

a. Conduct (1 Peter 3:1b-2a)

- Your proper conduct is a testimony to the unbelieving spouse.

b. Spirituality (1 Peter 3:2b)

- Your reverence to God is a testimony to the unbelieving spouse.

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C. Inner Beauty (1 Peter 3:3-6)

1. The Issue of Outer Beauty (1 Peter 3:3)

- Do not focus solely on your outward appearance.

2. The Importance of Inner Beauty (1 Peter 3:4)

a. The Focus (1 Peter 3:4a)

- The focus needs to be on the inner condition of the heart.

b. The Inner Character (1 Peter 3:4b)

- Their character needs to be marked with a gentle and quiet spirit.

c. The View of God (1 Peter 3:4c)

- A woman who pursues this in her life is precious to the Lord.

3. The Example of Past Godly Women (1 Peter 3:5-6)

a. The General Example (1 Peter 3:5)

- Peter points out that this was the focus of godly women from the past.

b. The Specific Example (1 Peter 3:6)

- Peter states that this was the focus that Sarah had in submission to Abraham.

II. Instructions for Husbands (1 Peter 3:7)

A. An Equal Responsibility (1 Peter 3:7a)

- Husbands have a definite responsibility to their wives.

Scripture Ephesians 5:25-32 (ESV)

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ In the same way husbands should love their 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 Christ does the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body. ³¹ “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” ³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

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Scripture Colossians 3:19 (ESV)

Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

B. The Husband's Conduct (1 Peter 3:7b)

1. With Understanding

- The husband is to have an understanding of the needs of his wife.

2. With Honor

- The husband is to honor her as a weaker vessel and fellow believer.

C. The Implication (1 Peter 3:7c)

- Our conduct toward our wives affects our prayers to God.