

(Put on helmet)

3 Likewise, wives, be subject to (or submit to) your own husbands

There you go, I've said it. Am I safe??? Righto, before I take it off, I might test the waters a bit further, and we'll see how far we can push this:

V⁵ For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, ⁶ as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.

How are we going??? Am I safe??? Anybody's blood starting to boil yet???

(remove helmet)

Before we begin today, there's something really important that we need to 'nail down', so that we're all on the same page,,,, otherwise none of this is going to make any sense....

50 years ago:

- this was a non-issue
- this is something that was assumed
- known by everyone
- used to be considered "general knowledge"; and
- if you didn't know this, there was definitely something wrong with you...

But now, now that our society likes to see itself as being more ‘woke’, this is something that **does** need to be said::: So, are you ready for this profound statement???

“Men and women, are not the same”... I know. And that’s ground-breaking information, isn’t it... And in fact, M&W can be quite different.

Generally (not always, but generally), and I hope this doesn’t get too technical for you, but men generally like blokey stuff, and women generally like girly stuff...

BTW, I’m well aware I’ve probably just offended a whole heap of feminists out there...

Let me use Robyn and I as an example:

- Robyn loves to cross-stitch;
- I love to shoot stuff;

- Robyn likes to sow;
- I like to weld;

- When it comes to watching movies, Robyn likes ‘chick-flicks’;
- I like to watch action movies;

- Robyn likes to keep the inside of the house clean and tidy;
- And Robyn likes **me** to mow the lawn and keep the garden tidy

- Robyn’s not at all interested in pistol shooting. In fact, she’s about as interested in that as I am in scrap-booking;

- Whereas for me, pistol shooting's a hobby I love, and I'm good at it... Just like Robyn's really good at scrapbooking...

M&W are different to each other... You get a couple of women together, and they can talk for hours... But us blokes, 10 minutes might pull us up, and then we've got to be doing stuff together...

M&W are different. That's why M&W don't compete together in sporting events, because generally men are bigger and they're stronger... And yet, in our new-found 'wokeness', this has become a very real issue, because apparently, somebody who was born as a man (and has the equipment to prove it), can now decide that they're a woman, and our anti-discrimination laws means that everyone else has to accept the lie that they're a woman (because they said so), and so men, who identify as being women, are now competing against women in the sporting arena, and understandably, that's causing quite an outcry...

What a hair-brained world we've become...

But, the Bible speaks with timeless truth. M&W are different... And if we can agree on this fact, **and** if we can **also** agree on the general principle that because we fear God, **all** Christians submit (men and women) to all people, then we'll very quickly discover that the bible reading today isn't sexist, and it's wonderfully life-giving.

Righto, the last few weeks, we've begun with the general principle that disciples of Jesus live lives of submission (first

of all to God, and then to all)... The battle of the flesh, is to battle against that part of us that wants to say “You’re not the boss of me”...

And we’ve looked at some specifics – how we submit to the authorities/bosses... And yet, Peter’s used these specifics as **examples** of the general principle, that we submit to everyone.

And last week, we discovered that Jesus is the copybook. Jesus is the perfect example of Godly submission. He didn’t submit because He was weak, but because He was strong. And even when He suffered injustice, He didn’t retaliate (although He could’ve easily done so) – He submitted...

And Jesus is our copybook. He is the perfectly formed letters of submission, that we copy; copy; copy, as we submit; submit; submit...

Now, what human relationship could be more personal; or more comprehensive, than the husband and wife relationship??? Husbands and wives live in close-quarters – it’s a relationship like no other. And it’s a relationship that Peter needs to address...

And he begins by specifically addressing women whose husbands are **not** Christians, and therefore most likely pagans, and most probably against Christ, and they’re probably ‘somewhat bitter’ that their wives have deserted the family religion and become Christians...

How should a wife live, in such a relationship? How should a wife relate to her pagan husband???

Well, the general principle applies... We submit to all people. And so, the wife submits to her husband.

Just like we discovered last week, that we submit to our employer/boss (even if he's a nasty crook), and we don't do it because we're afraid of the boss – we do it because we fear God... And so be a witness for Jesus, by being the very best employee that you can be, even if your boss doesn't deserve it. We've received grace from God, and therefore we are gracious to others...

And the situation that Peter's painting here (relationship between a Christian woman and her non-Christian/anti-Christian husband), is a very similar sort of a situation. And Peter is saying, "Be a witness for Jesus to your husband, by being the very best wife that you can be, even though your husband doesn't deserve it."

And all that comes out in the first 2 verses.

3 Likewise

Alright, that means "Just like Christ is our copybook, and he subjected himself (even to injustice)", just like Jesus, **wives**, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word,

That means, even though they're not Christians / Don't obey God's word,,, they may be won without a word by the

conduct of their wives, ² when they see your respectful and pure conduct.

You see, a Christian woman, being rebellious against her unbelieving husband, isn't likely to win him for Christ...

- Nagging him and complaining and needling him about his paganism, that's probably not going to help very much.
- Constantly preaching at him, probably won't win him either
- And being disrespectful toward him, isn't going to win him for Jesus.

they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, ² when they see your respectful and pure conduct.

The best way for a Christian woman to be a witness for Jesus to her unbelieving husband, is for her to be highly respectful to her husband, and above this, be uncompromising, in her purity to God...

Alright, so there will be times when she may have to disobey her husband, if he tells her to do something which is against her Christian faith, because her uncompromising purity to God comes first....

And the husband will very quickly realise that Jesus is her Lord, if generally she is very respectful towards him, and subject to him, and she lives a very Godly, upright life, and if

the only time she ever disobeys her husband, is when she refuses to do something which is against God's word...

e.g. the husband would generally expect the whole household to take part in his chosen religion... and it might cause quite a bit of angst and disharmony because the wife refuses... And the husband might demand that the wife stop fellowshipping with those Christians, because it's changing her,,,, But because Jesus is Lord, and because she fears God,,,, in those areas, she cannot submit to her husband, because she submits to Christ first... And in V6, Peter says: to do good, **and do not fear anything that is frightening.**

Even if your husband becomes angry, your first allegiance, is to Jesus.

BTW, can you see why it's so important for a Christian to marry a Christian – these problems can be avoided. And so the only reason a Christian should find themselves married to a non-Christian, is because they were married before they were saved...

Righto,,,

A lot of people really bag this biblical teaching on wives submitting to their husbands, and they criticise it, as being a product of a 'patriarchal culture', where men dominated women, and women were merely seen as objects for man's pleasure... Nothing could be further from the truth...

In fact, Peter here, speaks against the objectifying of women. He says, ³ Do not let your adorning be external

I was actually a little surprised – the Greek word behind the word “adorning”, is actually κόσμος, (kosmos) , which is actually “The ordering of the world/universe” but it also means to ornament yourself, or to adorn yourself...

Basically when you’re getting yourself in order, don’t merely think about your external appearance... Don’t let your ordering/adornment be about:

- your hairdo
- nice/expensive jewellery
- pretty clothes

Let it be what’s on the inside
let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart
with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet
spirit, which in *God's* sight is very precious.

Do you know how highly God rates ‘physical beauty’?
Zero...

Gentleness and a quiet spirit is what’s precious to God...

And yet so many teenage girls – young ladies, and even many older ladies put all their time and all their effort into trying to make themselves look beautiful with the way their hair and make-up’s done, designer cloths,,,, Some beat their bodies

with exercise regimes, to form and sculpt it into something that's more like the model in the magazine...

And they find their worth in external beauty... You know what??? God wants you to be free of that sort of pursuit...

And let me tell you, that as a Christian, I am ashamed of the influx of programs run by churches, aimed at connecting with young girls, trying to give them 'self-worth', by making them look beautiful...

We'll teach you to dress; We'll teach you how to do your make-up, so you don't look so plain, and then you'll feel good about yourself...

God's word says, "**Do not** let your adorning be those things, ⁴ but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious."

Peter says, that's how the Godly women of the Bible adorned themselves – **by submitting to their own husbands**
And then he's bold enough to give the example of Sarah, who **obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.**

BTW, I think she only called him "Lord" once that I can find in the Bible.. But when Abraham said, "We're leaving home, and we're heading off to this promised land (we're just going to live in a tent, Babe.)", she just followed...

And Peter says, **And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.**

We touched on that briefly before – it’s about honouring God first, and part of that, is submitting to all people (including your husband), but don’t be afraid to go against him if he’s wanting you to go against God’s word...

Righto: Now, a word to the husbands...

⁷ Likewise, husbands

Like what? Like the instruction to the wives, or like Jesus? Well, both.

- Like Jesus is the suffering servant;
- like Jesus submitted even to injustice;
- Like wives being the very best wife that they can be, for the sake of Jesus,

Husbands, you be a witness for Jesus, by being the very best husband that you can be, not because you fear your wife, but because you fear God, and you want to honour Jesus...

Sadly, this whole general command, that all disciples of Jesus (both M&W) should submit to all people, often gets neglected for the specifics... “Wives, submit to your husband” is what we know, isn’t it... Why is that the only submission we ever hear about???

And sadly, some abusive husbands, **misuse** this very scripture, to try and legitimise the abusive way they demean their wives... *“There you go – the Bible says it – Submit!!!”...*

But Peter won't have a bar of that sort of nonsense...

Men are to live with their wives in an understanding way,,, - The Greek word here is: γνῶσιν, (gnōsin), which means “knowledge”... Be considerate; Understanding; Know your wife... Husbands, did you know that your wife just wants you to understand her.... And be considerate towards her. And honour her.

You see, submission doesn't mean “slavery”... And back in V6, where Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him “lord”, some men probably go *“Oh yeah, my wife should be treating me like a king...” I'm the lord of my manner – I'm the leader of my household...*

But do you understand what Godly leadership (or even Godly lordship) looks like????

Jesus demonstrated this too...

John 13: (ESV)

³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and

was going back to God, ⁴ rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

And you might remember, Peter objected.....

¹² When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you?" ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, 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 also should do just as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

That is what Godly leadership/lordship looks like – servanthood...

When a godly wife submits to her husband, it's not about him having his own personal slave. As Godly men, in fact, it should be quite the opposite. The woman, is physically weaker, and therefore, we should do more for her, and we are to serve her, as Christ served His disciples...

And so men are to:

- Understand their wives & be considerate of them;
- Honour their wives;
- Serve their wives

And Peter gives us 3 reasons why:

1. Women are the weaker vessel. And the equalitarians will get all up-in-arms about that, but “tough” – it’s just true – get over it...
2. Our wives are fellow heirs in Christ.
Women are every bit as privileged as men are, to be saved...

Have you ever noticed that the New Testament says that we’ve become “sons of God” – I don’t think it ever says “Sons and daughters of God”... There are some modern translations that add “and Daughters” in, to try and make it more inclusive.... But the word “daughters” doesn’t appear there, for a very good reason. In their culture, women weren’t heirs – it was the men who inherited...

And in the Christian church, both men and women become “sons of God”, because it’s not talking about sex/gender – it’s talking about the rights of inheritance. And so, Women are every bit as privileged as men are, to be saved.

They are fellow heirs of God, with the men...

3. And the third reason we are to honour our wives, and be considerate, is so that our **prayers may not be**

hindered.

You see, it's the sinful nature, and it's the way of the world, to want to dominate and exploit a weaker person... And that sort of behaviour destroys our relationship with God...

Did you know, that if you say you love God, but hate your brother, you're a liar (1John 4)...

And my closest and most loved fellow disciple of Jesus, must be my wife. If I don't:

- Love her;
- Care for her; and
- Honour her,

How can I possibly love God??? If I dishonour my wife, it destroys my relationship with God, and thus, my prayers are hindered...

So, there you go... This is all about lives of submission and service, for the sake of Christ. And it's every bit as much about the submission and service of men, as it is for the women...

Let's pray:

Lord Jesus, another challenging word today.

Lord, fill us with Your Holy Spirit,

So that the fruit of the Spirit, would grow in our lives:

- Love
- Joy
- Peace

- Patience
- Kindness;
- Goodness;
- Faithfulness;
- Gentleness;
- Self-control

Lord, may these things characterise who we are,
And how we relate to everyone,
And for those who are married, especially how we relate
to our spouse.

Lord, help us to battle that part of us that wants to say
"You're not the boss of me", and to follow the example
of Jesus, and submit.

Lord, I pray that the wives who are hearing this today,
will be a witness for Jesus, by being the very best wives
that they can be.

And I pray for the husbands who are hearing this today,
that they will be a witness for Jesus, by being the very
best husbands that they can be:

- Loving their wives;
- Honouring their wives;
- And like Christ, serving their wives.

I pray that neither husband, not wife, would seek to lord
it over the other, but that both would have the heart of

a servant, serving the other, and honouring Christ as they do.

Lord, I pray especially today, for disciples of Jesus, who are married to someone who has not yet given their heart to Jesus... Lord, help them to endure. Help them to remain loyal and pure (spiritually). Help them to be the very best husband or wife that they can be – not because their spouse deserves it, but because it honours Christ, and it is a witness for Christ.

Lord, by their respectful and pure conduct, may their spouse be won over to You.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.