October 14/15, 2017

# Submission At Home

*Hope Filled Living in a Culture of Despair*

**1 Peter 3:1-7**

Pastor Bryan Clark

We've reminded ourselves on many occasions that when everyone is selfish and self-centered and demanding their rights, there is virtually no chance for flourishing. That story will always end badly. We're also reminded that we as the people of God are called to something different and called to something more. We have been called *to proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.* Peter is reminding us that we don't just do that with words; we do it with behavior. How do we silence the critics? It's not through debate...not through arguing, but it's through our behavior that wins them to Christ—as a citizen, in relationships that are unfair—and this morning we want to talk about: what does this look like at home? If you have a Bible, turn with us to 1 Peter, Chapter 3. If you're visiting with us we've been working our way through 1 Peter. We find ourselves in chapter 3 this morning. Chapter 3 verse 1:

> **In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any *of them* are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives.** (*NASB, 1 Peter 3:1)

Well, isn't that a little delicate? *(laughter)* Let's talk about that and kind of make sure we get off on the right foot here. It's really important to understand the historical context—what was going on, and why Peter is saying what he's saying. So first of all, it's worth noting that it starts, **In the same way.** What that's referring to is we have been told that, "Yes, we are free in Christ, but we aren't free to sin. We aren't free to rebel. We're free to be a bondslave to Christ, which means we're free to surrender and submit in order to accomplish the mission (or the calling) which we have been given." So we've all been called to be submissive to government, to be surrendered and submissive in relationships that are even unfair. So for anyone to walk out the doors, specifically a woman or a wife, and say somehow you are being called to something different from everyone else, that would certainly not be true! We're all called to submit. We're all called to surrender. What God is asking of a wife is no different than what He's asking of a husband or anyone else. But it's helpful to understand the context into which these words are given.

One of the things that's worth noting is: Peter is speaking directly to the women. Now that may not impress us, but to understand in a 1st century culture that was almost unheard of! Philosophers and teachers did not teach women. So already Peter is breaking through some of the cultural codes, and he's actually speaking directly to *the women*, which is an act of honoring them.

The text tells us that some of these husbands are **disobedient to the word,** meaning they are unbelievers. So imagine the scenario: There is a couple with a wife that comes to faith in Jesus. In a 1st century Roman marriage, there was what they referred to as *the household order*. One of the ways that Rome controlled the empire was they had certain expectations in a community and certain expectations in a marriage. It was the man's responsibility to control his home. It was the wife's responsibility to be in submission to that, even to the degree that the wife was considered to be the husband's property. She was not really to have friendships or relationships outside of his relationships, and it was expected that a wife automatically adopt the religious beliefs of the husband.

So everything's going along fine, and then she comes to Christ. Now, immediately there is a level of disorder according to the Romans. She is no longer embracing the belief system of her husband. If she has community with other believers, she's building relationships outside of his network, which again is out of order in terms of the expectations in a Roman marriage. Now, if that becomes known, the husband will be criticized; the husband will be publicly shamed. If the husband is in business, it would probably cost him business. It would disqualify him from certain honors and positions in the community. By and large they would make his life miserable until he dealt with this at home, which was considered to be *out of order.* Try to imagine just how delicate this has now become.

Imagine what it would be like today for a Muslim couple living in Iran, and the wife comes to faith in Jesus. Try to imagine how delicate that would be for her, for her husband, for her children. If she does not conduct herself wisely, the potential ramifications could be severe, even dangerous. So this is the kind of situation in which these wives find themselves. We've already dealt with the idea that the Christians were being slandered. A big part of the slander is that their Christianity made them rebellious—rebellious against the government, against the Caesar, rebellious against the religious establishment, against the home order. So we've been told already that the way to silence the critics—those that slander—is by choosing to do good or to do right, and it takes a careful amount of thought and skill and strategy in a very delicate situation, or this could all end badly. That's kind of the idea behind this text.

This text is not intended to teach the biblical overview of marriage. You have to find that other places. This is dealing with a very specific situation. They are foreigners. They are *aliens and strangers* living in a foreign land with no real rights. They are undergoing a degree of persecution as Christians, and that persecution is about to ramp up dramatically. In the midst of all of this, this is a very delicate situation. So the idea is not just how does the wife survive, but how does she win her husband to Christ? The text says that:

> **...they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.** (Vs. 1b-2)

The word **chaste** is a word that literally means *without contamination*, often referred to as *moral purity*. But it's really more than that. It's kind of free from any contaminated behaviors, whether that's manipulation, whether that's kind of a passive-aggressive behavior, whether there's kind of a hidden agenda. It's really free from all of that. It's just genuinely seeking to be a good wife.

Now stop and think about how delicate these dynamics are. This couple is going along, and from the husband's perspective everything seems fine. Then she comes to Christ. Now it's become very delicate. He's being criticized; he's potentially being shamed. Now she seems genuinely dissatisfied with him as a husband. She's now trying to change him as a husband, and he views Jesus as not someone who's attractive, but he views Jesus as a competitor for his wife's affections. Everything was fine until Jesus got in the picture. That doesn't make Jesus attractive. As a matter of fact, it's just the opposite. He develops deeper and deeper resentment towards this One who, in his opinion, made a mess of his marriage. That's why it's such a critically important part of the strategy that she *is perceived as becoming a better wife*—that now this is even a better wife, which makes her more attractive, which causes him to be more interested in this Jesus who seems to have changed her in such a wonderful way! So the idea of **chaste** is just that her behavior is pure, and it's genuine as a wife to her husband.

**Respectful** is the same word we saw in regard to slaves and masters last week. Part of it carries this idea of respect—how delicate this is! This is not only difficult; this is potentially dangerous. In a 1st century Roman marriage she was viewed as property and he pretty much had the liberty to do whatever was necessary to get her under control. So both to her and her fellow Christians, **respect** has the potential for disaster if this is not handled carefully. Verse 3:

> **Your adornment must not be *merely* external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious (**or valued) **in the sight of God.** (Vs. 3-4)

In the 1st century, just like the 21st century, it wasn't uncommon that women would use their **externals** to try to control their man. It was a very common part of the culture. So perhaps part of the temptation for these women to somehow influence their man, even to Christ, was through an overemphasis on the **external**. But what Peter is saying, "Ultimately what has been changed in you is not on the outside but it's what's on the inside. It's what's on the inside that provides what is necessary to win his heart to Jesus." It's not saying that the outside is not important. It's just saying that the emphasis, the focus, should be on the internal character—what has really been radically changed by the power of Jesus.

It's interesting that he refers to that as the **imperishable quality**. The literal means the *unfading quality*. Some of the most insecure women I know are women that are physically very beautiful, but there's a sense in which they know this will fade away. If they've gotten their value on the basis of external beauty, there's a reality year-by-year it's going away, and then what will I have left to give me value? Instead there is this wonderful truth of what matters most is what's on the inside, and it's *not* a fading glory. It's something that just becomes stronger and more attractive as the years go by. He describes it as **a gentle and quiet spirit**. It's really important that you don't misunderstand those terms. The terms do not mean m*ousy* and *mild*. Some of you ladies simply weren't made that way. "Good for you!" God makes women with strong leadership potential, tremendous talents and gifts. There's nowhere in the Bible where you're ever asked as a woman to be less than the person God created you to be. It's not what the terms mean. As a matter of fact, these terms were used to describe Jesus. The idea of **gentle** is the Greek word that sometimes is translated *meek*. "*Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth."* It's the same word. It's a term that means strength that is brought under control. It was a term that was used to describe a horse that had been broken to the bit—twelve hundred pounds of raw power that is now useful in the hands of an owner because the horse's power has been brought under control. The best way to think about it is to think about who you are as the person God's made you to be and what would it look like for those talents and those strengths and those qualities to be brought under control so that you would partner with your husband in a way that is productive, in a way that will influence him toward Christ.

**Quiet** has nothing to do with volume. It has nothing to do with whether you're an introvert or an extrovert. It isn't saying if God made you a talker, you need to not talk so much. It doesn't have anything to do with that. It has to do with someone who is a peacemaker, someone who rather than creating conflict at home, creates peace, creates an environment where there is flourishing. It's good to remind ourselves—both as husbands and wives—that anger, crabbiness, unpredictability are all forms of manipulation. Nobody wants to come home to that. If there is enough character that my strengths, my talents, my abilities, can be brought under control, that's **gentleness**—in such a way that there is peace at home, there's harmony; this is a wonderful place to be. That's the idea that makes Jesus very attractive. It's the most likely scenario where an unbelieving husband is going to

say, "You know, whoever this Jesus is, He's actually made you a wonderful wife and I'd like to know more about Him." That's the strategic part of this. Verse 5,

> **For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.** (Vs. 5-6)

First of all the idea of **lord**—some translations use the word **master**—is super misleading in our vocabulary. It's not that the wives are supposed to say to their husbands, "Yes, master." That probably wouldn't be productive. The term actually is a term that just means respect. In our language it would be a term like Mr. and Mrs. In generations gone by it wasn't unusual that one partner or the other would refer to the other partner in social settings as Mr. and Mrs. We don't really do that a lot these days. In terms of **master** like *master over a slave,* it's a completely different Greek word. It's not this term. So don't read into it more than what is there. But it's also saying that this idea of submission within marriage is not unique to the Roman Empire. It's always been a part of the plan. You can't take two people and bring them together in a partnership without both of them being willing to surrender and to submit. That's the only way a true partnership can work. It's always been part of the design.

For a Jewish woman **Sarah** would have been like the *first lady*, and she provides a wonderful illustration of that. Most scholars agree this is most likely referencing Genesis chapter 12. Now imagine what this would have been like for both Abram and Sarah. Abram and Sarah lived in the Ur of the Chaldeans. They were a pretty advanced city. They were wealthy. Life would have been comparatively very easy, but they were pagan to the core. God shows up and speaks to Abram and says, "Abram, I'm going to be your God and I want you to trust Me. I want you to leave your wealth. I want you to leave your comfort. I want you to leave the safety and security, and I want you to follow Me. I'm going to lead you to a land of promise, and I'll tell what land that is somewhere along the way. I just want you to trust Me."

Now imagine Abram having that conversation with Sarah. "You know, honey, the funniest thing happened today. *(laughter)* God appeared to me, and suggested that we leave our wealth, our comfort, our safety and our security, and head out into the middle of nowhere, and partway through the trip, God will tell us where we're going." What would that be like for Sarah to say, "I'm in"? Think about the amazing trust she had in her husband—the submission and trust in her husband that this was true and she was willing to leave everything behind and to go for it. We're reminded that Sarah was a faith *Hall of Famer*, Hebrews 11—really remarkable!

Chapter 12 includes the story that along the way there is a famine in the land. Abram becomes **disobedient to the word,** to use Peter's language. Rather than trusting God, he disappears south into Egypt. When he gets there, he suddenly fears that his wife is so beautiful the Pharaoh is going to want her, and in order to have her, he's going to put Abram to death. So Abram says, "Honey, I'll tell you what. If anyone asks, just tell them you're my sister, so they don't kill me." Now think about it. What exactly is Sarah supposed to do in that moment? She's now in a very dangerous place. She can't just ignore and disobey her husband. It probably would have cost them both their lives. She's kind of in a no-win situation, so all she can do is trust God. What do you know, Pharaoh notices her, finds out she is Abram's sister, and takes Sarah as his own. Sarah must have been absolutely *terrified*, which is the word used in verse 6. (The word **frightened** is the word *terrified*.) The potential of what could have happened here is unimaginable. But God shows up and says to Pharaoh, "Listen, fella, what do you think you're doing?" Pharaoh says, "Hey, I didn't know." So

God tells him, "Pharaoh, this is Abram's wife and you need to give her back," which Pharaoh does and ends up blessing Abram. But the idea of Sarah in a situation with her husband who is **disobedient to the word,** who couldn't do anything but trust God—and God was faithful! That's the essence of what is being said in verse 6. These women are in very delicate situations. They need to be very thoughtful and skillful. They can't just go out and start crusading as a Christian and think this is going to work.

Again, it's really helpful to kind of position this as a Muslim couple in Iran, and the wife comes to faith in Jesus. She had better be very thoughtful and skillful, or the consequences could be dire. It's a very similar analogy. So obviously we are in 21st century America, not 1st century Rome. There are lots of differences so it's very important to understand the text is not saying that a wife should be submissive in an abusive relationship, and just roll over and take it. Sadly, this text has been used to teach that far too many times. Women in the 1st century had few options. Women in a 21st century America do. In our roots as fundamentalists, we have often made divorce seem like the unpardonable sin. What comes out of that is no matter what's going on, no matter how bad it is, no matter what the abuse, God wants the woman to just submit and take it. That is just a terrible theology and that is not what God wants.

It's important to remember that marriage is meant to be this beautiful picture of the love story between Christ and His church. It is meant to picture to a lost and dying world that this is how Jesus loves His people. But when one or the other or both partners are **disobedient to the word**, and the marriage becomes abusive and dysfunctional, rather than it being a beautiful picture of the love story between Christ and His church, it becomes a mockery of everything we're about as the people of God. What we were essentially often saying as fundamentalists is: as long as there's not divorce, then we overlook the mockery, and I wonder, "Where do we get that in the Scriptures?" At some point we, as the people of God, take the mockery seriously. This is doing great damage to the reputation of Christ and in a 21st century America, sometimes we come together and say the mockery must end. It's doing too much damage to the cause of Christ, and the Bible makes provisions to put an end to the mockery. These are difficult, complicated life decisions that should never be made without some sort of guidance and counsel, but it's critically important we understand this text should never be used to suggest that those in abusive relationships just submit and take it. That has never been the heart of God.

Verse 7 then deals with the husbands. Some of you ladies might say, "You know, we had six verses; he's got one!" *(laughter)* Well first of all, the number of verses is kind of irrelevant, so put that in the "*that's silly*" category. But also understand the women were in the most dangerous and delicate part of this equation. It's interesting, Peter doesn't get really specific, just kind of gives principles. Every situation is different. They need to be thoughtful and strategic, but what Peter says in verse 7, for a 1st century Roman culture, was absolutely radical! He says,

> **You husbands in the same way...** (Vs 7a)

Now don't miss that! **In the same way** is a reference to the submission and surrender that defines us all as citizens, with the discussion about slaves and masters. Now the discussion is within the home, and we're all called to submission and surrender. We are free in Christ, but we're not free to rebel. We're free to be a bondslave and to be obedient to what He calls us to be. So...

> **...in the same way, live with *your wives* in an understanding way,** (Vs. 7b)

Now that seems like an odd statement to us in English, but the idea is basically *to live with her* is to *partner with her*, is to **live with her in an understanding way,** meaning according to knowledge—in other words understanding God's design and intent for marriage. This would have been radically different than the household order promoted by Rome where a woman was considered property, where a woman had two basic functions—a sexual function and a domestic function. Other than that, the men pretty much treated the women as slaves. This idea of understanding that we are to represent the love story between Christ and His church, that the call of the husband is to die to himself and to serve his wife, to create an environment where she can flourish as the person God made her to be, was so contrary to everything that was taught in Rome. It was just so radical. The idea is basically that outside in the community, things were very sensitive and delicate. Obviously, Peter is addressing now a husband who has come to Christ, who is listening to these words, who wants to walk in obedience. How that was presented out in the culture was very sensitive, just like a Christian couple in the midst of Iran. You need to be very careful with that. But once the door closes, there should be a radical difference in living out God's design for marriage. So the idea of *living with her* is the idea that she's not your slave. She's not just for sexual satisfaction and domestic chores but to partner up with her in a way that rightly represents God's design for marriage. That's in essence what Peter is saying.

> **...as with someone weaker, since she is a woman;** (Vs. 7c)

Now some translations say **as a weaker vessel**. Now *thems fightin' words (laughter)* in 21st century American culture, but I'm kind of disappointed the NASB takes the word **vessel** out. **Vessel** is simply referring to the body. It's simply a concession that, generally speaking, the husband is physically stronger than the wife. Now...generally speaking...can't we agree with something so obvious? It doesn't really have to be a fight, does it? Are there women in the room that are physically stronger than their husbands? I'm sure! Are there amazing female athletes that will walk through our doors this week who are probably stronger than most of us as men? Certainly! But, generally speaking, the husband tends to be physically stronger than his wife. Now think about this in a 1st century culture, where a woman was considered property. There was this household order. She was expected to be brought under control by the man. He could do pretty much what he pleased to her physically and no one was really going to object. So if you're physically stronger, you can intimidate; you can bully; you can push around. If you had the ability and the freedom to do that, you can just imagine what it was like. What the text is saying is: just because you can, doesn't mean you should. This was a radical change in the Roman environment—that she was to be honored! That word *honor* means *value*—to be *valued* for who she is as the person God has made her to be.

> **...and show her honor (**or value) **as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.** (Vs 7d)

*...to value her as an equal child of God in every way*. I mentioned a couple of weeks ago, the secular worldview has no basis by which to bring people together. The more secular we become as a culture, the more conflict there is, because the secular worldview basically fosters that. But within a Christian worldview, we understand all of us are equally made in the image of God—nobody *more than*, nobody *less than*. And as the children of God, we all come equally on the basis of the grace and mercy of God and we all stand equal in Christ. Regardless of our gender, regardless of the color of our skin, we are equal in every way. It actually provides a belief system by which we all come together as one in Christ. So he's saying if that's true at home, that includes your wife. She is equal to you in every way, and she should be treasured and honored and treated accordingly. Again, I just can't emphasize enough how radical these words would have been in a 1st century Roman marriage. Once the doors close, what was changing in terms of the internal culture of a family was nothing

short of dramatic. God is so serious about this that Peter says something that is rarely said in the Scriptures. He ends verse 7 by saying, "Men, just know this. If you're not willing to listen to Me on this," God says, "then I'm not willing to listen to you." Again, very rare for the Scriptures to say that your prayers will be hindered, but the essence is: if we as men and husbands say, "We aren't willing to listen to God," God says, "I'm not going to listen to you." It's very strong language, a radical change in a 1st century Roman husband's view of marriage.

Now regardless of who we are this morning—single, married, whatever your story—the principles apply. We all live lives of submission and surrender as bondslaves of God. The principles in this passage apply to any relationship where we desire someone to come to know Christ: to be thoughtful and careful and strategic about how we conduct that relationship. Very few people are going to be responsive to words, words, and more words. It is the behavior of our lives that is ultimately going to speak the message, so it pretty much applies to any of us in that sense. But to those of us that are married, there's a clear understanding of our assignment—that we would rightly represent the love story between Christ and His church to a lost and dying world. That's how we *proclaim the excellencies of the One who's transferred us out of darkness into His marvelous light.*

I think all sociologists pretty much agree that at the end of the day, what has devastated our cities and communities has been the breakdown of the family. As the family has grown dysfunctional and fallen apart, it has bled out into the greater community and the consequences are obvious, which, again reminds us that the way back is not government or politics. The way back is a reestablishing of the family and what it means to be a healthy secure family in order to rebuild a community. And there's no question that the Scriptures are clear that must start with us—*as the people of God, as we bring healing and redemption and restoration to what it means to be a husband and wife in Christ.*

> *Our Father, we celebrate that we are Your children, we are Your people, but we again soberly acknowledge that comes with a calling, that comes with a responsibility that we conduct ourselves in a way that makes Jesus attractive to a lost and dying world. Lord, there's probably no place in our communities where there is more pain and hurt and disillusionment and disappointment than within marriages and homes, which then creates this remarkable potential to shine the light of Jesus in order to make a significant difference in how we conduct ourselves as husbands and wives and Christian families. Lord, may that be true of us, in Jesus' name, Amen.*

(Dramatic Duo Recitation/Challenge):

***Dear friends, beloved friends, because we have been loved so passionately by the creator God of the universe, we should love one another. We should really love one another. But let's be honest. It's a lot easier to talk about than it is to walk it out. What does it look like? What does it look like to be more about someone else than about myself? If I read my Bible, I can tell you what it looks like. I can tell you what it looks like for us to be for one another. I can tell you what it looks like for us to love one another. Here are just a few of the ways we demonstrate love. We speak the truth to one another. We forgive one another. We confess our sins to one another. We are at peace with one another. We are devoted to one***

***another. We comfort one another. We put one another's needs before our own. We encourage one another…pray for one another…serve one another. In essence, we do for one another what Christ has already so gracious done for us, so the world will know beyond a shadow of a doubt, that we belong to one another—that we are His.***

(Video – Life Story)

*Everybody has a different story. I know lots of people who grew up with hurt and brokenness and pain. Their families were really messed up but that's not my story. I had a mom and a dad who loved me and my brother and sister. They loved each other. They loved Jesus, and they taught us about Jesus and that provided an incredible amount of security growing up. But regardless of where our story starts, we're still given a decision and a choice. My story is a story of pursuit. In our lives, we pursue lots of things—security, money, love. What we're all trying to do is fill an emptiness inside. I'm not sure why the hole was there for me, but I know what I chose to fill it with. About the time I turned 17 there began to be a lot of conflict between my parents and me, and I made a choice to leave, and I ran. I surrounded myself with friends who encouraged me to continue running. When I tried drinking for the first time, it was a little bit fun, a little bit scary. It started in my 20's, moved into my 30s. The need to medicate my pain increased. I began using drugs and things began to spiral out of control. The thing was I never looked for a solution. I always looked for another band-aid to medicate the pain. The thing was the problem is in here (heart) and in here (mind). I got married. We had children, and I was still not capable of being in a relationship. Things got worse. We got divorced. Shortly after that, social services showed up at my home, escorted by the police, to remove my children from my care. And you would think as a mom, I would have found my surrender there and done whatever I needed to do to be a good mother to my children, but that's not how I thought. I thought: this is freedom. Now I can do whatever I want to do without the responsibility of caring for my kids. In that time, the bar kept getting lower and lower about what I was willing to do to get what I thought I wanted. I found myself homeless and in dangerous, degrading, awful circumstances. I remember sitting in a car alone in a parking lot hurting, and it felt like it was a physical pain, but I feel like what I was experiencing was just spiritual separation from Jesus. So I got this fear and desperation to do something different, and man, I'm grateful for the gift of desperation! Because, out of that desperation I found a willingness to quit running. God is really cool and works in some crazy ways. I was walking out of a 12-step meeting and ran into my family. The last time that we had seen one another it had not ended well. I can't remember what we said—the words that were spoken—but I do remember what I felt, and I felt like I was in the process of being home, and I knew that I was being held and loved. It's just really hard to describe that feeling, but I know that I hadn't experienced it in a really long time. Jesus actually told a story in the Bible that's just like mine. It's about a son who ran away and messed everything up. Finally he hit bottom, came to his senses, and made a plan to go back home. He had this whole speech put together, about how he made mistakes, and about how sorry he was, but while we was still a long way from home, his father saw him coming and ran hard for him—to embrace him and to welcome him home, and that's who Jesus is. He came to save us. He saved me when He took my sins on the cross, and He's saving me today. I'm not strung out. I'm not homeless. I get to be a mother to my children. I get to have relationships with people, and I get to love people back the way that Jesus loves me. All of our stories are different but maybe not so much. If we aren't submitting, we're pursuing*

*what we want. We're running, but all the while Jesus is pursuing us. That's who He is! Sometimes the changes are immediate and sometimes they're gradual, but He's always in pursuit. All I have to do is quit running and believe!*

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*Hope-filled Living in a Culture of Despair*

1 Peter 3:1-7

Pastor Bryan Clark

## Opening Discussion

1. What are the main contributors to the breakdown of our communities today? What is the role of the family in this breakdown?

2. Can a family flourish if the people involved are always selfish and demanding their rights? Why or why not?

3. In what way does the breakdown of the family represent a micro perspective of what's happened to our society on the macro level?

## Bible Study

1. I Peter 2:9 tells us we were called to proclaim the excellencies of Him who called us out of darkness into the light. Review how we are to do that according to I Peter 2:11-20.

2. Read I Peter 3:1-6. To correctly understand this text you must understand the cultural issues and the concerns those issues created for Peter. Review what those are. Remember this text is not intended to be an overview of marriage but rather Peter is dealing with a specific concern related to the situation these Christians found themselves living in.

3. How will the unbelieving (or disobedient) husband be won according to this text (see also 2:12)? Which will be more effective, words or behavior? Why?

4. Review Genesis 12 as background to I Peter 3:5,6. What was the situation and what were Sarah's options?

5. Read I Peter 3:7. What does Peter mean by "live with your wives in an understanding way?" How was that a radical culture from what was typical in the first century?

6. Compare Genesis 3:16. What would be the result of sin as it relates to marriage? How has that manifested itself historically and in our culture today?

7. What does God expect from a Christian husband? What does it mean to "honor" her as a fellow heir of the grace of life? What does the text suggest will be a consequence of not taking this call seriously?

## Application

1. What are the principles of this text that apply to any relationship?

2. What is your role as a wife to be faithful to your calling?

3. What is your role as a husband to be faithful to your calling?


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