

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

How to Win Your Mate To Christ 1 Peter 3:1-7 Part Five

If we are going to be viewed in the most positive light by the world we need to be careful not to be perceived as a people who are always looking out for number one, always quick to fight for our rights, stand up for our rights, or defend our rights.

We need to learn to the virtue of deferring. We need to learn the value of submission and taking on the role of the servant. This is the point Peter has been making since **1 Pet. 2:13**.

He is now showing us the power of servant mentality for soul winning upon unsaved spouses In **1 Pet. 3:1-7**. The first six verses were addressed to Christian wives and **V. 7** is addressed to Christian husbands, and this is where we left off last week.

As with the wife, Peter lists three different behaviors that he believes should concern us in our quest to be the husbands the Lord would have us to be for our wives.

CONSIDERATE BEHAVIOR

V. 7 “You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way.” The word translated “**understanding way**” is the Greek word GNOSIS which most frequently is translated knowledge.

As husbands we are to live with our wives according to knowledge. God will hold us responsible for this knowledge. **WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT WOMEN?**

1) **AFFECTION** - Certainly as we noted last week that there is probably not a single husband in this congregation this morning who does not know that his wife has a need for affection. In other words who needs to know that you love them. Since we know this, the Lord will hold us responsible for our effort or lack of effort in this area. **WHAT ELSE MIGHT HUSBANDS KNOW ABOUT THEIR WIVES THAT THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR?**

2) **COMMUNICATION** - Let me ask you a question. Does your wife have a need to talk with you? I believe that there is not a husband here who has not yet figured this out. As certainly as we know that our wives need affection we also know that they need for us to communicate with them.

Rarely will a husband go to a counselor and ask “Why isn’t my wife talking to me?.” But they often hear, “Why isn’t my husband talking to me?” from wives.

Men do not seem to have as great a need for conversation with their wives as women do with their husbands. Women, on the other hand, seem to enjoy conversation for its own sake. Many women will spend hours with each other on the telephone, while men rarely call each other just to chat and be brought up-to-date.

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Meetings and luncheons and other gatherings where the entire purpose seems to be talking about their personal concerns bring women much pleasure.

When men gather, they tend to talk about practical matters, like fixing their cars, the best place to fish or for gold detecting, or who holds first place in the sport of that season. But they tend not to talk about themselves or their feelings.

Men view conversation largely as a means to an end and not an end in itself. If he wants to find out how the bank account got overdrawn, you can be sure he'll talk to his wife but he is not likely to talk to her about how nice the people in the bank were to him the last time he went there. He may not see any purpose in simply, as he would put it, making "small talk."

If a husband seriously wants to meet his wife's need to feel close to him through communication, he will give the task of communication sufficient time and attention.

The author of the book *His Needs Her Needs* suggests that a man set apart up to 15 hours a week to give their wives undivided attention. He comes by this suggestion by reflecting back on how couples interacted before they were married.

In the courting period couples look for activities that provide an excuse to get together. The activity is incidental. They really want to get together to focus on each other. The mental attitude that we should have as husbands when seeking to set time aside for our wives should be very much the same as it was when we were courting her. And this attitude combined with the opportunity afforded by disciplining ourselves to spend time together should produce the kind of communication that will meet the needs of our wives and therefore benefit our marriage.

Peter has asked us to live with our wives in an "**understanding way.**" We are to live with our wives according to "knowledge." This means that as Christian husbands come to appreciate needs of his wife he becomes responsible before the Lord for meeting that need. Whether it is a need for "affection." Whether it is a need for "communication." Whatever the need might be. Whenever a husband gains "knowledge" or "GNOSIS" he becomes responsible.

What is the next responsibility that Peter outlines for the husbands?

CHIVALROUS BEHAVIOR

Look again at v. 7 "**You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman.**"

Let us look closely at the phrase "**as with a weaker vessel.**" What do we learn from this phrase? We learn that men are "weak" and women are "weaker."

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What does Peter mean by “weaker?” How are women weaker than men? The word is the Greek word ASTHENES. In the NT this word is used either in the sense of physical weakness (**Mt. 25:43; Acts 5:15ff**) or moral and spiritual weakness (**Romans 5:6; 1 Cor. 8:7-11**). Most commentators believe that “weaker” should be understood in the former sense of physical weakness since there is no clear statements that would indicate the latter.

What are the scientific facts? On the average, man possesses 50 percent more physical strength than a woman. 40 percent of a man’s body weight is muscle compared to 23 percent for the woman.

This did not happen by accident. It happened by design. The significance of this reality is that man was placed in a position by God, by virtue of his physical strength to be the protector of his wife and family, why? Because they are weaker.

When a man thinks of his wife he should not think in images that convey strength. But he should think of her in images that convey weakness. She should not be looked upon as indestructible but rather as a “delicate flower.”

“You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way” “You husbands likewise, live with your wives according to knowledge.” There are certain things that we know about our wives that the Lord will hold us responsible for. We know that they need affection. The Lord will hold us responsible for that. We know that they need meaningful communication. The Lord will hold us responsible for that. But what else do we know that is clearly stated in this passage? We know that they are weaker. We must live with them according to that knowledge. We are to treat them accordingly. We need to be chivalrous. We need to treat our wives as a knight in medieval times would treat his lady.

Some women may not want to be viewed in this way, or to be treated in this way but for Christian women this is exactly how the Lord would want them to be treated and therefore hopefully as we read this passage we would not only recognize that the husbands need to give this behavior but the women need to be willing to receive it.

When you are dating, It is a good thing that men would open the door for their dates. It is a good thing that men would pay whatever expenses might be involved in that date. It is good that a man would want to bring his date home early so that she might get a good night sleep. This is a good thing. It is good for a man once they are married to continue to open doors, and make sure she gets sleep, and her work load is not overwhelming, that she might be able to pop up her feet and rest.

If the husbands that Peter was addressing in **1 Pet. 3:7** are going to win their mates to Christ they must live with them according to knowledge. They must live with them according to all that they know about their wives. This would not only include addressing their need for affection and communication, but it would also include, living with them as a weaker vessel. Taking on the role of the protector as a knight would protect his lady. It is viewing her as someone who needs to taken care of.

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This now leads us to the third behavior that we as husbands are responsible for in respect to our wives. If not to win them to Christ, certainly to win them to ourselves.

COMPANIONSHIP

Husbands certainly are to treat their wives with due consideration, living with her according to knowledge. And as such they are to live with her as a “weaker vessel” this does not mean that he is to be condescending to her. Why? She is not his pet or property but rather his life companion. He is not to be patting her on the head, but rather going through life arm in arm.

“And grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life.” What does this mean? What does it mean that the wife is a fellow heir of the grace of life? When grace is referred to in **V. 7** we should not assume that it is speaking of the grace of “salvation.” Grace is simply referring to that which is a “gift.” Certainly our salvation is a gift but certainly this is not the only gift that we have received from the hand of God.

What specific gift is Peter referring to here? He calls it the **“grace of life.”** It means exactly what it says. This statement takes us all the way back to the beginning of mankind. When God created Adam and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. That was grace. That was the grace of life. But you will remember that the Lord did not stop there. Having looked on creation on saying that it was good. The Lord looked at Adam and said that it was not good that he was alone so He created a helpmate for him. And gave her also grace of life. And they became life companions.

And so have we when we become husband and wife. And as husband and wife we share the **“grace of life”** together. The husband is being encouraged to honor his wife, not as a slave, not as servant but rather as a fellow heir of the grace of life. As a life companion.

To honor her in this way only can result in positive things taking place. In **Eph. 5:28** it talks about a husband loving his wife which really in a sense is just another way of saying what Peter is saying in **V. 7. Eph. 5:28** says **“So husbands ought also to love (honor) their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself.”**

Peter identifies another very specific blessing of loving or honoring your wife in the way he has spoken about. Look at the very last phrase, **“so that your prayers will not be hindered.”**

A man’s relationship with God is closely related to his relations to his fellow beings (**Matt. 5:22-23; 18:19-35; James 4:1-4; 1 John 4:19-21**). If this is true of our relationships with men in general how much more that would be true of our relationship with our wives.

Don’t think that you or I can mistreat our wives and have everything OK in respect to our relationship to our wives. At this juncture in our message it might be good for you to be willing to confess your sin.

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CONCLUSION

We are just as responsible as our wives in seeking to conform ourselves to our wives image of an ideal husband.

We are to live with our wives in an understanding way or in other words according to knowledge.

We are to be chivalrous, viewing our wives as the weaker vessel and therefore in the need of protection.

We are to honor them as fellow heirs of the grace of life. We are not to view them as our servants, but rather as our lifelong companions, they should be treated as well as we would treat ourselves.

IF WE AS HUSBANDS AND WIVES WILL SEEK TO CONFORM OURSELVES TO THE INSTRUCTIONS CONTAINED IN VV. 1-7 WE WILL HAVE AN IMPACT ON OUR MARRIAGE PARTNERS. AND IF WE HAPPEN TO BE MARRIED TO AN UNSAVED SPOUSE PERHAPS BY GOD'S GRACE OUR WIFE OR HUSBAND MIGHT BE DRAWN TO THE LORD JESUS THROUGH US.