

PETER'S EPISTLES

1 Peter: Living In Conflict With The Culture

XII. Relating Righteously In Marriage

(1 Peter 3:1-7)

I. Introduction

- A. Several believers in different states of the nation have reported on the increasing difficulty they face in living in accord with Bible truth since doing so conflicts with the godless world's deteriorating culture around them.
- B. "First Peter was written to Christians . . . whose stand for Jesus Christ made them aliens and strangers in the midst of a pagan society" (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 837), so we study 1 Peter for insight and edification.
- C. 1 Peter 3:1-7 calls us to relate righteously in marriage, even if our spouse is unsaved. We view it for insight:

II. Relating Righteously In Marriage, 1 Peter 3:1-7.

- A. Peter addressed the responsibilities of wives in marriage in 1 Peter 3:1-6 (as follows):
 1. Continuing the force of his imperative "submit" (*hupotagete*) back in 1 Peter 2:13a, Peter used the feminine present **middle** participle *hupotassomenai* in 1 Peter 3:1a to direct wives to submit [for their **own benefit** - middle voice] to their "own" (*idiois*) husbands. (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 796; The Analyt. Grk. Lex. (Zon.), 1972, p. 419; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 848)
 2. The **benefit** for a believing wife's submitting to her own husband, even if he "disobeys" (*apeitheo*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 82), what here means "disbelieves as an unbeliever" (Ibid.) the Word of Christ's Gospel, is that the wife's husband can be "gained" (*kerdaino*, Ibid., p. 430) or "won" to faith in Christ by her "conduct, behavior" (*anastrophe*, Ibid., p. 61), 1 Peter 3:1b.
 3. That conduct will ideally cause the unsaved husband to behold with respect his saved wife's "pure" (*hagnos*, Ibid., p. 11-12) "conduct" (*anastrophe* again, Ibid., p. 61) of submission to him, 1 Peter 3:2.
 4. To clarify what he meant by a believing wife's ideal submission to her unsaved husband, Peter expanded on this subject in 1 Peter 3:3-6 (as follows):
 - a. A godly submission in a wife does not highlight the outward adornment of formal hair styling and the wearing of jewels and rich clothing, but features the quality of the inner man, the heart, "the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious," 1 Peter 3:3-4 ESV.
 - b. Peter wrote that this is how the holy women of old who hoped in God adorned themselves, submitting to their husbands like Sarah who obeyed Abraham, calling him "Lord," 1 Peter 3:5-6a (with Genesis 18:12).
 - c. Believing wives follow Sarah's example if they do what is right and not give way to "terror" (*ptoestin*), a word that is used only here in the New Testament and that refers to wives being terrified of disobeying their unsaved husbands for failing to put their trust in God, 1 Peter 3:6b; Ibid., Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 849. [Note: in cases of physical or emotional abuse even in marriage, 2 Timothy 3:1-5 directs the believer pull himself or herself away from the abusive party. Divorce is never sanctioned in Scripture (cf. Malachi 2:16 with 1 Corinthians 7:10-11), but geographical separation may at times be necessary.]
- B. Peter then addressed the responsibilities of husbands in marriage, 1 Peter 3:7 (as follows):
 1. [Peter did not address the case of a husband being married to an unsaved wife possibly because such a case was unusual opposite the more usual case of a saved woman being wed to an unsaved man. However, if a believing man is wed to an unsaved wife, he can heed the directive in 1 Peter 3:7 to be "winsome" to her.]
 2. Thus, Peter directed that husbands "similarly" (*homoios*, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 570-571) like believing wives had duties to fulfill before God toward their wives, 1 Pet. 3:7a.
 3. Accordingly, husbands were to "live, dwell with" (*sunoikeyo*, Ibid., p. 799) their wives literally "according to knowledge," that is, "with understanding," 1 Peter 3:7b; Ibid., Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 849.
 4. What husbands must understand is that their wives are physically or emotionally "weaker" (*asthenestero*) "vessels," Ibid.; 1 Peter 3:7c. Women are not intellectually inferior to men, but they are more vulnerable to physical and emotional harm (fig. "vessel"). They are heirs with their husbands in the grace of eternal life, so their husbands must be considerate of this fact lest their prayers go unanswered, 1 Peter 3:7d.

Lesson: Godly wives are to submit even to their unsaved husbands as unto Christ in a meek and quiet spirit that God prizes and what can influence an unsaved husband to trust in Christ. Godly husbands are to understand and be considerate of the physical and emotional limitations of their wives that their prayers not be hindered.

Application: May we function in our marriages in alignment with God's will for His blessing.