



# TIME OF GRACE®

## God & Gender: In Marriage (Parts 1 and 2)

### Study Notes

#### Summary

Perhaps now more than ever, Americans find the idea of distinct gender roles as outdated, offensive, and oppressive. Much more preferable, many believe, is to recognize God-given gifts, regardless of gender. How does such thinking fit into the biblical view that Paul lays out in Ephesians chapter 5 where husbands are the “heads” of their wives and wives are called to submit to their husbands? How do biblically committed Christians winsomely explain these verses in our modern age?

#### UNIQUE

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- Husbands,
  1. Be \_\_\_\_\_.  
1 Peter 3:7: Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives . . .
  2. Treat your wives with \_\_\_\_\_.  
1 Peter 3:7: . . . and treat them with respect as the weaker partner . . .
  3. Treat your wives as a \_\_\_\_\_.  
1 Peter 3:7: . . . and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you in the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.
  
- Wives,
  1. \_\_\_\_\_ to your husbands.  
1 Peter 3:1,2: <sup>1</sup>Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won

over without words by the behavior of their wives,<sup>2</sup> when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.

2. Seek unfading \_\_\_\_\_.

**1 Peter 3:3,4:** <sup>3</sup>Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes.

<sup>4</sup>Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.

3. Put your hope in \_\_\_\_\_.

**1 Peter 3:5:** For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves.

### *Points to Ponder*

1. Compare 1 Peter 3:1-7 with Ephesians 5:21-33 and Colossians 3:18,19. What similarities do you see? What additional points does Paul make in those sections?
2. Evaluate: Once a husband or wife makes their love conditional (i.e. "I will put you first only if you put me first"), a marriage will spiral toward divorce.
3. Challenge: If you are married, make a plan to complete the homework from today's message. If not, share this message or podcast with a couple that you want to see embrace God's design for marriage.

### *Homework for Next Week*

Read Genesis chapters 1-3 and Romans 8:18-28.

Time of Grace Ministry  
**God & Gender: In Marriage (Part 2)**  
1 Peter 3:1-8  
July 12, 2020

*Pastor Mike Novotny*

Do you think the corona virus has been a blessing to marriage? As I think about the work that I do, the emails you send me, the text messages, and the counseling appointments, I realize what happens at your jobs matters and stuff at school and with friendship matters but most of the time, when you reach out to your church, it's because of your home. This means that when we die, the front row seats to see the face of Jesus will not be gender specific. No, instead, it will be man and woman, woman and man, all so close to Jesus, to feel so at peace by his protecting blood and his unfailing love.

I hope and pray that the corona virus is over soon and it never happens again but what I do know is there will still be pressure-packed situations in life. And when those situations come, it is going to be so essential for you and I and those that we love to embrace God's calling.

So guys, let me be blunt with you: If a woman in your home does not feel safe, be a man and get help. Husbands, when the Bible says that you're the head of the home, essentially what it means is you have the incredible privilege and authority and responsibility for this. Like, you don't have to know the Bible, you don't have to be great at praying out loud, maybe she went to church longer than you have but God wants you to lead the way; saying, "Hey, here's how we're going to read, here's how we're going to worship. Grab my hand and let's seek the inheritance that is already ours because of Jesus."

So today, I want you to open your ears to God's word; his united and unique callings for husbands and wives. And I want to warn you upfront, they can be controversial. God has a way of stretching both men and women to be more like Jesus than culture really asks.

So what does Peter say to the women? The answer is a lot. You know, it's kind of fascinating. If a pastor wants to be a reverse chauvinist, he opens his Bible to Ephesians 5 and he says, ladies, look at this, you only get one verse and then Paul needs like 10 verses to fix the dudes. But in 1 Peter 3, that's the opposite. Peter has seven verses for husbands and wives, only verse seven for the husbands, and the first six for wives, and the reason why is fascinating. It wasn't because they're like worse sinners and too immature in their faith. The reason was because many of the Christian women that he was writing to didn't have husbands who were Christians. They weren't with men who respected them and considered them and led them to Jesus. And if you've ever been with a guy who's like not really into Jesus or doesn't treat you great, you might know the most natural thing in the world is to forget about Jesus and not treat him great. And so, I love the practicality of Peter. He knows that every relationships isn't perfect, that it's complicated; sometimes you come to church by yourself. So what do you do then? And Peter has some really encouraging words. He has three things for wives to consider and here's the first one. "Wives, in the same way, submit yourselves to your own husbands so that if any of them do not believe the

word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives when they see the purity and reverence of your lives." That is the essential calling of a Christian wife. In 1 Peter 3 and in Colossians 3 and in Ephesians 5, every time a wife is directly addressed in the New Testament, she is told to submit. So let me have you write that down and then I'll tell you what it means. Wives, the Bible says submit to your husbands. And I see some people already having conversations with the person next to them so let me explain what Peter means.

The word "submit" seems like a bad, dirty, degrading word to our culture but it wasn't to Peter. Peter knew that to submit didn't mean you were inferior or weak or less than; you weren't a doormat if you were going to submit. And the reason that's true is because he says that even Jesus submitted. Jesus was perfect, he's worthy to be worshipped, he's the strong Son of God and yet, he submitted to his heavenly Father. And Peter also knows that to submit doesn't mean you stay in a toxic or dangerous situation. If a woman's calling is to help, sometimes the best help she can give is to leave a man who's hurting her. If a man is supposed to be a rib but he's a broken rib, he needs to heal and sometimes packing up your stuff and the kids or calling the cops is the best way to help. Like, that's not submission.

So what is it? To submit essentially means to say, "You first." Paul would put it this way in Ephesians 5: That you would respect your husband in everything. It means that with your choices, with your attitude, with your words, with the way you interact with him, that he would leave saying, "That helped." And you would feel built up, encouraged, and respected. And Peter knows how powerful that is; this is a fascinating verse. You catch it? Wives, if your husbands aren't Christians, and like you're talking to them all the time, "You should come to church, you should come to church, you should bring the kids to church," and they won't, you catch what he said? Here's how you can win them over without a word: Submit. When they see the purity of your heart, when they see the reverence of your life, when they feel what it's like to be so abnormally respected and encouraged compared to all the other guys that they know, they might reconsider Jesus. There is an insane life-changing power when a man feels that respected. And women, this is your calling and it's the homework I want to give to you today. If you're in a relationship, I want you to ask how respected do I make you feel? And is there anything I can do to make you feel even more respected? Because the most amazing thing in the world is when a man comes home from work or from school or from the game and whatever people said in those places, what he hears in his home makes him feel a thousand times more respected. If that happens, that's where a heart is not hurt but helped because a woman has embraced her calling and she is the helper.

Ladies, that probably is the most important work you will ever do in your family and it will also be some of the hardest. Because if there is a sin that is so hard for modern women and probably for all women, it's this: To respect. I was reminded of that when I read a really fascinating book this past year. It was a female author who told the story of the devastating day that she found out about her husband's porn problem. When she discovered the internet search history, she was devastated. She felt unappreciated, she felt ugly, she wondered what was wrong with her, why she wasn't worthy of his full attention. She was broken and crushed but then she found out how often that happened; how many men. How many married Christian men, actually sinned against their wives in that way and she was so like defeated and devastated that men in the church that were following Jesus could do that to a woman. But then actually, she asked herself a really,

really mature question. The question was: Are men unique? Are they just worse than we are, as women? Are they more sinful? Are they the only ones in a family who really hurt people this often? And she knew the answer was no. The Bible would say, unfortunately, we are united as men and women in sin and in brokenness so she had to ask the question, well, what do women do that's like that? That's as common among wives as pornography might be among husbands and it hurts just as badly. And she thought about that and she prayed about that and her conclusion was disrespect. That it was death by a thousand disrespectful comments. That it was the woman who always had to tweak and critique and comment that he couldn't clean up the house the right way, couldn't load the dishwasher the right way, couldn't discipline the kids the right way. His sex drive was weird, the way he would tell stories was off, she had to interrupt and fill in the details. Just time and time again he would be treated like a child instead of a man. And it would crush him. Much like a woman longs to be beautiful and when she discovers pornography, she feels the opposite, a man so wants to be respected and when he's not, it breaks him.

And I finished that book and I asked myself, "Really?" I mean, maybe that's her conclusion and experience but is that really the case? And I started watching and listening and I saw two things. One, that it happened all the time. The way, in public, in front of the pastor, in front of coworkers and family members and teammates. The little comments like he was kind of an idiot that didn't know how life worked, it happened all the time. And you know what else I noticed? The expression on their faces. How disrespected men - they wouldn't raise a fist, they wouldn't fight back - not in public. They just hang their heads broken. Wives, you don't know how much your words mean to us. When I counsel people through struggles with pornography, the same thing always happens. She says, "I don't know what's wrong with me. He must not think I'm beautiful." And he says, "No, that's not at all what I was thinking." And the opposite's true. Like, how this feels to a man, to not be respected, to always be corrected, it might not make sense to you but it is what it is. We're unique and your respect is the air that we breathe in our home. And so Paul says, "Respect your husbands." And Peter says, "Wives, submit." You'll win them over. You'll encourage their heart.

Ladies, we can't change the past and maybe in this area of marriage your sins are many but Jesus' mercy is more so know that you walk out of here today with the love of Jesus and help of Jesus to respect your husband.

Alright, that's the first thing that Peter has to say. Ladies, let's look at the second thing in verse three. He says, "Wives, your beauty should not come from outward adornment such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. Rather, it should be the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight." Some provocative words from Peter. So if you're wearing gold jewelry right now or have braids in your hair, you're okay. Some people read that and say, "Oh, my goodness! So I have to return all my clothes? Did I keep all the receipts?" But that's not his point. Notice Peter doesn't say your beauty should not come, you know, from these fancy clothes but from wearing shabby clothes. No, his distinction is your beauty, what makes you feel good, should not be from your hair or your makeup or your fashion or your shoes or your fitness routine. Like your real beauty should be what is inside; the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit. And this is so counter-cultural but it's so important. I know, ladies, when you go to the grocery store there's 1,000 magazines

that want you to focus all of your time, energy, and money on outward beauty but Peter's going to tell you the truth: That beauty is great but it fades. Did you catch that? He says your beauty should be the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit.

If you're filling in blanks today, let's write that down. Peter says to wives, "Seek unfading beauty." Because he knows you can spend the money on your hair but your hair's turning gray and you're getting older. And you could spend money on a new pair of Spanx and a beautiful dress - I learned about Spanx from asking women many questions. Holy cow; that just blew my mind. Why does that happen? Well, because we get older and metabolism slows down and the older we get from a worldly standard, you might be a cute, old lady but you're not a hot one, okay? No college guys go to the nursing home to try to pick up women. Beauty fades and the Bible says that. In fact, Proverbs 31, the most famous chapter in the Bible for women, says beauty is fading so a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. She might be good looking now but in five years will you want to be with her? She might catch your attention at the bar but in 10 years are you going to feel respected by her? Peter cares about homes and hearts and so he says to wives, "Seek unfading beauty." Seek Jesus. Because when you have roots in Jesus, the spiritual fruit, like a sense of peace and a joy about your life just overtakes your soul and a man loves being with a woman who has joy and peace as her default setting.

Ladies, I know this is hard in our culture but here's the good news. Here at The Core, we have incredibly spiritually beautiful women. As I was reading through all the names in our church directory, I was reminded how incredibly godly the women we have at this place are. We have such good roots in Jesus. Some of you, your faces I don't see every Christmas and Easter. You're here week after week. Some of you have the same chair that you sit in and it's so amazing that you're here. And I go home after church and I open up that, you know, YouVersion Bible app and I see female name after female name from our church, women who are seeking God day after day, posting passages, spending time in prayer. It's such an incredible place to be a woman with so many incredible examples.

Titus 2 says that older women should teach younger women what it is to be godly. And so ladies, I want to give you an opportunity today. You know, if you don't have a plan to be unfadingly beautiful, if you want to write that down on your communication card, I can easily think of 25 amazing, godly women at our church who would love to help. So if you want to be discipled and grown to seek God and find the things that can't be taken away even as you age, let us know because Peter says that unfading beauty is of great worth in God's sight.

Then he gets to his final point in verse five; one last verse for us together today. He says, "For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves." That's a funny verse to me. You know, Peter's kind of reminiscing about the past. He's saying, "Women these days; they're so caught up in their jewelry and elaborate hairstyles," but ladies, let me tell you, there were some women in the past, holy women. The word "holy" means "set apart." It means that the majority of women are like this but there were a few who were set apart. They were different and they were wonderful because they had hope in something more than what they saw in the mirror. They had a greater hope than their relationship status and their perfect Instagram picture from the prom. They had this deep, abiding peace because they looked to something more than what you could see; they had hope in the God that couldn't be seen. And

I'm thinking of the context - Peter's writing to women, many of whom aren't with Christian men. Their relationships are hard, they might be struggling, and what does he say? Man, if you put your hope in God, if he remembers your struggles with dating and finding a man who's a good rib, that's like this much on the eternal timeline of when you will see the face of God. The struggles, the counseling, the books you're reading to make a relationship work, that's like a millisecond of the eternity that you will celebrate and dance at the reception that we call eternal life. And Peter says to women serve and love and submit and respect and I pray your husbands are won over and they're good, godly men but even if they're not, even if it's hard, here's the hope that you have: That one day you will stand before Jesus and he'll say to you, "I saw that. When you respected him, I saw that. I know he didn't change but I saw that. Well done." And the man you've been waiting your whole life to see, he will look at you and he will bless you and you will never regret putting your hope in him.

So if you want a hopeful home, a happy home, a home where hearts are helped, husbands and wives, remember Peter's words: Guys, be considerate, respectful, treat them as fellow Christians and co-heirs. Wives, submit to your husbands, seek unfading beauty, and remember to put your hope in the right place. Not in a perfect relationship here but the relationship that Jesus made perfect forever.

You know, I was going to leave you today with a cute story about my kids; about these little girls that I'm trying to raise in a good, godly home. But then her email ended up in my inbox on Friday morning. It was a woman who had been reading this section of Scripture; she knew it was my message today and she wanted to tell me how much it mattered. And she gave me permission to share her story with you. She's been married twice and in one of her homes, her heart was really hurt and in another home, her heart was really helped. And as she read these words and thought about her two experiences, she said this: Having been divorced and now remarried, I can tell you that this is absolutely the recipe for a great, God-pleasing marriage and therefore, a happy one. And then she did the coolest thing: She respected her husband behind his back. She started taking screenshot after screenshot after screenshot of their day's text messages back and forth and if I had permission to put those pictures, you would love this man. He was considerate, he was humble, he listened, he didn't try to fix her. He just let her know that he was there for her. And in the last message, she said, "I love you." And his final words? "I love you more but Jesus loves you the most."

Now that is where a heart is helped. That's a home where people are blessed. Brothers and sisters, we can't rewind and do this better but with the help of God we can do our best today. So husbands, wives, remember your unique callings but more than anything, remember what unites you. That Jesus? He loves you the most. Let's pray.

Dear Father, I want to be a great husband. I'm okay with being a mediocre pastor if I can be a great husband. And I pray you'd help me be better to be better than both. For the sake of my wife's happiness, for the example that I set for this church, I pray that you would rid me of all selfishness and pride and help me every day to live out "you first," so that we can all be blessed. I pray for every relationship and marriage here today. God, the world teaches us to keep score and to put ourselves first and to fight for what we want and to try to meet someone who's not going to try to change us but you want to change us. You want to make us so humble and so

selfless like Jesus that the people who come in contact with us would feel so safe and protected and helped and respected.

So God, as we walk out of here today, give us your Holy Spirit. We need his help to live counter-culturally and we have his help through Christ. Thank you, Jesus, for your mercy; that there's grace on top of grace. You know that when we live with someone we get to see all of them; that the best and the worst and it's really hard to love twenty-four-seven so thank you God that your grace comes with us into our homes. Thank you that your mercy is new every single morning and your faithfulness to us is so great.

I pray for all the young people who are here today. Not all of them, God, but many of them will get married. They'll start dating and I pray that you would make them so abnormal, to look past the surface, past the smile, past the color of his eyes, past her looks and her body, to see down to the soul; the thing that can get better with time.

And finally, God, I pray that this would be a safe and beautiful place for single people. People like Paul, like Jesus. Help us not to idolize relationships and marriage and romance so that we feel like we're missing something. If we have you and our hope is in you, we have everything that our hearts need to be happy. God, help us to be hospitable. Help us to love married and single and those divorced whose lives have been turned upside down. Heal every heart and do it through us. God, thank you for speaking so clearly. Thank you for your timeless truth. Help us to live it out as we remember how much we have first been loved by Jesus.

It's in his name that we pray, Amen.