

Lesson Seven — The New Testament Picture of Marriage, Part I

Day One — Paul's Commands to Husbands and Wives, Part 1

Day Two — Paul's Commands to Husbands and Wives, Part 2

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Day Five — General Commands to Husbands and Wives

Last week we completed our study on the Book of Ruth, looking at its type/anti-type structure as it is laid out in this informative Old Testament book. In fact, over the past five weeks we have looked at several Old Testament types, where the anti-type of each is Jesus Christ and His Bride. We began in Genesis with the first marriage and the record thereof, and we continued doing a good amount of study throughout the remainder of the Old Testament building the overall picture of marriage as it is laid out in Scripture through the use of types.

It is interesting to put all these pieces together, building the overall Scriptural picture of marriage. Now, in coming to the New Testament (and eventually to the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ), it is easy to see that not a whole lot more information is necessary to be given concerning Christ and His Bride, as numerous details have already been given in the Old Testament word picture. The New Testament is simply **not** where an individual begins to learn about the picture of marriage. One must begin where God began and build from there. And God began in the *Book of Beginnings* — The Book of Genesis.

In bringing the overall picture from the Old Testament down to its most simple terms, it can be shown that Christ's Bride:

- **Will be taken from His Body (as was Adam's bride).**
- **Will be taken from the family (as was Isaac's bride).**
- **Will be taken from among the Gentiles (as were Joseph's and Moses' brides).**
- **Will be identified as one who came to the threshing floor (the JSOC) fully prepared (as Boaz's bride).**

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Understanding the type/anti-type structure of Scripture *is essential* to understanding the details concerning marriage and its ultimate end — that of Christ and His Bride. I hope you have come to realize that by now.

Now we approach the *practicality* of the New Testament. Are you ready to get practical, and perhaps personal? Okay. Let's begin.

Day One — Paul's Commands to Husbands and Wives, Part I

This week we will observe some passages in the New Testament which deal with the *practical aspect of the marriage relationship*. All too often Bible studies and marriage seminars offered in Christian circles today are relegated only to the present-day relationship between a man and his wife, with little or no attention given to the overall Scriptural picture of marriage. At the same time, studies show that Christian marriages end in divorce at the same rate (or, in some studies, at an even greater rate) than do marriages in secular society. It is obvious that even in the Church the sanctity of marriage is looked upon *much too casually!* How sad!

The Bible studies available on marriage today can be helpful to some extent, but they would be much more effective if the teaching would place marriage within the correct Scriptural perspective. Placing marriage in the correct Scriptural perspective gives great impetus to men and women to fulfill their respective roles and be pleasing to the Lord. If Christians had a better grip on God's perspective of marriage, they would undoubtedly take marriage more seriously — both *prior to* getting married and *thereafter* as well. Christians need to know and understand the high regard God places on marriage, and we need to have the same regard ourselves. This is more important than can be expressed in words!

With that said, we will begin looking at what the New Testament has to say on the topic. Again, this week's study will be of a very practical nature, due to the fact that the New Testament passages themselves offer very practical instructions for the marriage relationship.

In their writings, both Peter and Paul deal with the practical aspect of the marriage relationship, but as you will see, *neither deals with it apart from touching some facet of the overall Scriptural picture of marriage*. This week, as we study through the passages of Scripture having specifically to do with the marriage relationship, we will strive to keep these practical New Testament passages within their respective contexts, for in seeing the respective contexts, we will be able to realize that the New Testament passages on marriage fit well into the overall picture of Christ and His Bride.

Now, let's get practical!

In the New Testament, the passages that address the roles of the husband and wife, the wife is usually addressed first followed by the address to the husband. This cannot be coincidental! If wives only knew how much sway they hold over their husband's (often hidden) emotions, perhaps the circumstances in a tough marriage might change dramatically. If a wife would take the commands addressed to her seriously *and literally*, she might find great encouragement!

(Of course, I am not saying that all the responsibility of the difficulties in a marriage falls solely on the wife's shoulders, as I am aware that many wives find themselves in very tough situations in spite of all the *right* things they do! What I am saying is that the situation *may change*, even dramatically, if the wife would understand what she could do in the relationship through utter obedience to these commands. Almighty God is for her to do this!)

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Remember, we will need to see the commands given to wives and husbands *within their respective contexts!* In order to do that, we will need to look at the various texts leading up to these commands, which will reveal the author's perspective of marriage and show how these commands fit into the overall plan of God.

Let's begin with Paul's letter to the Colossians. First, the opening context of his letter —

Colossians 1

9 For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10 so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously 12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

What has God qualified us to share in (v. 12)?

Then Paul says:

28 And we proclaim Him [Christ], admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ.

Why does Paul proclaim Christ and admonish every man?

Is there a possibility that a Christian *may not be found* complete in Christ?

Write in your own words the gist of what Paul says in these opening chapters to the Colossians.

Then, in the succeeding text and in a variety of ways, Paul continues to admonish the Church to remain steadfast in *the faith* with the purpose set before them — he admonishes them to walk in a manner worthy! He wants them to attain “to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:2, 3).

Paul also wants to make sure that “no one takes them captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than

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according to Christ” (v. 8). He explains to them that the feasts which the Jews have kept — including the Sabbath — are a “mere shadow of what is to come,” referencing the coming Sabbath day of rest (2:16, 17).

Paul refers to the coming Sabbath day of rest, which is the very goal set before the Church, toward which we are to strive (Heb. 4:1-9). The focus on the coming Sabbath day of rest can not only be seen in the type/antitype structure which we have recently studied, but can also be seen in many other places throughout Scripture, both implicitly (that which is implied in various texts) and explicitly (that which is expressed in various texts).

Having touched on the opening context of Paul’s letter (and keeping it in mind), let’s read through the chapter that deals with the admonitions concerning marriage. Read through chapter three in its entirety, noting the *immediate* context wherein the specific commands to the wife and husband are placed. Colossians chapter three is printed for you in the Appendix. We’ll study through this chapter first, then we’ll come back to today’s lesson and deal with some of the specific portions of the chapter. Remember, context is extremely important — both general context and immediate context!

Study through Colossians chapter three now, printed in your Appendix.

Having studied through chapter three, what are Paul’s admonishments and encouragements that he gives *prior to* dealing with family relationships?

Now we will consider the portion of this chapter having specifically to do with the marriage relationship. Paul is very direct and specific in what he says!

Colossians 3

18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. 19 Husbands, love your wives, and do not be embittered against them.

What is a wife to do? How is she to do this?

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The English word *subject* is taken from the Greek word *hupotasso*. The Strong's number and definition is:

subject <5293> **hupotasso**

5259 and **5021**; to subordinate; reflexively, to obey: — be under obedience (obedient), put under, subdue unto, (be, make) subject (to, unto), be (put) in subjection (to, under), submit self unto. This word is made up of two words:

5259 hupo: a primary preposition; under

5021 tasso: a prolonged form of a primary verb (which latter appears only in certain tenses); to arrange in an orderly manner, i.e. assign or dispose (to a certain position or lot): — addict, appoint, determine, ordain, set.

With a somewhat expanded definition in mind, what does it mean that *a wife is to be subject to her husband*? (Come on! Write it out!)

Moving on the text, what is a husband to do?

The English word “love” comes from the Greek word *agapao*. The word is used in Scripture to depict *the perfect love of the Father toward the Son* (cf. John 3:35; 17:24, 26), as well as *the sacrificial love of Christ toward the Church* (cf. John 15:9; Gal. 2:20). With that in mind, in your own words, explain how the husband is to love his wife. (Come on, again! Write it out!)

And according to this passage, what is the husband *not to do*?

The English word *embittered* is from the Greek transliterated word *pikraino*. The Strong's number and definition is:

embittered <4087> **pikraino**

from **4089**; to embitter (literally or figuratively): — be (make) bitter.

4089 pikros: the idea of piercing; sharp (pungent), i.e. acrid (literally or figuratively): — bitter.

The NIV Bible has the command this way: **Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.**

With the expanded definition in mind, write in your own words what it means for the husband *not to be embittered* against his wife?

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Yes, just as the Church is to come under the authority and Lordship of Jesus Christ, so a wife is to come under the authority and leadership of her husband in an orderly fashion. *It is the picture of the Bride of Christ!*

And just as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her, the husband is to display that kind of love for his wife. *It is the picture of Christ's sacrificial love for the Church!*

And there is a stated reason given for all of this — *it has to do with our inheritance*. Just a few verses beyond Paul's commands to the wife and husband, he says:

...23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. 25 For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.

Go back and underline *why* Christians are to work heartily as for the Lord (v. 24).

In your own words write what Paul says in vv. 23-25.

Relate vv. 23-25 to the commands just given to wives and husbands. What is being said here?

That's it for the day. See you tomorrow.

Day Two — Paul's Commands to Husbands and Wives, Part II

Yesterday we looked at Paul's commands to husband and wives in his letter to the Church at Colossae. Today we will be looking at more detailed information on marriage as Paul addresses the issue of the husband/wife relationship in his letter to the Church at Ephesus. (Colossians and Ephesians are companion epistles and are better understood if the two epistles are studied together.)

As before, we will want to see the context *preceding* the chapter that deals with marriage. We'll begin in chapter one.

Ephesians 1

7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, 8 which He lavished upon us. In all wisdom and insight 9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him 10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fulness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth.

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In Him 11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, 12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. 13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation — having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

What is it that God has made known to us (vv. 9, 10)? In other words, what is essentially being dealt with in these opening verses in the Book of Ephesians? (Don't be too brief with your answer; both verses give a lot of information!)

The inheritance is mentioned two times in this passage. What does Paul say about the inheritance?

In dealing with the inheritance, Paul also deals with good works, for the reception of the inheritance is based upon an individual's good works — *works done through faith in what God specifically says about the future*. (Do you remember Ruth's work in Boaz's field?) In Ephesians chapter two, Paul brings the thought around to the idea of good works. Underline v. 10.

Ephesians 2

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, that no one should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:8, 9 explain how a person is saved — *it is through faith*. But v. 10 deals with things beyond this initial salvation, received through faith. What does v. 10 have to do with?

According to this verse, what should we do *after having been saved through faith*?

Continuing further in the passage —

19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, 20 having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; 22 in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

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In Lesson Five of this workbook, we saw that Ruth had been an alien with respect to Naomi and her people. But she was brought into the family through marriage and remained within the family after the death of her Jewish husband. Boaz considered Ruth as a “daughter,” a member of the family.

With that in mind, how does this passage in Ephesians deal with Gentile believers?

Let’s ignore the chapter break and keep reading —

Ephesians 3

1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles — 2 if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace which was given to me for you; 3 that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. 4 And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; 6 to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, 7 of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God’s grace which was given to me according to the working of His power.

What has been revealed to the Apostles and Prophets by the Holy Spirit (vv. 6, 7)?

Relate the fact that Gentiles are made fellow-heirs and partakers through Jesus Christ to Ruth’s standing in Naomi’s family in the Book of Ruth. What relationship can you see?

Then in Ephesians chapter four, Paul deals with righteous living practices, the admonitions of which continue into chapter five. Again in chapter four, Paul encourages us *to work!* He begins by telling Christians that they are to walk in a manner worthy, then goes on to explain how the Body *is to work together* —

Ephesians 4

1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called...

...11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ. 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

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According to vv. 12 and 13, what should be the goal as the Body works together?

And if this type of activity takes place within the Body, what will be the result (vv. 14-16)?

The remainder of chapter four continues to give more admonitions to the Church on how Christians are to live and function together *as a Body*.

Keeping in mind all of this context leading into chapter five, take time now to study through chapter five in your Appendix, then we will look closely at the last section of the chapter. At the end of chapter five, we can have greater insight into the whole picture of marriage. Study through Ephesians chapter five printed in the Appendix.

After reading and studying through the chapter, let's deal with the specific portion having to do with marriage.

Ephesians 5

22 Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

Notice again, that the wife is addressed first. Paul makes the same statement to the wives in the Book of Ephesians as he did to the wives in the Book of Colossians (v. 22; *cf.* Col. 3:18). But here he adds more information. *Why* is the wife to be subject to the husband?

In what is the wife to be subject to her husband (v. 24)?

Continuing —

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; 26 that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. 28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; 29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, 30 because we are members of His body. 31 FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.

How is the husband to love his wife (v. 25)?

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What did Christ do for the Church?

Why did Christ do this (vv. 26, 27)?

In what other way is the husband to love his wife (v. 28)?

The thought of the husband loving his wife, *as his own body* should cause us to think about the first marriage — that of Adam and Eve. In thinking about this first marriage, why would the husband be commanded to love his wife *as his own body*?

What Paul reminds us of in vv. 25-31 is something that should cause us to shout, “A-ha!” Paul brings the whole picture back to the foundation of marriage as it is presented in Genesis chapter two. Paul quotes Genesis 2:24 in Ephesians 5:31. In Genesis chapter two information is given concerning the formation of the woman. Do you remember how the woman was created, then formed (somewhat of a two-step process)? How was it?

We must not forget what we have already learned! Remember that the woman was created *in Adam*. It was *after God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man*, that a part of his body was removed from him and then formed into a woman.

In the same way *we have been created in Christ Jesus* (cf. Eph. 1:4). Christ gave Himself up (i.e., He shed His blood in death), and through faith in the shed blood and death of Jesus, an individual becomes part of His Body. Hence, *we have been created in Christ Jesus*!

Then it was *after Jesus died* (a deep sleep fell upon Him) that His side was opened up and out flowed blood and water! This *blood and water* is symbolic for the *cleansing and sanctification* of individuals making up His Body. With His blood on the Mercy Seat in heaven (for the cleansing of one’s sin), and the water available by the Holy Spirit through the Word (for the washing of one’s self for ministry), individual members of His Body can be continuously set apart (sanctified). It is these individual members of His Body — the ones who have availed themselves of the cleansing power of His blood through confession, and the washing power of the water with the Word — that will make up His Bride! What a picture this is! Are you seeing this picture?

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So *from God's perspective*, a husband ought to love his wife as his own body, since it was so in the first marriage, and is so in the final marriage. In the original marriage, a part of the man's body was removed and built into the woman. *The picture is to be ever before us.* As it was in the beginning, so it will be in the end.

In the end, a part from Christ's spiritual body will be removed and that part will make up His Bride. As it was with Adam, so will it also be with Christ. And we must see the picture of marriage the way God's sees it, for God's perspective is the correct one!

Lest you think that seeing the type/antitype picture in this way may be carrying this picture a little too far, look how Paul handles it at the end of this passage concerning marriage. Underline v. 32.

32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband.

With all of this in mind, reread Ephesians 5:25-32 and make notes as to what you understand of the picture of marriage:

See you tomorrow.

Day Three — Peter's Commands to Husbands and Wives

Be sure to begin with prayer.

Today we will deal with a passage concerning marriage from the pen of the Apostle Peter. As we have done in the past two days, we will begin looking at the context of the passage within the epistle itself, which leads into our topic. We will see what Peter is dealing with and how he brings marriage into the picture. Let's begin by reading from chapter one. As you read, underline the word *inheritance*, when you come to it. (These passages are double-spaced for the benefit of thorough observation.)

I Peter 1

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, 7 that the proof of your faith, being more precious than

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gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 8 and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

According to vv. 3 and 4, we have been born again in order to obtain what?

Describe the inheritance.

In the lives of those who have been born again, what happens between the time of the rebirth to the reception of the inheritance (vv. 6-9)? And for what reason do these things happen?

According to v. 9, what is the *outcome* (lit., the *goal*) of one's faith?

Let's continue in I Peter from where we left off.

I Peter 2

1 Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, 2 like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, 3 if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

What does Peter tell Christians to do, and why are they to do it?

Then Peter goes on to explain that Christians are "A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION," and that we have been called for a purpose. Notice that the purpose is expressly stated in v. 21. He writes:

13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, 14 or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. 15 For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. 16 Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God. 17 Honor all men; love the

brotherhood, fear God, honor the king. 18 Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. 19 For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a man bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. 20 For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. 21 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, 22 WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; 23 and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; 24 and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. 25 For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

In vv. 13-20, Peter tells how Christians are to act. Describe this in your own words.

According to v. 20, why are Christians to act in this way?

According to v. 21, to what purpose have Christians been called?

We'll pick up here tomorrow.

Day Four — Peter's Commands to Husbands and Wives, Part 11

Today we need to pick up exactly where we left off yesterday. In order to do that, will you skim yesterday's homework? Do that now.

From the text in I Peter chapter two, we see that Christ is given to us as an example of how we are to suffer. Describe the way of suffering (vv. 20-24)?

An *unfortunate* chapter break is found at the end of chapter two! The first six words in chapter three, "In the same way, you wives..." should cause us to ask, "In the same way *as what?*" This first statement in

chapter three must be connected to the last section of chapter two. What connection do you think we are to make?

In order to keep the end of chapter two in mind, as we come to chapter three, this complete section (I Peter 2:11-3:9) is printed in the Appendix. Please take time to read this section of Scripture; afterwards we will look closely at some of the sections therein. Read this section from your Appendix now.

Now let's look closely at the commands to wives first, then to husbands.

I Peter 3

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, 2 as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. 3 And let not your adornment be merely external — braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; 4 but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. 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. 6 Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

In some situations, I Peter 3:1 (being based upon 2:21-25) may seem difficult to accept! The possible difficulty lies in the circumstances in which a woman may find herself — that of being married to a man who is extremely difficult to live with.

The passage begins with: “In the same way...” These four words call women to suffer (in her marriage) *in the same way* Christ suffered at the hands of the Jews. The previous context explains how Christ suffered:

I Peter 2

21 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, 22 WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; 23 and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously...

And in the statement just previous to this, Peter tells the favor that this will find before God:

I Peter 2

19 For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a man bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. 20 For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.

Peter's words, inspired by the Holy Spirit, are with reason. And the reason is given in 3:1. According to 3:1b, what is the reason that wives are suffering in the same way Christ suffered?

Let's reread v. 4. If we look at the expanded definitions of a few of the words found in v. 4, we might be able to better understand the great encouragement given by God to the woman who finds herself in a tough marriage but within whom no deceit is found in her mouth, and while being reviled, she does not revile in return, and while suffering, she utters no threats, but keeps entrusting herself to God, Who will judge righteously.

Let's look again at v. 4.

I Peter 3

4 but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable <862> quality of a gentle and quiet <2272> spirit, which is precious <4185> in the sight <1799> of God.

imperishable <862> apthartos

undecaying (in essence or continuance): — not (in-, un-)corruptible, immortal.

quiet <2272> esuchios

a prolonged form of a compound probably of a derivative of the base of **1476** and perhaps **2192**; properly, keeping one's seat (sedentary), i.e. (by implication) still (undisturbed, undisturbing): — peaceable, quiet.

1476 hedraios: from a derivative of *hezomai* (to sit); sedentary, i.e. (by implication) immovable: — settled, steadfast.

2192 echo: a primary verb; to hold (used in very various applications, literally or figuratively), direct or remote.

precious <4185> poluteles

from **4183** and **5056**; extremely expensive: — costly, very precious, of great price.

4183 polus: mostly, largely: — abundant, plenteous, sore, straitly.

5056 telos: from a primary *tello* (to set out for a definite point or goal); properly, the point aimed at as a limit, i.e. (by implication) the conclusion of an act or state (termination (literally, figuratively or indefinitely), result (immediate, ultimate or prophetic), purpose); specially, an impost or levy (as paid): — + continual, custom, end(-ing), finally, uttermost.

sight <1799> enopion

neuter of a compound of **1722** and a derivative of **3700**; in the face of (literally or figuratively): — before, in the presence (sight) of, to.

1722 en: a primary preposition denoting (fixed) position (in place, time or state), and (by implication) instrumentality (medially or constructively), i.e. a relation of rest

3700 optanomai: to gaze (i.e. with wide-open eyes, as at something remarkable)

With these expanded definitions in mind, perhaps you have a better grasp as to the meaning of v. 4. Rewrite what the verse is saying.

For the woman who is willing to hear and obey what the Spirit says through the pen of Peter, it is consoling to note that she is in God's line of sight — acting in this way is precious in the sight of God. This may be likened to the fact that in the Book of Ruth, it had been "fully reported" to Boaz all that Ruth had done (Ruth 2:11). And just as the end result for Ruth was that Boaz was enthusiastically willing to

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redeem her inheritance and take her as his bride, so it will be in the end for the woman who willfully possesses a gentle and quiet spirit (even with respect to a hard-to-live-with husband) — **her patient endurance will bring about the redemption of her inheritance, indicating also of Christ's exuberant willingness to take her as His Bride.**

Now for the husband —

7 You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

According to what Peter says, what two things are husbands to do, and why are they to do this?

1)

2)

Peter's gives his own summary of what he tells husbands and wives. He says:

I Peter 3

8 To sum up, let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; 9 not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

Relate 3:9 back to 2:21. What relationship does 3:9 have with 2:21?

In the way of encouragement to Christians who are suffering in any form, and especially to those who are suffering in their marriages, let Peter's words continue to encourage you:

I Peter 4

1 Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, 2 so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

7 The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer. 8 Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.

12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation. 14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

19 Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

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You, who are suffering at the present time, go back and underline v. 13. This verse should give *you strong encouragement*, especially in the light of v. 7a. Any thoughts?

(Then, by the Spirit of God, Peter directs commands to the leaders of God's people at the beginning of chapter five. Many good admonitions are given to Christian leadership, and those leading God's people would be doing well to heed these commands.)

In closing out his first epistle, he further encourages those who are suffering unjustly at the hands of another:

I Peter 5

10 And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal <166> glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.

According to this verse, what comes at the end of suffering?

This is the very reason why James, the brother of Jesus, says in the opening words of his epistle, "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials..." (Jas. 1:2).

Spend some time today thinking on these things!

Day Five — General Commands to Husbands and Wives

In the past four days we have looked at very specific admonitions to husbands and wives. We will close our week of study with few general commands to men and women in a marriage relationship. Please begin with prayer.

Paul writes the first passage we will look at today to Titus. The center portion of his message is addressed to men and women in general, giving them a very practical standard of living. We'll begin in chapter two. Paul is teaching Titus what he is to teach Christians in his charge.

Titus 2

2 Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance.

In your own words, describe what an older man should be like.

Continuing —

3 Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips, nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, 4 that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored.

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In your own words, describe what an older woman should be like.

What are older women supposed to do with younger women?

What are younger women supposed to do?

Why are the women supposed to do this (vv. 5)?

Keep in mind Paul is teaching Titus what he is to teach others. He goes on to say:

6 Likewise urge the young men to be sensible <4993> 7 in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, 8 sound in speech which is beyond reproach, in order that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

sensible <4993> *sophroneo*,
from 4998; to be of sound mind, i.e. sane, (figuratively) moderate: — be in right mind, be sober (minded), soberly.

4998 *sophron*: from the base of 4982 and that of 5424; safe (sound) in mind, i.e. self-controlled (moderate as to opinion or passion): — discreet, sober, temperate.

5424 *phren*: probably from an obsolete *phrao* (to rein in or curb); the midrif (as a partition of the body), i.e. (figuratively and by implication, of sympathy) the feelings (or sensitive nature; by extension (also in the plural) the mind or cognitive faculties): — understanding.

Considering the definitions, describe what younger men should be like.

How does Paul tell Titus he should act?

Continuing —

9 Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, 10 not pilfering, but showing all good faith that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.

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In today's vernacular, describe how an employee should act toward his employer.

Now Paul tells why all should act in the prescribed ways:

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; 14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. 15 These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

After the grace of God brings salvation, what does this grace do for us?

What are we to deny?

Basically, how are we to live?

All the while, what are we to be waiting for (v. 13)?

(I love that!)

What are we to be zealous for (v. 14)?

Notice how Paul continues in his admonitions to Titus, teaching him how he is to teach others. Read this passage *three times through* and make notes as to what you learn from these admonitions.

Titus 3

1 Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, 2 to malign no one, to be uncontentious, gentle, showing every consideration for all men. 3 For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. 4 But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, 5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal (lit., *age-lasting*) life.

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8 This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God may be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men.

9 But shun foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law; for they are unprofitable and worthless. 10 Reject a factious man after a first and second warning, 11 knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.

What did you learn from these admonitions?

And finally, we will end this week's study by looking at how Paul spoke to the Church at Thessalonica. We end with this passage "that you may excel still more."

I Thessalonians 4

1 Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that, as you received from us instruction as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you may excel still more. 2 For you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. 3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; 6 and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. 7 For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification. 8 Consequently, he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.

What admonitions do you personally receive from this passage. Be specific in your answer.

Whoever rejects this, Whom do they reject?

We have had a very practical lesson this week. If you are married, you would do well to heed the message within the passages we have studied.

Next week's lesson will be practical as well. We will look at a topic that has basically become **taboo** in the Church today — that of divorce and remarriage. Please pray (even before you turn there) that all who study this lesson will be available to the Holy Spirit for His teaching.

Lord's blessing!