

## Lesson Five — Commands for Living

*Day One — In the Same Way, You Wives...*

*Day Two — You Husbands Likewise...*

*Day Three — To Sum Up*

*Day Four — Our Hope*

*Day Five — Alive in the Spirit*

We ended last week's study in the midst of a list of do's and don'ts concerning our living with a view to an inheritance. In the middle of the list, Peter takes an opportunity to give an example of how we are to handle suffering at the hands of other people. He gave us the example of the Lord Jesus Christ. We saw that when we suffer we are to follow the example Christ set for us. We are to react to suffering as Christ reacted. *When He was reviled, He did not revile back; when He suffered, He uttered no threats; but He kept entrusting Himself to Him Who judges righteously* — His Father. We are to do the same.

The first phrase in chapter three is not a new thought in the whole scope of what Peter is saying about suffering, but is a continuation of his thought concerning the possibility of suffering and under whose hands some may have to endure. On the heels of giving us Christ as our example, Peter continues, with the words... "*In the same way...*" In the same way as Christ suffered, so are we to suffer. "*Therefore, you wives...*"

### Day One — In the Same Way, You Wives...

If we were just to jump into today's passage without remembering the reason for Peter's commands and the stated blessings for our obedience of them, it may come off sounding like a male chauvinist, or at least like a bunch of Christian rhetoric. "*In the same way, you wives be submissive to your own husbands...*" You have heard it enough times, haven't you?

I have. And I have heard good Christian women say, "If I hear that one more time, I think I am going to..." then a variety of suggestions are made as to what they will do. It always makes me cringe when I hear women respond that way. The statement Peter makes in 3:1 is not mere rhetoric, nor is it heresy, despite what the world tells us. In fact, many New Testament writers exhort women to submit to their husbands. And the exhortation is usually within a Biblical context which goes on to say, "Husbands, you likewise..." or something similar.

Today we are going to cover the topic of the wife's role. Tomorrow we will cover the topic of the husband's role. Scripture usually deals with the women first, so we will follow suit.

Before we jump into the passage, let us take a moment to remember why we are to obey the commands Peter sets out for us. From previous passages in I Peter, what is the reason/benefit for our obedience? (If you need to refresh your memory, check I Peter 1:3-12.)

After Peter lays out the goal that is before us, *the salvation of our soul* and its related inheritance, he then begins an extensive list of actions we are to live out in our day to day lives (1:13ff), with an explicit example for us to follow (2:21ff). He tells us *to be holy as God is holy*, and when we suffer, we are to suffer in the same way Christ suffered (for without sharing in His suffering, we will not share in His glory [cf. I Peter 4:13]).

On the heels of this example of Christ's suffering, Peter continues...

**I Peter 3**

**1 In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands...**

Now stop right here. Don't roll your eyes. Don't say, "I don't want to hear it again." Think about it. Have you ever been told *why* you are supposed to submit? Have you ever wondered what present benefit there *may be* for you here and now, *and* what future blessing *will be* yours at the judgment seat *if you were* to submit, even/especially if your husband is ill-tempered? And, if you do have an ill-tempered husband, have you always wondered how someone could tell you to submit, if they have never been where you have been, nor walked where you have walked? In saying wives are to submit, I am only stating what the Bible states. I am only telling you what the Holy Spirit prompted Peter to write to the Christians in his day, knowing that it was also being written for the Christians in our day. We will be learning about the larger picture concerning marriage in the lecture this week. The picture of submission goes far beyond our marriages here and now.

But for now, let's look at the whole passage, today and tomorrow, and see just what the Holy Spirit's intention is here.

**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.**

It's too bad there is a chapter break here. The passage begins, "In the same way..." From the end of chapter two, in what way are wives to submit to their husbands?

Some husbands may be disobedient to the Word. The text assumes that we are dealing with Christian couples, although perhaps the principle may be applied to women married to non-Christian men. But the fact that a husband may be disobedient to Word, indicates that he is a Christian. (Non-Christian people are never expected to obey God's Word.) And of course disobedience can be in varying degrees. So if the husband is disobedient in one area of God's Word, or in numerous areas of God's Word, the text says that he may be won in either or both of two ways. How does the text say he can be won?

Peter continues to deal with an admonition to women:

**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.**

Describe what is precious in the sight of God?

Continuing...

**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.**

Who “hoped in God?”

In that hope, what did these women do?

Since God raised Jesus from the dead and gave Him glory, so should our hope be in God. And so was Sarah’s hope. Below is a passage which Paul wrote to Titus, telling him to teach certain things. Here are a few things in the list, having to do with women, and a few verses down, the reason for doing it.

#### **Titus 2**

**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.**

What are older women to do for younger women?

What are younger women to do, and why?

Continuing in Titus...

**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.**

In the passage beginning at verse eleven, there is a past action of something which has been complete, which has present ramifications...demanding present actions to do, with something to look forward to in the future. Would you please put all of this into your own words, stating your comment with a view to the past, the present, and the future?

Did you especially note v. 13? Do you see how the blessed hope is connected with the glorious appearing of the Lord? Bring this idea back up to the thought in I Peter 3:5,6. What does this all mean?

Would you spend the remainder of the study time, going before the Lord in whatever manner you need. Have sweet fellowship with the God Who loves you as He loves His Son.

## Day Two — You Husbands Likewise...

Yesterday we covered what Peter wrote to women. Today we are going to cover how he follows that admonition to women with an admonition to men. Then we will also look at some cross references. It is important to see these admonitions within their context.

### **I Peter 3**

**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.**

What two things stated in this passage are men to do?

1)

2)

If you are a husband taking this study, in the space below, write out what these two actions might look like in the eyes of your wife. If you are a wife taking this study, write out what you think these actions would look like.

(If you are taking this study with your spouse, you may want to compare notes on that last item.)

Just like the women are told to be submissive with a goal in mind, that of winning a disobedient husband even without a word, there is a goal in mind to be accomplished by men obeying this command. What is the goal found at the end of this verse?

If you feel hindered in your prayer life, you might want to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal weaknesses in this area of your life. Do you care to write down what He shows you?

Now let's look at how other New Testament writers handled this life concern between husbands and wives. There are so many Scriptures related to this portion of I Peter. God seems to be serious about the way we are to live day in and day out within the confines of marital relationship especially with the inheritance in mind. Read through the passages below a couple of times, underlining the things which are similar to what we have seen Peter say.

**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. 20 Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord. 21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children, that they may not lose heart. 22 Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. 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.**

List who is to do what:

From vv. 23-25, what reason does Paul give to the Church for living in this way?

In case any one wonders if the "inheriting the kingdom" is part and parcel with the free gift, this passage should put that question to rest. It clearly states that the inheritance is a reward (v. 24).

In another letter Paul wrote, he tells his recipients the same thing. Remember, too, that Ephesus is a hub of activity in the region where Peter addresses his letter. So this reveals the same information going to the same people.

**Ephesians 4:24-5:5**

**24** and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. **25** Therefore, laying aside falsehood, **SPEAK TRUTH, EACH ONE of you, WITH HIS NEIGHBOR**, for we are members of one another. **26 BE ANGRY, AND yet DO NOT SIN**; do not let the sun go down on your anger, **27** and do not give the devil an opportunity. **28** Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need. **29** Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear. **30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. **31** Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. **32** And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

**1** Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; **2** and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. **3** But do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints; **4** and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. **5** For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

From the very last sentence in this passage, what reason does Paul give the Church at Ephesus for living in this way?

Continuing in Ephesians a few verses down:

**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. 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.** 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.

From these passages we can see that in the same way Christ suffered, some women may be called upon to suffer. And in the same way Christ laid down His life for the church, so should a husband lay down his life for his wife. Sounds pretty fair, doesn't it? But fair is not always the situation. In fact, it rarely is. What if your spouse is not acting in accord with these commands, does that free you from your obedience? According to I Peter 2:21-25, what are *you* to do even if *your situation* just isn't fair?

In learning these things, and the contexts of them, what are the things you should be doing in your present situation that you are not presently doing? Ask the Holy Spirit to answer these questions with you. Then be specific.

If you obey, do you think God will bless you for your obedience?

What will be the blessings?

In your estimation, are the blessings worth the obedience?

Maybe you would want to make it a prayer to the Lord right now.

### Day Three — To Sum Up

Having dealt with both roles, that of the wife and the husband, Peter switches the focus to some general concerns in our lives. Begin in prayer today, continuing to ask the Lord for spiritual understanding of these spiritual thoughts put into spiritual words.

Let's get back to I Peter chapter three. Back in verse seven (printed the beginning of yesterday's work), we are told that the husband is to *grant honor to the wife as a fellow heirs of the grace of life*. What do you think that means? Remember, being an heir points to a future inheritance.

Pick up the thought there.

#### **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.**

In your own words, write out what it means to be —

- 1) harmonious:
- 2) sympathetic:
- 3) brotherly:
- 4) kindhearted:
- 5) humble in spirit:
- 6) not returning evil for evil:
- 7) or insult for insult:
- 8) but giving a blessing instead:



Peter states why we are to live like this. Why are we?

Continuing...

**10 For, “LET HIM WHO MEANS TO LOVE LIFE AND SEE GOOD DAYS REFRAIN HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING GUILE. 11 AND LET HIM TURN AWAY FROM EVIL AND DO GOOD; LET HIM SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT. 12 FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE UPON THE RIGHTEOUS, AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER, BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL.” 13 And who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED, 15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; 16 and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. 17 For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.**

The capital letters in vv. 10-12, 14 reveal that these passages are quoted from the Old Testament. Verses ten through twelve are from Psalm Thirty-four; and v. 14 is quoted from Isaiah Eight. Find Psalm Thirty-four and the portion of Isaiah Eight in your Appendix, and spend the day studying through it. These Old Testament portions were specifically chosen by the Holy Spirit for the church to have before them as they approach pending persecution. Read them with that thought in mind.

Do you see how this might have comforted them?

Now read through the Psalm and portion of Isaiah again. But this time make application to your life. There is suffering of varying degrees and for various reasons within the ranks of Christians today. Some through fault of their own, and some through no fault of their own. God knew that this Psalm would *comfort and admonish* His people in this day as well. Read the Psalm through for your own comfort and admonishment. Ask the Holy Spirit to minister to you personally, as you read through, or perhaps pray through Psalm Thirty-four. Spend the rest of the day at the feet of the Lord, allowing Him to minister to your heart through this Word.

## Day Four — Our Hope

Begin with prayer.

Yesterday we began working through I Peter 3:11-17. Look back at the text in the previous day's lesson. What is the admonishment in verses ten and eleven?

Verse twelve tells why we are to do this. Why are we?

Verses thirteen and fourteen puts perspective on this picture. What is the perspective that you get?

Now let's deal with verses fifteen through seventeen. In verse fifteen, what are we told to do?

What do you think it *means to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you?* If someone were to ask you today, "What is your hope?" what would you tell them?

We have seen this word *hope* mentioned three previous times in I Peter. The verses are printed below:

**1Peter 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...

**1Peter 1:13** Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

**1Peter 1:21** who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

*How* is the hope brought to pass?

In I Peter 1:13, what are we to do with the hope?

*When* will the hope be brought to pass?

# Understanding I and II Peter — Striving to Obtain the Outcome of Faith

## Lesson Five Commands for Living

In I Peter 1:21, the “Him” is referring to Jesus Christ. What two things did God, the Father, do for Jesus Christ?

Based upon these two things that God did for Jesus, what is the hope in God for us — what is *our hope*? (I know that question is phrased in an odd way, but think it through. I believe it will bring out exactly what our hope is.) And remember, repetition is a great teaching/learning tool.

Though there are so many passages in Scripture which deal with our hope, we have a few in the Book of Hebrews to see today. Study these passage carefully, and see what you can learn about our hope.

### Hebrews 3

**6 but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.**

### Hebrews 6

**9 But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way. 10 For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises...  
... 19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil,**

### Hebrews 7

**17 For it is witnessed of Him, “THOU ART A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.” 18 For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness 19 (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God. 20 And inasmuch as [it was] not without an oath 21 (for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One who said to Him, “THE LORD HAS SWORN AND WILL NOT CHANGE HIS MIND, ‘THOU ART A PRIEST FOREVER’“); 22 so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.**

### Hebrews 10

**23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; 24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.**

Now can you better tell someone what is the hope within you?

What are we to be doing with and for each other...as we see the (judgment) Day approaching (see Heb. 10:23-24)? And why are we to do this?

Are you doing these things with the people around you?

Ask the Lord to be making you sensitive to His Spirit to opportunities presented to you wherein you might stimulate others to love and good deeds. And have a good day.

## Day Five — Alive in the Spirit

We come to what most would consider a very difficult passage in I Peter. Read it, and see what I mean.

### I Peter 3

**18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; 19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, 20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.**

**21 And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you — not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience — through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.**

Because of the difficulty in understanding what is being said here, I defer to a commentary written by Arlen Chitwood, which I have found to be very good. I have printed two portions of the commentary in the Appendix, pp. 175-178. Please find the information in the Appendix, and spend your time studying through this material. The first portion entitled *Christ's Proclamation* deals with vv. 18-20; the second portion entitled *Out of Water* deals with vv. 21-22.

I'll see you in class.