

A Harmonious Home

How can we have harmony in our marriages?

The key to every home's happiness is to do things God's way.

I ran across a story of two boys talking during a wedding.

One asked, "How many marriages can someone have?"

"I don't know." The other answered.

To which he said, "Sixteen... four better, four worse, four richer, and four poorer."

In today's lesson Peter gives basic advice on how to keep things harmonious in a marriage, so you won't need another spouse.

- 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 Your adornment must not 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 just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.
- 7 You husbands in the same way, live with *your wives* in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.
- 8 To sum up, all of you 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.
- 10 For, "THE ONE WHO DESIRES LIFE, TO LOVE AND SEE GOOD DAYS,
MUST KEEP HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING DECEIT.
- 11 "HE MUST TURN AWAY FROM EVIL AND DO GOOD;
HE MUST SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT.
- 12 "FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE TOWARD THE RIGHTEOUS,
AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER,
BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL."

Text Outline: I. Responsibility – Authority; (context)

II. Remedies – Instructions :1-7 ;

III. Resolutions – Harmony :8-12

Peter gives us keys to a godly marriage.

I. Responsibility

Peter began writing in the context of a persecuted church about submission to authority. The basic principle of submission to authority flows from government to family and affects every person.

He lists several examples:

- Submission to Governmental Authority

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution...

(Vv. 2:13-17).

- Submission of national leaders to Christ

Joshua was the authority of the nation of Israel. Before entering the Promised Land, He came across a man on a horse and challenged him. Joshua 5:13-15.

“Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down and said to him, “What has my lord to say to his servant?” (Josh. 5:14)

- Submission of slaves to masters

Next, he wrote of slaves and their masters, as another example of submission, “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...” (Vv. 18-20).

- Submission of Christ to the Father

The key example of submission was Christ, who submitted to the Father's will and went to the cross, where He bore the sins of the world.

“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...”

(Vv. 21-25)

Peter here emphasizes the importance of following Jesus' example when he applies the statement “*in the same way*” to both wives and husbands.

He could have stated, in the same way that Jesus was our example of suffering so ‘wives suffer and ‘husbands suffer.’

We could also add, ‘believers suffer from those around them.’

The context adds the idea of being righteous in suffering.

We could repeat the question which makes a statement, “*What would Jesus do?*”

In every one of our circumstances and key relationships. “*What would Jesus do?*”

How would Jesus advise me to respond to my spouse? Become more Christ-like...

II. Remedies

Instead of a battleground home is to be a place of harmony – a greenhouse for homegrown kids. God’s design for the family:

- The home is designed as a place of training, character development health, and hospitality.
- Knowledge of God’s Word – key
- Mentoring
- Marriage modeling

1. Wives to Husbands.

¹In 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,

● **Actions: Submissive behavior**

Root of the problem: Genesis records what happened after the fall...

“To the woman He said, I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children;

Yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”

(Gen. 3:16)

To the man God said that work would be affected; the garden wouldn’t be easy and productive any more. There would be thorns and his labor would be difficult,

“Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; ...By the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground....”

(Gen. 3:17-19)

These consequences of sin affected the home, but especially in their marriage relationship there is a built-in war beneath the surface (similar to thorns in the ground). God spoke to Cain who was angry with his brother,

“... sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.” (Gen. 4:7).

In essence this phrasing speaks of the cursed woman who had a desire to control her husband. In sinful response, the husband will try to put her in her place: “He shall rule over you”.

Pastor Ray Ortland describes the struggle in this way:

“Either she will suffer conflict with her husband,
or she will suffer domination by him.”¹

The gospel transforms men and women to their original state, undoing the curse.

Peter gives the remedy,

¹ Ray Ortland, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, p. 37.

If any of them are disobedient to the Word

-Not living by biblical standards or not submitted to the Lordship of Christ.
They'll be "Won without a word by the behavior of their wives."

The purpose of submission is not simply domestic order;
it is to soften a heart that is hardened toward biblical truth.

The greatest evangelistic tool we have is a godly life.

Wives married to non-believing husbands are to preach long wordless sermons.

A wife's example of Christ-likeness is a gospel message he will not miss.
He will be *won without a word*. Later use words. (3:15)

- **Adornment: Inner Beauty**

³Your adornment must not be *merely* external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses;
⁴but *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.
(Vv. 3-4)

Adornment –Gk. kosmos – “cosmetics”

Idea – anything used to beautify or decorate.

[By 2024 estimated cosmetics expenditure: \$864 billion worldwide]

Swindoll writes,

“Some have taken this out of its context and opted for a ‘plain Jane’ approach, resulting in an unkempt, even sloppy appearance that draws attention to the externals just as much as an exaggerated, flamboyant adornment does. That approach misses Peter’s point. Wives who use cosmetics appropriately and in good taste are not ‘worldly.’ Those who substitute an emphasis on their external appearance for the lack of cultivating their internal character, however have chosen the wrong priority.”²

Society’s focus is typically on external beauty, styles, and the latest fashion. In biblical times they braided gold into their hair and wore jewelry in abundance, not only as a fashion statement but to display their wealth.

² Charles R. Swindoll, *Swindoll’s New Testament Insights, James, 1 & 2 Peter*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), p. 187.

Contrast of focus:

- attitudes of the heart instead of external adornments of the body.
- Media: "Look your best at all costs."
Adorn (cosmos) your heart (kardia)

- **Attitudes**

Qualities of the hidden person: gentle and quiet spirit are what pleases God

Gentle – humble as opposed to harsh, meek – used of Jesus

Quiet – the quietness of peace as opposed to the loudness of war

- Sarah's example of godly character

⁵For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands;

⁶just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

Credentials:

Sarah is the example listed with holy women –

They hoped in God [Peter's theme]

Adorned themselves with submission

Sarah obeyed Abraham – Mother of all who do right

Adorn – inner attitudes that manifest themselves in both words and deeds.

Sarah's husband Abraham [saint, father of faith...]

- Visions from God instructing him to move. [When they were old] [to a strange land].
- Convinced her to pretend she was his sister and was temporarily taken in to Pharaoh's house as his wife.
- Followed his lead when the best grasslands of the valley were surrendered to his nephew, Lot.
- A second time Sarah became his sister this time, attracted the attention of Abimelech, king of Gerar, who wanted Sarah as his wife.
- She endured the near sacrifice of her only son, Isaac, at the hands of Abraham, who claimed God had instructed him to offer Isaac

(Gen. 22:1-19).

From Sarah's perspective Abraham may have appeared unpredictable, devious, foolish, rash, and irresponsible.

Peter writes, "Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord." In reference to Genesis 18:12 we read that Sarah said these things "within herself", or "to herself"; She makes reference to Abraham as her lord, at the time that the visitors were announcing to Abraham that by the following year she would bear a son. It was her attitude, her inner jewelry that adorned her. Some of the gemstones were hope and trust, and submission. Peter by the Holy Spirit picks up on this moment and praises Sarah's submission in the context of her total humanness. That's what made her the example of submission to all believers ... her insecure and imperfect marriage. Her insecure situation and laughter. Peter adds this,

6 just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

Sarah made it into the hall of faith in Hebrews 11,

"¹¹By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised. ¹²Therefore there was born even of one man, and him as good as dead at that, as many descendants as the stars of heaven in number, and innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore."

(Heb. 11:11-12).

In this text a wife wins her husband by living Christ daily before him.

Muller's story: Christian wife of evil business man. Spent his evenings at the tavern drinking with his friends. She never scolded him but waited up for him every night. Brought his friends home late and demanded dinner for all...

George Muller advised,

"Don't be discouraged if you have to suffer from unconverted relatives. Perhaps very shortly the Lord may give you the desire of your heart, and answer your prayer for them. But in the meantime, seek to commend the truth, not by reproaching them on account of their behavior toward you, but by manifesting toward them the meekness, gentleness, and kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ."³

We live in a time of great enemies. "Who is on the Lord's side?" is the question.

³ William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989), p. 2268.