

A Husband's Position in Marriage

Let's look at a couple of points from last week.

As I said, we all need to get out of debt. Some of you have wondered what this has to do with submission and the relationship between husband and wife.

In counseling with people over the years as a CPA and pastor, I have found that many of the problems in a marriage often can be traced back to financial strife.

Another thing to note, Peter says a wife should stay with an un-believing husband. I think his assumption is that the wife is not being physically abused.

Unfortunately, in our society today, that happens all too often.

As I said last week, life is more important than marriage. In any abuse case the wife needs to get out if necessary to protect herself and the children.

There are places of refuge that can be found.

Please understand, I am not suggesting divorce. Every effort should be made to reconcile the situation if possible.

The Torah is very specific in those areas and Yahshua was even more dogmatic in that divorce should be avoided.

A woman who has endured an abusive marriage needs to seek spiritual guidance before making any long-term decisions.

However, that is not the subject of this sermon.

One of the things we noticed last week as we ended our study was that Peter seems to spend much more time addressing the women than he does the men.

Six verses for the women and only one for the men.

Of course this is not that Peter was picking on the women.

In fact, as we saw last week, because of the condition of the world and its attitude toward women at that time, Peter felt it necessary to spend a little extra time encouraging women to fulfill their role in the marriage relationship.

And before I move on to the men this morning I want to take just a few minutes to make sure we understand how women are to be viewed in this relationship.

The idea that women are to be these muffled wall-flowers who aren't allowed to speak unless spoken to is **not** what Peter intends when speaking of being submissive to their husbands.

The whole idea of being submissive in our text has to do with the wife's role in that marriage.

Her role is to compliment her husband and help him fulfill his ministry as husband and father.

The idea of being submissive is simply an acknowledgment that Yahweh has given the husband the final authority in that relationship and that the wife needs to submit to that authority before Yahweh.

Even if she feels in her heart that he is wrong.

This does not mean that she has no input or that she doesn't have any authority or responsibility in that relationship.

For those of you who work at a job where you have a boss, you may have to submit to his or her authority, but if that boss is half-way smart he will delegate some of the responsibilities so that the task is spread out and given to people who are much more able to accomplish the task.

Authority is not necessarily the equivalent to doing everything, **as much as it is the responsibility to make sure everything gets done**, because that responsibility falls ultimately on one set of shoulders.

It's the same in a marriage.

The husband may be responsible before Yahweh for all that is to be accomplished in that marriage, but there is no way a husband can do it all.

This is one reason Adam was given a help-mate in Havah.

She was given to Adam to help him.

She was to submit to his authority, but she was certainly to give input into that relationship as Yahweh gave her talents and abilities.

I believe our culture has gone in two different directions to confuse the roles of man and woman in marriage.

On the one hand there has been the attitude of keeping the wife barefoot and pregnant which is just a derogatory way of suggesting that she needs to be put in her place, which is in the house under lock and key.

In reaction to that unbiblical view we have the other extreme which says the only way a woman will ever be fulfilled is to put her shoes on and get out of the house.

And by that is meant, she needs to find a career which allows her to use her talents and not be burdened down with a slobbering husband who has more in common with the T.V. than he does with her.

And of course since a career is the most important thing, if the unspeakable should happen and she becomes pregnant then she must do everything possible to get that child into the hands of someone else during the day so she can resume her first responsibility, which is to herself.

Now, I understand that there are cases where women have to be out of the home as someone else watches the children, especially cases where it's a single parent home.

But what has happened in many cases, but not all, is that in two parent homes the mom has taken a career so that the life-style they want can be maintained.

And so it's not always a matter of necessity.

But that doesn't mean mom can't be working outside the home.

But the way Yahweh has designed the family, mom is very important to her husband and to the children and neither should be neglected for the sake of a career.

But that doesn't mean they can't work in harmony.

All of you here are familiar with the Proverbs 31 woman.

This woman of Yahweh is no wall-flower.

She takes care of her family in a way that is similar to running a business.

She plans everything out with the express purpose of helping her husband and bringing him honor as well as taking care of her children.

She's an entrepreneur.

She buys real estate, and from her earnings she plants a vineyard.

She's also compassionate to those in her community.

She extends her hands to the poor and the needy.

She clothes her children and she looks well to the ways of her household.

She's busier than most women today want to be.

But the point is not that women clone themselves after this woman, but that women are vital to their family and husband and that when she is sold out to wanting to serve Yahweh in that capacity she will have the strength and joy to fulfill her ministry.

And notice the acceptance she receives. PRO 31:28 **"Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:**

29 "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all."

30 Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears Yahweh is to be praised.

31 Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate."

He's not intimidated by his wife, but he trusts her and gives her a great deal of responsibility because he knows that she does it to please Yahweh, and in the process it pleases him and makes him proud.

This is the kind of submission that Yahweh desires.

A submission that is not under compulsion, but is enjoyed because she delights in pleasing her husband and family and in turn the husband let's her run with it.

But this is the message to husbands.

If you are to enable your wife to fulfill her ministry to you and the family, don't squash her spirit by trying to dominate in areas where Yahweh wants her to soar.

Do everything to help her grow in her relationship to Yeshua and her relationship to you will grow and bloom as well.

But you must understand her and be sensitive to her needs and then meet those needs.

LET'S LOOK AT FIRST PETER 3:7

This is what Peter says in our text. 1PE 3:7 "Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers."

Short and to the point.

Most guys like it that way.

Just give me the facts and don't dress it up with a lot of words.

Let's take a look at this verse. **"Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives..."**

The NIV misses some of what is being conveyed in the Greek language here.

The Greek could be literally translated "dwelling with them according to knowledge."

- a. **Dwell with them:** A godly husband abides with his wife.
- b. **He doesn't merely share a house, but he truly lives with her.**
- c. He recognizes the great point of Paul's teaching on marriage in Ephesians 5: that *husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself* (Ephesians 5:28).
- d. **The godly husband understands the essential unity Yahweh has established between husband and wife.**

The NAS comes close to this when it says, "live with your wives in an understanding way."

A husband must take the time to understand his wife.

Be knowledgeable of what she needs to be the wife Yahweh wants her to be.

And an essential ingredient to this is to have a knowledge of Yahweh's word regarding both your role and hers.

b. **With understanding:** A godly husband undertakes the important job of **understanding** his wife.

By knowing her well, he is able to demonstrate his love for her far more effectively.

- i. When a husband has this **understanding**, Yahweh directs him to use it, to **dwell with his wife with understanding.**
- ii. **He is supposed to take his understanding and apply it in daily life with his wife.**
- iii. This is where many men have trouble following through.
- iv. **They may *have* understanding about their wives, but they don't use it as they dwell with them**

Only as you begin to understand her true Yahweh-given role will you be able to effectively minister to her and be thoughtful enough to meet her needs.

And as you understand how they fit into Yahweh's scheme of things you will be, as the NIV suggests, more considerate of them.

William Barclay gives this insight. "The cruelty which is hardest to bear is often not deliberate but the product of sheer thoughtlessness."

Peter then adds the idea of treating them with respect as the weaker partner, whereas the NAS and the NKJV uses the term weaker vessel, since she is a woman."

c. Giving honor: A godly husband knows how to make his wife feel honored.

Though she submits to him, he takes care that she does not feel like she is an employee or under a dictator.

- i. In giving honor to the wife, the word in the ancient Greek language for the wife is a rare word, meaning more literally "the feminine one."

It suggests that the woman's feminine nature should prompt the husband to honor her.

- ii. This was a radical teaching in the world Peter lived in.

In that ancient culture, a husband had absolute rights over his wife, and the wife had virtually no rights in the marriage.

In the Roman world, if a man caught his wife in an act of adultery, he could kill her on the spot.

But if a wife caught her husband, she could do nothing against him.

All the duties and obligations in marriage were put on the wife.

Peter's radical teaching is that the husband has Yahweh-ordained duties and obligations toward his wife.

The term "weaker vessel" is not a derogatory slur.

It's simply an acknowledgment of the truth.

Now by weaker, Peter suggests that physically she is not the equivalent to a man.

In this context, weaker speaks of the woman's relative physical weakness in comparison to men.

Men aren't necessarily stronger spiritually than women, but they are generally stronger physically.

As Peter brought in the idea of the woman's feminine nature with the words **the wife**, he continues in appreciating the feminine nature and how a husband should respond to it.

i. Therefore, a godly husband recognizes whatever limitations his wife has physically, and he does not expect more from her than is appropriate.

The militant women's movement for years has made the assumption that women are not weaker to men in any way.

But here Peter is saying that the differences between a man and a woman need to be taken into consideration, not for exploiting her but in helping her.

Suggesting that she is the "weaker" vessel also carries with it the idea **that both vessels are weak and frail in this world.**

She just happens to be the weaker of the two.

But there's another aspect of weakness which should be pointed out and Peter has implied this in the context in verse 6.

She is weaker in authority and so she is much more vulnerable to the misuse of that authority by the husband, **which is why the husband should be vigilant in being considerate of his wife and her needs** as the weaker vessel.

But whether a weak or strong vessel, the term **vessels** carries with it the idea of tools to be used for specific reasons.

And both vessels in a marriage relationship are to be used in the way Yahweh intended to bring glory to Himself in that relationship as their relationship with Him grows.

She is a vessel of honor and he is a vessel of honor and both are to see each other in that light.

Peter then brings an important part of the spiritual aspect of this relationship into view.

"She is an heir with you of the gracious gift of life... "

Keep in mind what we saw last week as it related to how men saw women in the first century, and how many cultures today see women as less than men in value.

Cultural norms may have relegated women to second class citizens, but not Yahweh.

They too are able to share in the same eternal inheritance in Yeshua as men.

It was customary even among Jews in the first century to view women as less in this spiritual arena.

Only men were allowed to participate in certain religious rituals whereas women could only view them from afar.

It carries over even today.

Some men have confused their role with their standing before Yahweh and think women should worship them.

It's true that in the Assembly some men have a certain role in leadership.

But this does not preclude that women are second-class citizens within the Assembly anymore than they are second class citizens in the home.

Yahweh sees both as precious and beautiful in His sight as they both share equally in the blessings of their salvation.

It's when men think they are better than women simply because they are different that trouble starts and a haughty spirit rears its ugly head.

Peter says, "grant her honor as a fellow-heir of the grace of life."

We are to respect our wives, but like the woman in Proverbs the husband is to give honor for all to see as he lifts her up in a way that shows that she is a very special vessel to him in that marriage.

- e. **Heirs together:** A godly husband realizes that his spouse is not only his wife, but his sister in Yeshua.

Part of their inheritance in Yahweh is only realized in their oneness as husband and wife.

Even though men have been given great authority within marriage, their wives are still equal to them in spiritual privilege and eternal importance: they are 'joint heirs.'

And you guys will find that as you honor your wives in private, as well as in public, her desire to submit to your authority will be as natural as Yahweh intended it to be, because she will want to please you and in doing so she will please Yahweh.

Paul also talks of this relationship in marriage and he too has something to say to the husbands .

EPH 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Yeshua loved the Assembly and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant Assembly, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Yeshua does the Assembly - 30 for we are members of his body.

31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." + Gen. 2:24 +

32 This is a profound mystery - but I am talking about Yeshua and the Assembly.

33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."

Since wives are joint-heirs of the Kingdom of Yahweh, then a Believer's marriage is spiritual in nature and must be nurtured spiritually.

Not only are men to live with their wives according to knowledge, they are also to promote the spiritual well-being of their wives by taking the lead as the spiritual head.

Paul starts off by saying that husbands are to love their wives even as Yeshua loved the Assembly.

I don't know about you but that sounds a lot like giving everything for the sake of your mate whom you love.

In Paul's description of marriage he brings in a very interesting analogy. In fact he gives us the real picture of what marriage is to represent.

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Marriage is an intimate union where the two become one as they are living with one common direction now instead of two separate directions.

As we have become united to Yeshua by faith and are to be loving Him with all of our hearts, souls and minds, we are to be united to our mates and loving them in a way that reflects the love we should have first and foremost for our Elohim.

The problem that both men and women face in a marriage relationship, or any relationship we have with other people in this world, is that we all have a tendency to be selfish and self-centered.

This is a sinful attitude.

Because of this, the kind of ideal relationship which Yahweh speaks of and wants us to enjoy in Yeshua is often missed because one or both parties are more concerned with self than in wanting to be loving servants for one another.

The picture Paul gives is that if we're willing to lay our lives down for each other and accomplish the task Yahweh has given us, then that relationship can be used to accomplish far reaching goals which extend far beyond the immediate family.

And in the process Yahweh is glorified as He is seen working in the lives of husband and wife as they both submit to Him.

Peter doesn't use the word submission with the husband because in his role the husband doesn't submit to his wife's authority because that has been given to him.

But it must be implied, as we read the whole counsel of Yahweh's word, **that the husband must be submitting to his head who is Yeshua.**

1CO 11:3 "Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Yeshua, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Yeshua is Yahweh."

If a husband is not loving his wife as he ought then he is not submitting to Yeshua; he is in fact misusing his authority and not honoring his wife as a joint-heir of Yahweh's Kingdom.

And when this is happening the husband runs the risk of having his prayers hindered.

This is an interesting thing. What does it mean to have your prayers hindered?

Well, whatever it means it certainly has a negative connotation.

f. **The failure to live as a godly husband has spiritual consequences.**

It can and it will hinder prayer.

- i. **Some have thought that Peter has in mind here the prayers that husbands and wives pray together.**
- ii. **But since he addresses **husbands only**, and because says *your prayers*, he is referring to the prayers of husbands.**

And it's the direct result of not honoring your wife as a fellow-heir and dealing with her in an understanding way as with a weaker vessel.

This is Peter's point.

And he is emphasizing that it has some effects that are spiritual in nature.

Whenever we talk about prayer it is assumed we're talking about communication with our Elohim.

Peter is saying that wrong behavior toward your wife, and the principle will certainly apply to other areas of life as well, will effect your fellowship with Yahweh.

This is something the enemy would try to do to thwart normal communications between you and Yahweh.

But it's because of sin on the person's part that brings this about.

This is the problem with a lot of people.

Selfishness will get in the way of seeking Yahweh's will.

Yahweh will not listen to "selfish prayer" unless He desires to use even our own rebellious wills to His glory, as He did with Israel when they prayed for an earthly King instead of trusting the King of kings for their leadership.

Their prayer was answered, but it was in the form of discipline instead of the blessing they could have received if they had sought His will in the matter and then obeyed His will.

Peter implies the same thing here.

In fact two things are implied.

1) Natural outcomes for disobedience and

2) the supernatural outcomes for disobedience.

Let's look at the first.

When we are not seeking Yahweh's way and walking in Yahweh's way, as in the case of the husband and wife, as the husband is not honoring her, there is a natural outcome which follows.

His desire to pray to Yahweh begins to diminish.

There seems to be a barrier, kind of like that feeling where your prayers are hitting the ceiling and bouncing back.

Another thing is that prayer is spiritual in nature and when you're rebelling against Yahweh your spiritual desires become weak until you're willing to repent.

The desire to pray humbly is hindered.

Another natural outworking is that the ability for the husband to pray with his wife is limited, especially when the wife feels the husband is mistreating her.

She is not going to want to come together with, what she feels to be a hypocritical encounter towards Yahweh, with her husband.

When we have people problems that we play a part in creating, it's indicative that we are having a Yahweh problem where we are not living according to His will and submitting humbly before His presence.

But there's a second and related supernatural consequence to having our prayers hindered when sin is placed before love.

...So concerned is Yahweh that Believing husbands live in an understanding and loving way with their wives, that He interrupts his relationship with them when they are not doing so.

No Believing husband should presume to think that any spiritual good will be accomplished by his life without an effective ministry of prayer....

...And no husband may expect an effective prayer life unless he lives with his wife in an understanding way, bestowing honor on her.

To take time to develop and maintain a good marriage is Yahweh's will; it is serving Yahweh; it is a spiritual activity pleasing in His sight."

Of course this is not limited to husbands.

Wives, singles, husbands, people of all sorts need to understand the importance of humbling themselves before Yahweh and obeying Him according to His word.

As Ya'Acov says let's not be hearers only of the word who deceive ourselves, but let's be doers of the word.

But you know, the beauty of how our heavenly Father loves us, even in discipline, is to drive us back into His loving arms.

That's what He wants; for us to come running back and confess that we've messed up and trust that He forgives.

I don't know about you but I'm very thankful for Yahweh's grace and forgiveness when I mess up and I stand on His promise as I find it in **1JOHN 2:1 "My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense - Messiah Yeshua, the Righteous One. 2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world."**

He may have to get our attention periodically so that we'll flee back to Him, but as His children, the sheep of His pasture, He will never leave or forsake us and He will do everything to make sure our relationship with Him will grow and that in the process our appreciation and thanks will grow as well.

It all comes down to trusting that He is a Yahweh, who not only will take care of us here, but has every intention of bringing us to be with Him forever.

May we never think we've arrived when it comes to growing in the grace and knowledge of our Messiah and Savior Yeshua.

B. Godliness in suffering.

1. (8-9) A plea for unity and love among Yahweh's people.

Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

- a. **Be of one mind:** Most of us are willing to have one mind, as long as that one mind is *my mind!*

But the one mind is to be the mind of Yeshua (1 Corinthians 2:16).

Our common mind is to be Yeshua' mind.

- i. This command brings us back to the need to know Yahweh's word.
 - ii. **We can't be of one mind, the mind of Yeshua, if we don't know what His mind is.**
 - iii. The word of Yahweh shows us the mind of Yeshua.
- b. **Be of one mind speaks to the essential unity of Yahweh's people. We are one; but we are not all the same.**

c. While we should all **be of one mind**, we can't expect everyone to be like us.

d. **Yahweh has built both unity and diversity among His people.**

i. Every cell of your body is different, and each one has its role to play.

But every cell in your body has the same DNA code written in it, the master plan for the whole body.

Every cell in your body has the same "mind."

ii. **We could say that Believers are to be like a choir.**

Each one sings with their own voice, and some sing different parts, but everyone sings to the same music and in harmony with one another.

c. **Having compassion . . . tenderhearted . . . courteous**: Peter describes the kind of warm love that should be among the people of Yahweh.

We should be compassionate, brotherly, tenderhearted and even polite.

Believers should treat each other with love!

i. Remember that this was the measure Yeshua gave to the world to identify His true disciples: *By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another* (John 13:35).

ii. **Yeshua did not command us to like our brothers and sisters in Yeshua.**

iii. But we **are commanded to love them**, and once we start loving them, we will start liking them.

e. **Not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing**: The greatest challenge to our love for others comes when we are wronged.

At those times, we are called to not return **evil for evil**, but to give a **blessing** instead.

i. No dispute, argument, or personality conflict among believers should linger. Even if one Believer gets out of line, the loving response of other Believers should keep the problem small and short-lived.

- iii. **The natural response to hostility is retaliation.**
- iv. **This is what the terrible ethnic conflicts all over the world are all about - one group wrongs another, and dedicates the rest of its existence to repaying that wrong.**
- v. **Only the love of Yeshua for our enemies can break that terrible cycle.**

Yeshua reminded us that it is no great credit if we love those who love us in return; the real test of love is to demonstrate compassion to our enemies (Matthew 5:44-47).

- f. **That you may inherit a blessing:** We love one another, but not only for the sake of Yeshua, whose body we are members of.
- g. **We love one another, but not only for the sake of our brother or sister for whom Yeshua died.**
- h. **We also love one another for our own sake - by blessing those who have wronged us, we will inherit a blessing.**
- i. **If you can't love for the sake of Yeshua, or for the sake of your brother, then do it for your own sake!**

Stay humble and stay close to Yeshua.

He will stay close to you.