



Surviving Life

October 18, 2009
Sermon Based Studies
I Peter 3:1-7

Group member page

“Surviving Life #10—Arm in Arm”

Text:1 Peter 3:1-7 (English Standard Version)

Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, 2 when they see your respectful and pure conduct. 3 Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— 4 but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious. 5 For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, 6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.

7 Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

Getting to know me

1. Have you known any couple who has been a good model of marriage? What have you seen in their lives?
2. What was your parents' marriage like? Was their life together a positive role for you or have you had to not repeat some of the patterns that you saw in them?

Into the Bible

1. For the women, how is the submission here similar in purpose to that in 2:13-15?
2. 3:3—Some take these verses to mean that Christian women should not use jewelry, make-up, etc. How do you respond to that? What would make the “inner woman” beautiful? What are some of your ways to beautify the inner woman?

3. A “mixed marriage” may be common in our culture, but it was not for those whom Peter was writing to. From the ESV Study Bible—“For a Christian wife to have a different religion than her husband was quite astonishing for that culture. For example, the Greek historian Plutarch (c. a.d. 46–127) said, ‘A wife should not acquire her own friends, but should make her husband's friends her own. The gods are the first and most significant friends. For this reason, it is proper for a wife to recognize only those gods whom her husband worships’ (*Advice to Bride and Groom* 19, *Moralia* 140D). Even though Peter calls on wives to submit to their husbands, it was a different submission than was common in that culture, for the wives' devotion was first and foremost to Christ.” What are the challenges that a Christian wife with a non-Christian husband might face in our culture?

4. Men, according to verse 7, what should you “understand” about your wife?

Feminists attack the Bible on the “weaker vessel” statement. Emerson Eggerichs in “Love and Respect” says, “Peter makes a comparative statement, not a qualitative one. He is not saying that women are weak. He is saying that the wife is a ‘weaker vessel’ because of her vulnerability to her husband within the marriage relationship.” She is vulnerable when her husband does seek to understand her, and when she is not respected as an equal “fellow heir of the grace of life.”
How do you “respect” your wife?

5. Why would a couple’s prayers be hindered if the husband is not fulfilling his responsibility?

Application Questions

1. What would “submissive, purity, and reverence” look like? How would this “win over” a husband to Christian faith?

2. What does “without words” mean for the Christian wife of a non-Christian husband? [A great reference is “Surviving a Spiritual Mismatch in Marriage” by Lee and Leslie Strobel. Sometimes the mismatch is also between a Christian spouse who is actively living his/her faith and one who is not.]

3. For men, the NIV says “be considerate,” the ESV says, “live . . . in an understanding way.” What does this look like in real life?

4. How would you respond to the charge that the Bible makes women subservient to men and that Christian men are domineering?