

# What's a Wife to Do?

1 Peter 3:1-6  
A Sermon by Chris Mueller

You are in the locker room of a golf club and a mobile phone on a bench rings--a man engages the hands-free speaker function and begins to talk. Like always, everyone else in the room stops to listen in. "Hello."

"Honey, it's me. Are you at the club?"

"Yes."

"I'm at the shops now, and I found this beautiful leather coat. It's only \$2,000. Is it okay if I buy it?"

"Sure, go ahead if you like it that much."

"I also stopped by the Lexus dealership and saw the new models. I saw one I really liked."

"How much?"

"\$90,000."

"Okay, but for that price I want it with all the options."

"Great! Oh, and one more thing . . . the house I wanted last year is back on the market. They're asking \$980,000."

"Well, go ahead and give them an offer of \$900,000. They will probably take it. But if not we can go the extra \$80,000 if it's really a pretty good deal."

"Okay. I'll see you later. I love you so much!"

"Bye! I love you too." The man hangs up. The other men in the locker room are staring at him in astonishment, mouths agape. He then turns and asks, "Anyone know who this phone belongs to?"

I know you hope that never happens to you. And if your wife is anything like the women who are living out the Scripture in 1 Peter 3:1 to 6, it won't happen to you since these verses contain a detailed description of the authentic godly wife. Open your Bibles to 1 Peter 3, take your outline and listen as I read the description of a genuine Christian wife.

*"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."*

Peter is writing to Christians who are experiencing stormy seas. The waves of persecution are foaming and a hurricane is due to hit. Look at 1 Peter 5:12 and you can see one of the purposes for Peter's first letter--he says, "*Through Silvanus, our faithful brother (for so I regard him), I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!*" Peter wants his readers to stand firm in God's grace.

Look at 1 Peter 2:12 to see another purpose for this letter, "*Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.*" In the midst of the storm blowing against them, Peter wants his readers to demonstrate good deeds, conduct themselves honorably, even sacrifice for unbelievers so that they might see God's grace lived out so some might come to repentance.

In order to glorify God, live like Christ, and point to the Gospel Christians are to stand firm and display excellent behavior even when they are attacked, maligned or abused for their faith. When 1 Peter was written it seems that the government of Rome had identified Christians as a subset of the Jewish faith and marked them out to some degree like Germany did the Jews prior to WWII--Rome is beginning to blame Christians. It was not against Roman law to practice a religion, but it was against the law for a religious person to try to convert a Roman citizen. Since Christians obey God rather than men, they continued to share the Gospel with everyone, citizen or not, which began to get them in trouble with the authorities.

The city of Rome was like LA, NY and Washington DC all rolled into one and continually battled with overpopulation. They could not feed or protect or maintain the health of this growing metropolis. So they devised ways to cut the population of the city. They would award veteran officers property in foreign lands. They would award Roman citizenship to people who would populate frontier regions. And sometimes they would carve out a group they didn't like and force them to move to a border area that needed more Roman citizens to make it secure. Some scholars believe that is what has happened to the readers of 1 Peter. Christians were identified as a group who broke Roman law by proselytizing Roman citizens. So en masse, a large group was sent away as punishment from the city of Rome, to Asia Minor below the Black Sea, to populate that region.

Notice what Peter calls them in 1 Peter 1:1, "*Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen.*" And look at 1 Peter 2:11, "*Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.*"

It is true that all of us here are aliens--we Christians have a home we have not seen or been to yet, and can't wait to get to. But if these Christians were merely persecuted, they could have all gone home to their original homelands all over the known world. But they were scattered as aliens to these specific regions of modern day Turkey which fits with the practice of Rome. So here they are in a foreign land, marked out as troublemakers, experiencing stormy seas, with a tsunami named Nero on its way, now lovingly exhorted by the apostle Peter to stand firm.

Peter prepares them in chapters 1 and 2 by calling them to daily live the Gospel--each day remember that Jesus Christ lived, suffered and died for your sins on the cross. Daily recall He

took your place and bore the wrath of God on your behalf--24/7 remember Christ caused you to be born again and gave you a new life now and eternal life forever with Him in heaven. Healthy Christians live each day remembering their salvation.

Then in chapters 2 and 3 Peter says standing firm involves the humble actions of submission. Christians only stand firm in grace when they submit to their God-assigned authorities--in 2:13 even to the unjust government that is persecuting them, in 2:18 for slaves to submit even to unfair harsh masters, and now in 3:1 for wives to submit even to unsaved difficult husbands.

Now in chapter 3 Peter focuses on Christian wives who were not only being persecuted, but were also in a difficult position. You see a wife married to a non-Christian man was automatically in danger since Roman homes worshipped household Gods who were thought to provide safety and bring blessing to each house. But an authentic Christian woman would refuse to acknowledge those gods and not pray to them, nor dip her hand in the water altar at the front door, which would upset a non-Christian husband who was still trusting in those gods to protect his house. Plus a Christian woman would not worship the Roman emperor, which would cause the husband great concern, since it could result in civic fine, punishment or arrest.

A Christian husband with a non-believing wife would simply bring his wife and children with him to church and the expectation of society would pressure the wife to follow the god of her husband. But a Christian wife with a non-Christian husband was in a very fragile, tenuous, scary position. So with persecution on the rise, and tension in the home, Peter shares the steps a born again wife is to take in order to stand firm, point to Christ, and glorify God.

What are wives to do? Look at 1 Peter 3:1, "*In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands.*" Peter is saying . . .

## **#1 Let Christ and His cross motivate your submission to your husband**

The New Testament is filled with examples and commands to submit--Jesus submitted to His parents as a boy in Luke 2. Church members submit to church leaders in 1 Corinthians 16. Christians submit to God in James 4. And wives are to submit to their own husbands in Colossians 3, Titus 2, Ephesians 5 and 1 Peter 3.

Submission is ranking yourself under your husband like a soldier does his sergeant. It's honoring his authority and following his lead. Submission is the character of heart to follow a husband's authority and an inclination to yield to his leadership. Submission is an attitude that says, "I delight for you to take the initiative in our family. I am glad when you take responsibility for us and lead with love. I don't flourish in the marriage when you are passive and I have to make certain that the family works."

When Peter tells wives to submit, he uses a word that means subordinate, place in order, under in an orderly fashion, to arrange and to rank under--to submit in everything but sin. Submission is framed in the original language to communicate to wives that submission is who you are, not merely what you do. Submission here is to be ongoing present tense—literally be the wife who is continually subjecting yourself to your mate. And the word submission in verse 1 is middle voice, reminding a husband it is not you who subjects your wife, but God is clearly telling wives to submit yourself to your husband.

Now if you have been married long enough to realize that your marriage license was really only a learner's permit, and what started out feeling like a romantic horse-drawn sleigh ride on a wintry day under a blanket when you got married, ends up feeling more like a toboggan ride down a triple-diamond mogul hill that was roped off because it was too dangerous. Like all experienced Christian couples know, the husband's role of headship and the wife's role of submission are not easy.

In this context, Christian citizens are to submit to a persecuting government in 2:13, and slaves are to submit to harsh masters in 2:18, and wives now are to submit even if their husbands are unsaved. The common thread in all three examples is unfair treatment--not getting what you want, experiencing unjust suffering. Our normal sinful response to unjust treatment is to fight fire with fire--if people misuse their authority then we won't listen. If others use their position to mistreat us we will try to hurt them back.

Peter understood this impulse to fight back. Citizens want to rebel against their government and disobey emperor Obama—I mean Nero. Slaves will seek to hurt their harsh masters, and wives will disrespect, manipulate or dishonor their husbands. So Peter adjusts our thinking on submission two ways in verse 1.

### **First By Christ's character**

Let me ask you a question. Who has the most intimate relationship you know? When you think of a relationship of intimacy, who do you think of? Your answer should be the trinity--the role of submission in verse 1 and the role of headship is all based upon the trinity. Turn to 1 Corinthians 11:3.

The reason we have and can enjoy relationships is because before time began God has been, and continues to be, in a perfect relationship of equal and authority/submission. Submission does have something to do with the created order of Adam and Eve--and submission has something to do with the fall of Adam and Eve into sin. But the marriage relationship of oneness and authority/submission is all based upon the trinity. Marriage is designed to put the Godhead on display like few things can.

A godly woman knows she is seeking to display Christ through her submission since Christ is one with the Spirit and one with the Father in the eternal trinity, yet Christ also submits to the Father as His authority. In 1 Corinthians 15:28 (ESV), "*When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.*" And a godly woman knows her role of submission to her husband is pointing to the role of Christ, in Christ's equality to the Father and Christ's submission to the Father's authority.

Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 11:3 that the role of submission of a wife to her husband as head is the only way people will correctly see Christ's role as an equal, yet of submission to His Father as head. First Corinthians 11:3 (ESV), "*But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.*" Submission does not mean inferiority--submission is imitating Christ's character, enjoying the oneness of the trinity and modeling the submission of Christ to the Father in the trinity.

When Paul uses the word submission, the root source it is modeled after is an attribute of God. Marriage is designed to model the trinity and modeling the trinity involves two major commitments:

1 to live out authority and submission like Christ to the Father

2 to live out oneness, like Christ is one with the Father

Oneness has to do with equality, intimacy, and being one heart and one mind. Get this--some marriages have authority and submission down, but without oneness the marriage becomes harsh, domineering and husband-controlled. Other marriages have oneness down, but without authority and submission, the marriage becomes emotive, wimpy and wife-controlled. But marriages with both authority/submission and oneness lead to the grace of life and Christ control. Submission is modeling the character of Christ—submission is an attribute of God and glorifies Him when it is seen in us. But the submission of verse 1 is also . . .

## **Second By Christ's example**

Look at how Peter begins verse 1, *"In the same way, you wives, be submissive."* In the same way is likewise--you wives likewise be subject to your own husbands. Wow--submit similar to Christ. Submit like Christ submitted. Some have said "in the same way" is referring to the same way citizens submit to government and slaves submit to masters, but the context and content demand that Peter is saying submit like Christ did. Just like Christ was silent under unjust treatment, Peter will say, "Wives, be silent under an unsaved husband, submit the same way as Christ did when He submitted Himself to the unjust suffering of the cross"--which is what Peter just described in verses 21 to 25 of chapter 2.

Look there--here is the example for all wives to follow starting in verse 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, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness."*

Peter used our Lord as the example of submission to follow. Sinless, innocent, perfect Christ submitted to sinful, guilty, imperfect men. And notice in verses 23 and 24, Christ submitted without grumbling, without retaliating, and without threatening and without doubting. Peter says let Christ and the cross motivate your submission not to every man, but verse 1 says to your own husband. Literally the text says "to own man"--to your own man. "He's my man, and he's the one I am submitted to." I am not to be in submission to every man, but to my own man.

We don't get it in our culture, but back then without a man over you as a woman, either a father or husband, you were subject to starvation and all kinds of danger--you needed protection. So God says to your own man--that's the object of submission. The Greek word own is used to describe belonging to another, or private land vs. public land, meaning he's your man, privately owned, exclusive to you and no one else.

And he is a man, not Peter Pan looking for Neverland to fight pirates and play video games, but a man who obeys the Bible with truth and grace, plus knows how to work hard. So a wife submits to her husband because submission is an attribute of Christ and it imitates Christ's

example on the cross. But how can a submissive wife impact a husband who has not yet submitted himself to Christ for salvation?

## **#2 Live God's Word to impact your husband**

Verse 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."* These first six verses are not merely for wives of unsaved husbands--Peter describes the possibility of some of the husbands being lost with his phrase, *"so that even if any of them."* He is not saying all the husbands are unsaved, but some are. And he describes these men as disobedient--it is a word he uses three times in this letter to describe the unsaved.

Here in verse 1 the Greek word disobedient is a factual, ongoing, present tense pattern describing a man who does not follow Christ--is disobedient to God's Word and must be won to Christ by the power of the Gospel of grace lived out through a wife's lifestyle. How did she get married to a non-Christian man? There are only three options:

1 They were both unsaved and she came to Christ

2 She was saved but violated 1 Corinthians 7:39, to marry only in the Lord

3 She was saved and didn't wait long enough for her young man to be proven faithful over time, and then he demonstrated that he was not a genuine believer

Most young Christian gals 18 to 24 want to marry a combo man--a combo man is a future husband who is a combination of the best qualities of Brad Pitt, Paul Walker and John MacArthur . . . Bible-saturated and a hunk. When they get to 25, they want a man who's active in church, at 30 someone who goes to church, and at 35 someone who knows where a church is, at 40 someone who can spell the word church.

Here is the key for singles wanting to find the right mate. Marry someone who loves Christ more than you, and has proven that love for Christ with faithful fruitfulness over time. They are proven. Provenness is massive affection for Christ demonstrated over time.

Once you are married, 1 Corinthians 7 says remain as you are--do not send your non-Christian wife or unsaved husband away. So if you wives are married to a non-Christian husband, Peter says live God's Word to impact them for the Gospel. That means forgiving them like Christ forgives them. Loving them sacrificially like Christ loves you. Delighting in them as your head the way Christ delights in you, and fulfilling your role as a woman to her husband in every way.

Your husband is disobedient to God's Word, so the assumption of verse 1 is the saved wife will be obedient to God's Word. It is only those wives who are obedient to the Word of God who are submissive to Christ. It is only wives who are submissive to Christ who can be submissive to their husbands. Plus only those wives who are obedient to the Word of God who God will use to possibly lead their unsaved husbands to the Gospel of Christ.

The verb they may be won is future tense. Peter wants Christian wives to continue hoping in the future that they might be the instrument God uses to win their husbands to Christ. God is offering hope here--not a guarantee, but genuine hope. And by using the passive voice in the

verb “they may be won,” Peter reminds us God is the one who must save the husband. Saved wives can be God’s effective tool, but God must save.

So how are wives to live God’s Word to become that effective tool to impact their husbands? Look at the end of verse 1 and 2, “*they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, 2 as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.*” Simply stated, focus on your walk over your talk. Actions speak louder than words. Unsaved husbands are to be won without a word.

Peter uses a play on words--the husband who is disobedient to the Word of God is going to be won without a spoken word. Stop lippin’ and start livin’. Stop sharing, and start showing. Become a silent preacher through the loveliness of your behavior--have him rethink his beliefs. Through the beauty of your conduct, have him notice Christ. Refuse to make talking your primary witness. Peter here is shouting at you--are you listening?

Do not forget what Peter just said about Christ. First Peter 2:23 (NAS), “*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.*” Peter makes a powerful point--Jesus didn’t use talk in the midst of His suffering. And in verse 21 this was to be an example for us to follow--stop speaking and start showing, conduct over communication, lifestyle over lecture. He did not revile in return--while suffering He uttered no threats.

The rest of the passage, verses 2 to 6 loudly shouts for you to be quiet, to use behavior, internals and character as your strongest witness. Become a silent preacher. Yes he needs to hear the Gospel, but Peter says he must primarily see it lived out. Don’t nag an unsaved spouse with truth, bomb him with love and shoot him with kindness. Learn to enjoy your spouse, delight in your spouse and serve your spouse.

God wants your conduct to point to Christ. Minimize the witness of your words and maximize the witness of your ways. The Greek word behavior in verses 1 and 2 has to do with observable moving about and demeanor--your facial expression, your eyes brightening when you see your spouse, your smile, being encouraging and affectionate. Sure, with an unsaved husband there will be behavior you’ll not like, but you can always honor him as your God-appointed head. And Peter helps you in verse 2 to know which two behaviors are most important--and as it turns out they are the two behaviors husbands bring up most in marital counseling.

Look at verse 2, “*as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.*” Chaste is primarily used as physical purity--you save yourself for one man only. Then once married you give yourself exclusively, from the heart, to only one man. The teaching of Song of Solomon has three A’s--to be Attractive, Available and Anticipatory.

You take care of your husband physically--1 Corinthians 7:2 to 5 commands a wife and husband four times to take care of each other’s physical needs in marriage, and that is not an easy assignment for a woman married to an indifferent, unsaved, possibly brutish husband. But it is that observable conduct on the part of a godly wife that God may use to win that unsaved husband to Christ, along with the second most important behavior in verse 2, which is respect. This word is used 93 times in the New Testament, and is translated fear, be afraid or respect. It has to do with thinking of your husband as being great, or as a person deserving to be honored--like Sarah blows us all away in verse 6 by calling Abraham “lord”. The fear in verse 2 is a kind of awe--wives in awe of their husbands.

You won't find this respect on a sitcom or in the media, but it is a powerful tool for God to use in a marriage and as a witness. Wives, if you want to honor Christ and taste the blessings of a biblical marriage, then respect your husband until he is respectable. Most men would rather be respected than loved. You know it's true--you see it in the men you know. You can say complimentary things to a man and he will believe them, even though he shouldn't. "You're not fat, your just stocky"--big boned. "Yeah, I'm big boned." "You're not weird, you're just creative, you do things differently, your artsy"--"Yeah, I'm artsy." Respect him. Live God's Word to impact your husband--don't just say it, show it. What else is a woman to do?

### **#3 Prioritize your character over your clothing**

Look at verse 3, "*Your adornment must not be merely external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses.*" Peter isn't saying don't braid your hair, nor is he saying don't wear jewelry--otherwise in Greek he'd also be saying don't wear dresses.

Turn to Isaiah chapter 3. The braiding of the hair is referring to elaborate hairdos, and wearing gold jewelry is wearing so much gold jewelry that you look like Mr. T--not two or four earrings but twenty earrings, not one ring but rings on every finger, not one bracelet but forty. So much so that they jingle when they walk--the Bible says they tinkle.

Isaiah referenced the practice of ancient women overdressing (almost 3,000 years ago), Isaiah 3:16–23, "*The Lord said, 'Because the daughters of Zion are proud and walk with heads held high and seductive eyes, and go along with mincing steps and tinkle the bangles on their feet, ... 18 In that day the Lord will take away the beauty of their anklets, headbands, crescent ornaments, 19 dangling earrings, bracelets, veils, 20 headdresses, ankle chains, sashes, perfume boxes, amulets, 21 finger rings, nose rings, 22 festal robes, outer tunics, cloaks, money purses, 23 hand mirrors, undergarments, turbans and veils.'*"

Many women 2,000 years ago in the Roman Empire had very little to pass the time. They could not hold public office, be in the priesthood, compete in games, or have a job in public, and many had slaves for the kids and house. So many women devoted all their time to their appearance and their dress. They had too much time. Add to that the natural fleshly tendency of a woman to get what she wants by flaunting her beauty and using her outward appearance as a weapon. Instead of putting her trust in God she trusts in her looks to gain love, attention, care and power by the way she dresses.

So Peter says don't let your adornment be merely external. Adornment is the Greek word *kosmos*, where we get our English word cosmetics, surface issues. Don't find your greatest joy in feeling sexy (surface)--find your joy in the approval of your God (internal). Don't you wish you could say to singles prior to marriage--instead of valuing gorgeous eyes, an hourglass figure, pouty lips and a great smile--value a woman of character. As Proverbs 31:30 says, "*Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.*"

You don't marry a body, you marry a person--if that person does not have biblical character they'll make a terrible spouse. But if they have genuine, tested, proven biblical character they will make a tremendous spouse. Don't let your appearance be merely surface, external, outward. A godly wife does not focus her life on clothing and appearance. A godly wife focuses more on character. Look at verse 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.*"



Peter uses the strongest single word for contrast here—"but". Then he uses the strongest verb in the entire passage right here. It is a continual command--do you see it? "Let it be" is actually in verse 3 in the Greek text and becomes the assumed verb in verse 4. God commands us to continually not allow our garb (verse 3) to overshadow our heart for God (verse 4). It is not wrong to do your hair and wear jewelry--the point is that outward adornment should not be your primary pre-occupation. Verse 4 says "let it be—not" what others think about you, but what God thinks about you that motivates you. The deep quality of the internal you--the new heart, the new creation, the new person Christ alone sees.

Turn to 1 Samuel 16. You remember what the Lord said to Samuel as he reviewed Jesse's impressive muscle-bound sons, the older brothers of David, verse 7, *"But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.'"*

Yes friends, eat good, work out, sleep properly, watch your weight--but make certain you focus more on your heart before God. Peter reminds his readers, just like this world is going to end, so is this body. But your inner man, the hidden man is (verse 4) imperishable--this will last forever, it can't be destroyed.

Look at your old pictures--go back to the 80's, 70's, 60's and you will groan at how you looked and what you wore. God doesn't want our lives focused on passing earthly fashions, but on heavenly eternal qualities. Verse 4 also says imperishable quality--since imperishable is an adjective, a noun must be supplied. NASB says imperishable quality, but I like the ESV better here--it says imperishable beauty. Christian women, do not make earthly beauty your passion (verse 3), but make lasting, eternal, unfading beauty your passion (verse 4).

Fashion will change, your physical looks will change, so what true eternal beauty in a woman can never be taken from her? Verse 4, a gentle and quiet spirit--gentle is the compassionate way she treats others around her, and quiet is a heart that is at peace even when married to a brutish unsaved man in a persecuted culture. She shows strength under control--gentleness. And she is calm in a crisis--quiet.

A heart beautiful woman, who by the way will always be beautiful externally too since her heart leaks out in her appearance, is not all about cosmetics and clothing but Christ and the cross. Verse 4 says this quality is valued by God, and precious in His sight. Literally Peter says God continually treasures a gentle and quiet heart. God prizes this quality in women, He respects this in wives. The world prizes garb and goop on your face. Christ prizes character and Christlikeness in your heart. What do you prize most of all?

#### **#4 Imitate the models God has given you**

Some wives might ask, is this normal for wives to act this way? Is this what God has expected of women since the beginning? Yes--verses 5 and 6 say, *"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."*

Peter is giving authority to what he has just taught by showing all wives that the women of the Old Testament lived the same way. Peter is wisely using the Old Testament as his authority

and as a motivation for wives in the first century and wives today to live out verses 1-6. Verse 5, “holy women” meaning women who have been made members of God’s chosen family, now set apart for God alone are those who hope in God. She does not put her hope in her husband, or in getting a husband, or a boyfriend, or a date, or just some interest, or put her hope in herself her family, or put her hope in her looks or skills or wealth, or anything or anyone else. She puts all her hope in God alone.

These wives did not submit to their husbands because they believed their husbands were intellectually superior to them, or spiritually deeper. They submitted to their husbands because they were confident that God would reward all those who put their hope and trust in Him. Hope is reaching up, hanging onto, and resting in God. Hope is putting all your greatest desires in Him. Hope is trusting in God’s promises, relying on His Word, taking your stand on truth, and following His commands over all others. Hope is confidence that this life is fleeting and temporary, but eternity is forever and permanent. Hope is a quiet confidence in God which produces a gentle and quiet spirit, enabling a woman to submit to her husband’s authority without any fear that her submission will ultimately be harmful to her well-being or her family.

Verse 6, gorgeous Sarah was so confident in God she actually submitted to Abraham when he lied, not once, but twice about her not being his wife because Abe was afraid. Peter says Sarah called her husband (the liar) “lord” and obeyed him, manifesting respect and submission in all things. And like Peter’s persecuted and pressured wives, you too will prove to be a godly woman (saved) if you follow God’s Word (do what is right) and not give into a woman’s greatest struggle—fear. You live out the truth and don’t allow your feelings to stop you from being obedient—is that you?

I could go on and on--which is what the preacher says when he runs out of material, or runs out of time. Allow me to give you four closing thoughts.

#1 Singles, you are preparing the road you will walk tomorrow by how you live today. You don’t suddenly become a godly woman or godly man when you walk down the aisle and say I do. You grow to become this kind of woman by the choices you make, the Bible you study and live, and the models you follow now.

#2 When you suffer or are lonely, like Peter’s audience in this letter, the clothes covering your soul are taken off exposing the real you. When God blesses you with that kind of trials don’t panic, don’t feel sorry for yourself but put all your hope in God--trust Him to be sufficient. Delight in Him and cooperate with His work in making you more like His Son--even when it hurts.

#3 No one can live these truths unless they have turned from their sin and now depend in Christ alone for salvation. Only those who have surrendered to Christ by believing He is God who became a man, lived a perfect life, then offered Himself to die in our place on the cross, take the punishment for sin we deserved, rose from the dead, and is the only way His children can be made right with Him now and forever--can live these truths. Some of you here need to stop trying and turn to Christ for salvation.

#4 Many Christian husbands do not make it easy for their wives to actually like them. A lot of Christian men are slobs, stink and are too rough (tickle okay, noogie not). Husbands need to work at being attractive and loveable to their wives. Every genuinely saved woman in this

room wants to live verses 1 to 6, but you men can make it easier by living out verse 7. What does verse 7 say? Come back next week.