

**1 Peter 3:1-6**

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, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. Your adornment must not be merely external — braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; 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. 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; 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.

We are continuing our instruction regarding the manner in which women are to allow God to cause them to be submissive to their husbands. As we found out, this is not a command for women to go out and obey as “submissive” is in the *present passive participle*. In other words, It is to be how you live in your now (*present*), it is something which God does in and through you (*passive*), and it is to be your ongoing experience (*participle*). And this experience is absolutely possible when you begin to value what is imperishable and most precious to God. God has commanded you to stop finding your identity through dressing up what is dying. Rather, your adornment—your beauty—is to come from the hidden person of the heart (what is inside).

Where we left off in **3:4**, the Spirit explained that the characteristics of meekness (which is translated as “gentle”) and a settled or peaceable spirit (which is translated as a “quite spirit”) are what He deems to be exceedingly valuable in a woman; and these two characteristics should be your adornment and considered by you to be your beauty. It may not be how the world defines beauty, it may not even be how your own husband defines beauty, but it is to be how you define your beauty.

Both of these traits, by the way, were used of Jesus when He lived on this earth. Meekness is strength under control abounding with grace for others. In no way does “meekness” imply timidity or fearfulness; rather, it is a confidence which comes from the Lord resulting from your strength being yielded to His will. Having a settled or peaceable spirit means that you have made peace with God and His calling in your life and all the ways He has chosen to provide Himself as your security. Thus, you no longer react in ways that cause you to rule your man in order to get what you want or to ensure your security. It also means you no longer have a need to create any kind of disturbance with others in order to get attention, to be seen, or noticed. You truly are at rest.

These are amazing qualities that can be yours in the Spirit when you bet your life on the fact that Jesus is your security in relationship, He is your provision, your protection, He always leads you in the correct paths, and He always leads you to Himself. Nothing can be more secure. And if you are willing to bet your life on these truths, He will loosen in you His character of meekness and a settled spirit and you will be a powerful force in this world. His work in you will be undeniable.

But it is important to note that betting your life on these truths requires a

fundamental value shift. You must be willing to set aside the attention and focus you have placed on what is dying. This is the crux of your battle. As a woman, practically everything in this world and everyone has valued you by what is external; and this has formed your personhood—your identity. It has formed your association (good or bad) with this world and the people in this world. Yet, according to this passage, that association is sick and twisted. It is not what God desires of you and it is not how He wants you to live. Don't get me wrong, He wants you to enjoy the beauty of your womanhood and He wants other to enjoy it as well, but you are not to be defined, or find your value, importance, or acceptance in this world, by your external beauty.

I know that is a nice idyllic statement, but in order for it to be your reality—which God wants—it is going to take work and practice. I know you don't pop out of bed and snap your fingers and insto-beauty is yours to be had. You fix your hair, you pick your clothes and sometimes re-pick, and re-pick, and re-pick until you have it right and feel good in what you have on. You put on makeup and make sure things are in order. It takes work and practice. Learning how to do your hair, the type of clothes that are good with your body, the colors that are good with your skin, and the type of makeup that works for you, and how to best apply it takes a lot of practice. It is not natural. It takes work and practice; a skill to be honed. And that is the same thing for the inner person of the heart.

Adorning yourself with meekness and a quiet spirit involves work and practice and this is the crux of the value shift. You have to agree with God, and continue to agree with God, that you have been chosen and are His **beloved**; therefore you can be a part of this world yet separate from this world. This is something you

have to choose to be true for you every single day (multiple times per-day). You have to be willing to identify yourself as an alien and stranger who has been sent here on a mission from God regardless of what He has you doing in your practical day-in-and-day-out experience. That means you have to let go of the identity which you have formed in this world; let it go. You must never forget that first and foremost you are the Lord's holy priest sent to proclaim His excellencies. And to do that, you have to trust that the Lord is your security and look for your full and complete provision in Him and not in what you can manipulate and control either from your man or from this world. This is the value shift, this is true Christianity 101. This takes practice and this takes work; but, if you are willing to practice, before too long it will become as easy as breathing.

### ***1 Peter 3:5-6***

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; 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.

The Spirit focuses our attention on the example that has been set by holy women in order that you might know that this way of living is possible; it has been done and is even now being done. You are not alone; others have made this value shift and are practicing this way of living. Sadly, the translators once again distort things in their translation choices. They again utilize the *past* tense and word their

translation as if the Spirit is only dealing with women in former times. But that is simply not the case. The *past* tense is not even used. The Greek word “*pote*” translated “in former times” is a unique word that is contextually used at times in the *past* tense (**John 9:13**), but also in the *present* tense (**1 Corinthians 9:7**), and even in the *future* tense (**Luke 22:32**). It merely means at some time not necessarily in the past time. Therefore, the rest of the context of the passage is to give us our direction as to whether our understanding is to be in the past, in our now, or in the future.

You might say I am making a big deal out of nothing since the Spirit brings up Sarah and Abraham. Yes, He does, but first you have to take note of the fact that “the holy women also, who hoped in God” is in the *present active participle*. So it should read “hope” for it deals with women who are now and continually betting their lives on the fact that God is their security; women who are now confident and secure that Jesus has their backs, even when their husbands are awful and disobedient to the Word. These are women who have found their identity in the inner person, adorned by meekness and a stable spirit, and have rejected the identity formed in this world. Further, “being submissive to their own husbands” is also in the *present passive participle*; again, something that is happening now, something which God is doing through them, and it is continual; it is how they live. This should probably read: “For in this way when the holy women also, who now hope in God, adorned themselves, and are now being submissive to (or are accepting the authority of) their own husbands.”

The point being, other than the fact that the translators twist things to fit their own agenda, is that it is possible to live this way. People are doing it; this is not

fiction. The design point, “it is no longer I who lives but Christ lives in me,” is possible. Jesus can live in you in such a way that He is submissive through you. And you don’t have to just look to these semi-untouchable heroes of the Bible like Sarah for your example because there are real time heroes, like our own Sarah, living in our now who is your example. These women who are practicing this lifestyle are to be your present example giving you the courage and the strength to both endure and to choose to adorn yourself with God’s meekness and a quiet spirit versus clothing yourself with the aggression and trickery of the curse.

I want to draw attention to the fact that these woman hope (not hoped) in God. You would think this would be the same Greek word often translated as trust or even faith, but it is not. This word “*elpizo*” comes from the idea that you can confidently, expect, and anticipate God to be everything He has promised to be; He will not leave you hanging. As used in **Hebrews 11:1**, faith is the evidence of things, “*elpizo*” hoped for; things that are and can be yours when you bet your life on the truth. Thus, these women are not crossing their fingers hoping God comes through for them; rather, they are confident He has their backs, is their fulfillment, is their security, and is going to deal with their disobedient husbands or anyone else who takes advantage of them. In other words, they are women who live by faith, who fear God, who walk in the Spirit, and intimately know their true lover of both their heart and soul. This is powerful.

I also want to make note of the fact that “adorn” is in the Greek *past* tense and it is a statement of fact (the *imperfect active indicative*). In other words, these woman who now give you an example to follow already made the choice to set aside the identity that was theirs in this world and have adorned themselves with

the identity which Jesus gave them as His **beloved**—as an alien and stranger in this world. It has been done. They have rejected the identity found in the braiding of hair, gold jewelry, and fine dresses. They are now known as women who have adorned themselves with God’s meekness and a settled spirit; thus, they can be at rest inside their souls confident in their true lover knowing that they have strength beyond what anyone can even imagine. And being in the *indicative* it is a statement of fact. They did it.

These women now gives us a picture of power, peace, and beauty that is so fascinating, attractive, and completely undeniable. And in this power and peace, which is based on their knowing that God is going to be everything that He promises to be, they allow God to cause them to be in subjection to their own husbands (again, this is in the *present passive participle*). They know they are safe in giving up their own need to rule and control because they are confident that Jesus, their Lord God Almighty, has everything under control; even when it does not seem to be so. They have given up the fear in their hearts and exchanged it for the fear of the Lord. And it is entirely possible for you to choose to live like these women.

By the way, going back to **3:3**, not adorning yourself with the identity that comes from this world but with the adornment of meekness and a settled sprit is a command (*present active imperative*). You are not to adorn your personhood according to the values of this world, but with that which come from God. Being a command, this is now a matter of your obedience. This is a choice you must now make. Others have made it, it is now your turn to live in obedience to Jesus in this area of your life. And even if you are not married, it is a decision to make now;

this is how holy women who hope in God adorn themselves.

In addition to the example of women who now live in this way, the Spirit brings up the example of Sarah who obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. This is a very strange sentence in the Greek. When it says Sarah “obeyed” it is in the *aorist active indicative*. In this case, the *aorist* instead of the *imperfect* (the technical Greek past tense) is used to generally refer to what had been; and being in the *indicative* it is a statement of fact. She obeyed or submitted herself to Abraham’s authority. But “calling him lord” is in the *present active participle*. It is weird, but the Spirit is saying that she is even now still continually calling him lord. I know it is strange. But the point is that this sort of example of faith in a woman is a powerful spiritual reality and provides for us a voice that continues for all time.

The example of Sarah calling Abraham lord comes in a very esoteric way from **Genesis 18** and it is not what we might imagine given the way this event is mentioned here. Let me explain. Sarah was around 90 years old when the Lord showed up with a couple of angels to talk with Abraham. At that time, Sarah and Abraham were childless; he was around 100 years old and was far beyond child bearing capability. Sarah was in the tent nearby and like a woman her curiosity was such that her ear was fully bent on every word they said; she was not going to miss a thing. The Lord told Abraham that in one year He would return and Sarah would have a son. Overhearing this conversation, Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I have become old, shall I enjoy such pleasure, my lord being old also?" (**Genesis 18:12**). That’s it. That is the example; hardly an example we would expect; and, by the way, it is the only example where she calls him lord. But the Spirit draws on this story, and this little statement, to highlight the fact that



overall Sarah rested in a submitted relationship with her husband.

And we have a lot of evidence of this fact. For example, when Abraham left His homeland following the voice of this unknown God, she agreed. When Abraham went out to sacrifice his one and only son, Sarah's only child, she did not freak out and stand in the way as Moses' wife acted when the Lord demanded her son's foreskin. When Abraham told Sarah to tell both Pharaoh King of Egypt and Abimelech King of Gerar that she was his sister (which was only a half-lie since she was the daughter of the same father but from a different mother), she agreed and somehow trusted that God would take care of her. Both kings took Sarah in to their harems. Can you imagine? But still she obeyed and trusted that if her husband was going to be a gutless, fearful, dirt bag, then she would have to trust that God would be her provider and protector. And that is what she did; her obedience to Abraham was merely evidence of her having placed her trust in her true Lord and master.

And you become her children, a recipient of her spiritual legacy, if you continually do what is right, or intrinsically good ("*agathos*"). Remember, only God is good, so this goodness comes from Him; but clearly He wants you to be busy about His business. And in context, letting Him continually cause you to be submissive to your husband (a supernatural work that defies the curse) is good.

But notice it says without being frightened by any fear or alarm. This is extreme. Going back to the example of Abraham telling his wife to tell the people of both Egypt and Gerar that she is merely Abraham's sister and not his wife because Abraham was afraid they would kill him to get to his beautiful wife, well, that would cause quite an alarm. Being escorted into the harems of these kings

would cause quite an alarm. Then the idea of actually being presented to these kings would cause all the red lights to flash, the horns to blare, and would be a reason to totally freak out. Watching your son—your only son—head up the mountain to be sacrificed would cause quite an alarm. But Sarah, so it seems, did not have this reaction. She seems to have trusted that God who spoke to her husband and made them amazing promises would fulfil each and every promise, for He was truly her Lord. That is how you are to live, without being frightened by any alarm or without making any choices that are not intrinsically good merely because of the circumstances which your husband has brought into your life.

This is hard; this is entirely supernatural. Your obedience to God is to be played out in your relationship with your husband. And God who loves you and adores you will take care of you and be all that you need no matter how frightful the circumstances may seem that He allows into your life. The point being (going back to **3:1**), this is how you might win over your husband who is disobedient to the word. It is through this form of radical living that he might be turned to the truth. Now there is no guarantee; God makes no such promise. But He does promise that your confidence, fulfillment, strength, and satisfaction can be found in Him (besides, it was never intended to be found in your husband anyways).

Before we move on, I want to circle back around to what I said at the beginning of last week's teaching. Husband and wives, first and foremost you are brothers and sisters in the Lord and that is always to be honored by both of you. Second, as it says in **1 Corinthians 7:29**, husbands your primary concern should not be marriage, but the kingdom of God for the time is short. Accordingly, if there is another layer of spiritual authority in the mix where a wife happens to be a

deacon or even a pastor in the church and is focused on doing that which is good, then there is a bizarre layer of spiritual authority which sits over this relationship of husband and wife and a husband would be wise to honor that authority as well, for it was established by God. But even then, there is still a spiritual covering and protection that comes when a woman, even a spiritual leader, allows God to cause her to be submitted to her husband in the Lord. It is all so wonderfully complex, as only God can cause to happen; but it works and is a sign of supernatural alien living.

### ***1 Peter 3:7***

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.

You see women, this is evidence of God's protection over your lives and reasons why you can let Him enable you to be submitted. If a husband takes advantage of you in any way, his prayers will be hindered by God ("hindered" is in the *present passive*—God will do it now). That is extreme. God has asked you to live in an extreme way and His protection over you is extreme. Guys, how is that for an ominous warning and reality. I bet you would never have tied your attitude towards your wife and your day-in-and-day-out dealings with your wife with the reason why you might be blocked in your prayer life. But this is real. You have real responsibilities as a husband and the Lord takes those quite seriously. Just think

about that. Out of love for your wife, He will intervene and block your prayers as a way to induce you to obedience. It is very similar to the way that your wife will often block you out of some of the things that you desire in your marital relationship as a way to induce you to take up your role as a man of God. Sorry, it just happens.

Therefore, in the same way, in choosing to submit to God as your wives do, husbands are to live with your wives in an understanding way, or with knowledge. Accordingly, this is a matter of your submission to God; therefore, it is to be what you allow God to do in you and through you. Like your wife, you are to allow God to cause you to be submissive to Him, which means you also must throw off your identity which this world has given you and embrace your identity as the Lord's **beloved**. You must decide that you are in fact an alien in this world and that the design point, "it is no longer I who lives but Christ lives in me," is entirely possible and is to be your reality. In fact, you must decide that the design point is more important than being "the man." Everything that we studied with regard to women applies to you, so I hope you were paying attention.

Husbands are to live with their wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman. I think this is an awful translation. It sounds like women are pathetic and feeble and as a man you just need to condescend to her and be understanding; after all, she is a woman. Again, this is an extremely poor translation. Sticking to the Greek, it would read more accurately, "The husbands, in like manner, dwelling with [them] according to knowledge, as to a weaker vessel—to the wife—giving honor as also being heirs together of the grace of life."

Dwelling with them according to knowledge, as to a weaker vessel. The Spirit is saying that you have to understand and not be ignorant to the fact that God purposefully made women to be more dependent (or weak). Because they are a type of the glory of man, God placed in woman this insatiable need for security which by definition makes them dependent, which is often seen as weakness. They have to look for something outside of themselves to fulfill this need for security: for those in the world it is usually to men, but for children of God it is to be to Jesus. That is how it is. You can argue about it not liking this reality, but it is how God designed women; and this has been proven out all throughout time in every culture. God established things in this manner in part because of His love for typology. The woman's vulnerability (or weakness) is a picture of the church and its relationship with Christ. The Lord has placed within us (His body) a similar insatiable need for security. By definition this makes us dependent or weaker than others (for example, the angels) because we cannot look to ourselves to be ok and we cannot take matters into our own hands; we simply do not have the strength or the wisdom. We have to look to Jesus to fulfill this need for security.

Guys, you are to not only understand the design; but you are to live with women according to this design. In other words, the fact that God has asked women to be in a submitted relationship with you and honor the authority He has given you is to provide you no place or opportunity to ever take advantage of that relationship. If you do there are real consequences. So what does it mean to dwell with your wife (or with women) according to this knowledge?

First, we need to go to the design point: "I have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who lives but Christ lives in me." In other words, you need to die

to your wants, your demands, your rights, and your expectations of your wife, and let your wants, demands, rights, and expectations be formed by God in you. Like your wife, you are to seek your fulfillment in Jesus such that out of your abundance in Him you are able to give instead of take from your wife. If you do, I guarantee that your wants, demands, rights, and expectations will not be selfish, demanding, overbearing, authoritative, aggressive, and so on. Rather, they will by definition be defined by God's agape love. You will be known as a man who loves and not a man who dominates, demands, and rules. You will be known as a man who understands what God wants to do with your wife and you will be not just supportive but instrumental in her carrying out His will. You will be an anomaly and His life in you will be undeniable.

Second, this idea now takes us to the full application of the design point. If God promises to meet your wife's needs and be her source of security such that she is no longer needy, vulnerable, or weak, then guess what that means for you? He wants such mastery over your life such that you can be one of the person's through which He fulfills that need. Now mark my word, you won't be the only person through which He meets her need. Her need for security is far too great and expansive; thus, He will meet her need through so many different parts of His body (and that should actually comfort you and not threaten you). But the Spirit wants you to live with the understanding that through Christ in you, you are to be a source of that provision.

Again, through you He wants you to be a source (not the source) of her deepest need for security. Please remember this point or else it will cause a lot of trouble in your relationship and will ignite in you a jealousy and desire to control your

wife that is entirely misplaced and will cause nothing but pain and separation. When a man looks to be the source of His wife's security, this desire is usually rooted in insecurity and fear; which is why it is usually expressed in jealousy, control, and even aggression. But in your foolish attempt to be the source of her security, you will ignite in her the curse, because in your attempt to rule and control her you will cause her to become very insecure. Accordingly, she will fight your attempt to dominate her and control her; and one way or another, even if it looks like you are winning or have won this battle, you will pay for it. But when you understand that you can be a source of meeting her needs, as Jesus lives in and through you, then you are emotionally securing your wife and she will likely not see your relationship as a threat but as a source of life.

As I said before, Jesus wants total mastery of your life because you have been given a big responsibility to live with your wife with knowledge. He wants you to do the work of putting to death all the fleshly lusts of self-pity and self-love so you can be a man who confidently declares: "I have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who lives but Christ lives in me." And guess what, if you are that man, I guarantee your wife will be so attracted to you because Jesus is the most attractive man there can ever be and His agape love is the one thing every single one of us desires and craves.

Husbands, men, this is how you are to live. Besides, as we have learned, if you choose not to it is entirely to your demise. There will be real consequences to pay not only in your prayer life but in your practical relationship with your wife as she attempts to rule and control you in an attempt to induce you to take up your true role in her life. It is a cycle that needs to be broken.

You are also to bestow or to give your wife honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life. And this is in the *present active participle*. Thus, it is to be how you continually live in your now. This ties back to what I said at the beginning, you are first and foremost brothers and sisters in the Lord and that is to always be honored and given priority. In so doing, what it means for her to be in a submitted role in your life will not involve on your part force, threat, coercion, trickery, or any kind of aggressive authoritative act on your part. Rather, you will lift her up knowing that she deserves honor, not just as your wife, but as a sister in the Lord.

She is a fellow heir of grace and you must keep eternity in your perspective. Jesus made it clear in (***Matthew 22:30***) that in heaven people are neither married nor given in marriage, which implies a practical equality among believers. The same idea is communicated in ***Galatians 3:28*** when it says in Christ there is neither male nor female. Sure for now God has established authority while we traverse through this life and it is for our mutual protection. But in eternity, He will be our only authority. Men will no longer need to be a protective covering over women for they will be completed in Jesus and the enemy will be conquered. So the authority you have been granted now is temporary and is to be understood that it is not to be used for your benefit but for the protection of women as you look forward to the day that Christ perfects all in Him. You are a steward of the Lord's authority and you need to use that authority wisely according to His will and not your own.

I want to take a moment to ensure that everyone who is not married understands that this is how you can live even now with the women God has brought into your life. They are your sisters in the Lord and you can practice and



even now be a vessel through which God desires to meet and satisfy their need for security. Sorry, you don't get to enjoy the actual benefit of marriage, but you do get to enjoy experiencing Jesus live in and through your life and being His vessel of agape love; and you do get to enjoy seeing what that love does in the lives of your sisters in the Lord. You can practice honoring them and if you do I believe God will greatly honor you.

So what does it mean to honor the women in our lives? Let's put some meat around this concept so we don't just walk out of here with some esoteric notion that never plays out in practicality. Men, you can ensure that they are free to do all that God has asked of them and not be a hindrance—not put your needs above His calling in their lives. You can encourage them in their calling and treat it as important as your calling. You can treat them as ladies and not as men. You can care about what is important to them and even prioritize it. You can value what they say, desire to hear it, and let their voice have authority in your life. Specifically for husbands, you can follow ***Ephesians 5:28-30*** which says you should love your wives as you do your own bodies, for no one has ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church. Honoring your wife will naturally involve nourishing and cherishing her.

Being a man is an intense calling; but it is what it is and that is why we have to be so submitted to God so He can have full mastery over our lives because these things are not natural to our flesh. Besides, God takes our calling so serious that if we do not let Him rule our lives and love our wives in this manner, and perhaps this can be extended to the women in our lives, our prayers will be hindered. On the flip side, I think there is also great joy and pleasure to be experienced from

our wives and the women in our lives when we live this way. Such honor will not go unrequited. But we will be beneficiaries of all the beauty and grace which God gives women. We will find great comfort in their meekness and settled spirit. It will be securing for our own need for security. As with all things which God asks of us, choosing to live this way will be more than worth it.

Let's Pray.