

The Marriage Model

Chapter 9

New Testament Audio Lesson #81



Objective: To understand God's model for marriage in 1 Peter



Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. ...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.

—1 Peter 3:1-4, 7

The best marriage counsel is found in Scripture, because God is the source of marriage. Both Peter and Paul encourage us to look at Christ and the church as the model for marriage. In this model, wives represent the Church, and husbands represent Christ. We should focus on changing ourselves instead of our spouses, because at the Judgment, we will each be accountable to God for the person we are.

The biggest problems in Christian marriages are husbands who will not assume their God-given responsibilities. Peter urges wives with husbands like this to grow in the faith. If the husband is not standing in his place, the wife cannot do much except, by God's grace, be the woman He made her to be and have a gentle, quiet spirit. Her husband still may not take the spiritual lead, but her example is more likely to persuade him than anything else.

Peter also tells wives to be submissive as Christ was submissive to the Father - our example to follow. God assigns the headship of the marriage and family to the men; they are responsible for their wives and children. The men represent Christ so they must love their wives as Christ loves the Church. Husbands should know and love their wives. Scripture says to "dwell with them," which means to make time to be with them, to make them a priority.

Although this advice was given centuries ago, it still works today because it is the Word of God. It is still timeless counsel. And if the Holy Spirit tells us to do this, we need to do it. Use the model of marriage in this epistle, and by the grace of God, stand in your place.



1. True or False: The most common problem in marriage is that wives do not submit to their husbands.
2. True or False: It is possible for a wife to win her husband to the Lord by her example.
3. True or False: God delegates responsibility of the home and children to the wife.
4. True or False: Peter gives advice to wives on how to make their husbands change.

Choose all answers that apply.

5. Why are many Christian marriages ineffective today?
 - a. Children distract parents from their responsibilities.
 - b. Wives submit to their husbands instead of demanding equality.
 - c. Men do not step into the role God designed for them.
 - d. People are getting married too late in life.
6. Why should believers heed the marriage counsel in Scripture?
 - a. God designed marriage to be an example of Christ and the Church.
 - b. The Bible's advice on marriage is as good as anyone else's.
 - c. Because the Pastor told us to.
 - d. Because Christian marriages are always the best.
7. Why does Peter use the example of Christ as a suffering servant to describe how marriage should look?
 - a. Because the wife is to be like a servant, and to suffer.
 - b. Christ showed us how to submit to God and each other through His humility.
 - c. Christ was married.
 - d. Christ is head of the Church as the husband is head of the home.

8. What does Peter tell wives and husbands to do?
 - a. Try to change the other person.
 - b. Change themselves.
 - c. Do not attempt to imitate Christ's example of loving the Church.
 - d. Do not have children because they complicate marriage.

9. Why should we focus on our own responsibilities and shortcomings in our marriage rather than our spouse's?
 - a. We are accountable to God for our own lives.
 - b. Trying to change someone else always works.
 - c. People appreciate it when we try to change them.
 - d. Nagging and complaining about your spouse strengthens your relationship.

10. Why is it so important that wives submit to their husbands?
 - a. Husbands are more important than wives.
 - b. Husbands may reject them if they do not.
 - c. God's plan is for the husband to be responsible for the home.
 - d. Because men always make better decisions.

11. Why does Peter encourage women to be quiet or silent?
 - a. So they can win their husbands by example.
 - b. So they can turn their husbands away from the Word.
 - c. He wanted men to have more control.
 - d. He did not like it when women talked.

12. How are husbands commanded to treat their wives?
 - a. As sisters in Christ
 - b. With respect
 - c. With Christ's love
 - d. All of the above



What are some reasons people think the Bible's marriage advice cannot work today?
 What do you think?

If you are married, are you standing in your place in the marriage? Does your marriage look like Christ's example in the Bible? Using what you have learned from this study, what is one thing you need to do to be more obedient to God's Word? What are some ways you can strengthen your marriage today?



If you are married, thank God for your spouse and your relationship. Ask God to help you understand His marriage advice and to show you how to put it into practice. Ask God to give you patience with your spouse and to extend grace when needed. Thank God for Christ's love for the Church and for you, your spouse, and your children. Ask Him for the strength and courage to be the wife or husband He wants you to be. If you are not married, pray and ask God to bless the marriages in your church and use you to be a blessing in their lives.

NOTES



Going Deeper

1. How do you apply to your own marriage, or to the marriages of those you teach, the inspired model for marriage used by Peter in the verses from the end of 1 Peter chapter 2 through chapter 3:1-7? _____

2. Based on that model for marriage, what is the role assigned to the wife and what is the role assigned to the husband? _____

3. How do you explain and apply why Peter instructs the husband to dwell with his wife according to knowledge? _____

4. How do you explain and apply why Peter addresses the woman when he is writing about the role of the woman and the man when he is writing about the role of the man? _____

5. How do you explain and apply to marriage the Scripture Peter is quoting at the end of chapter 2? _____

6. How do you explain and apply the reality that Peter has given the greater challenge to the husband? _____

7. How would you paraphrase and summarize this marriage counsel of Peter? _____
