

Godly Husbands

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[0:00] The scripture reading is taken from two passages. The first is Genesis chapter 2, verses 18 to 25. If you're following along in the Blue Bibles, you can find that on page 2.

! Genesis chapter 2, verses 18 to 25. Then the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone.

I will make him a helper fit for him. Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them.

And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field.

But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man. And while he slept, took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh.

[1:00] And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man, he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.

She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man. Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife. And they shall become one flesh.

And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. Second passage is from 1 Peter chapter 3 and verse 7. And you can find that one on page 1015.

1 Peter chapter 3 and verse 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.

Here ends the reading. Thank you very much for reading God's word for us. I think anyone who takes the time to read the Bible in a reasonably ongoing way would soon discover that the Bible is filled with surprises.

[2:22] For example, in Matthew 21, Jesus told some of the most outwardly religious people, righteous people outwardly, who in his day were the chief priests and the elders, he told them, the most outwardly righteous people, that the most outwardly unrighteous people, who in that day were tax collectors and prostitutes, that those people were going into the kingdom of heaven ahead of them.

It's the most startling statement that Jesus made. It's certainly been very startling to the hearers in his day when Jesus looked at the men who were esteemed in society as the icon of righteousness. He said to them, these people who are seen as the icon of unrighteousness, the tax collectors and the prostitutes, they are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you.

The Bible is filled with surprises like that. This morning we come to a passage in 1 Peter as we continue our sermon series in 1 Peter.

We come to a verse that has a surprise. 1 Peter 3, verse 7.

[4:12] Peter tells husbands that if they mistreat their wives, their prayers may be hindered. And one of the ways that their prayers are hindered is that God just won't listen to them.

Now, I think it's no surprise that God does not listen to sinners. The Bible says that. He doesn't listen to sinners. But Peter writes these words to believing men, believing husbands, and he says to them, if you mistreat your wife, God will not listen to you.

Your prayers may be hindered. That is both surprising and sobering.

It should be to those of us who are believers, who are husbands, and who have wives.

It tells us that how we treat our wives is not tucked away in some corner in private, but the eyes of the all-seeing God are upon us as we relate to our wives in marriage.

[5:44] And what God says is that if we mistreat our wives, if we do not live with them understandingly, if we do not honor them, our prayers may fall to the ground.

And so this morning, I want us, just as we last week considered verses 1 to 6, and we heard what God's word had to say to wives, this morning, we want to hear what God's word has to say in verse 7 of 1 Peter chapter 3 to husbands.

Something's wrong? That's not going to work for me. Let's see how this works. This is not my best suit.

I'm not hearing anything on this either. Can you hear me on this? I'm not being heard on this either. What's that? I have no idea.

Yeah. Yeah, I'm not sure what's this. All right, we'll do our best. Let's take a moment to pray before we consider what God says to us.

[7:13] Heavenly Father, would you draw an air to us this morning as we open your word. Lord, this is your word, and so we pray that you would speak to all of us, but in particular, would you speak to those of us who are husbands, those of us to whom you have entrusted wives.

Lord, you know where each one of us is, and you know what each one of us needs. Speak to us, we pray in Christ's name. Amen. No doubt some of you have already noticed that when Peter addressed wives, he used six verses to do it.

and now, when we come to him addressing husbands, he uses a single verse. But as theologian Wayne Grudem insightfully points out, although Peter speaks briefly to husbands, he speaks just as forcefully to them as he spoke to wives.

You should also notice that what Peter says in verse seven really is one single sentence, one long sentence. And in this single sentence, the apostle Peter lays upon husbands two weighty ongoing duties that God calls them to in marriage.

Here are the two weighty duties that God calls believing husbands to in marriage. Believing husbands, are called to the ongoing duties of understanding and honoring their wives.

[9:14] That is the ongoing duty. Those two compound duty, as it were.

compound duty of understanding and honoring our wives. And so, in our remaining time, I want us to consider these two duties that God has called husbands to.

The first duty that godly husbands are called to is an understanding of their wives in an ongoing way.

They are called to an ongoing understanding of their wives. Peter says it this way in the first part of verse seven, likewise husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way.

So, to the husbands to whom Peter last week called wives to submit to, he now says to those same husbands, you are to live with your wives in an understanding way.

[10:33] Notice that husbands are called to live with their wives, not above their wives, not over their wives, but they're called to live alongside their wives and they're called to do it in an understanding way.

Now, what does it mean to live with our wives, husbands in an understanding way? I think first of all, it means to live with them with consideration, to be considerate towards them.

it calls us to be mindful of them, to be thoughtful of them as our wives as we live together in marriage. I'm sure many of us have had the experience of going into a business, for example, and seeing a sign that said something like, we are currently changing our computer system, and so your wait time may be a little longer than usual.

We thank you for your understanding. And basically, what they're saying is we want you to take into account that we have this thing going on, something to hopefully serve you better, and we thank you for understanding that.

What it means to be understanding is to take into account all the relevant circumstances, and let that inform how we act, how we conduct ourselves.

[12:06] And this is what we are called to do, brothers, towards our wives, when we live with them in an understanding way, it calls us to take into account the various circumstances of our wives, of our marriage, of the seasons that we're in, and we are to respond appropriately.

in light of all of those realities. This call to live with our wives in an understanding way is a call to be comprehensively thoughtful of them, mindful of them personally, mindful of their constitution how God made them, mindful of their strengths and their weaknesses, mindful of their abilities and their limitations, mindful of what encourages them, what discourages them, mindful of when they flourish

best and what diminishes them.

This call to live with our wives in an understanding way is to be attentive to them. It is to pay attention to them in an ongoing way, and not just to gaze, but to learn, and to learn that we might obey what God says to us, that we might serve our wives in this particular way.

It is a call to be a lifelong student of our wives. And it's a lifelong call because our wives change. Our marriages change. The seasons that we find ourselves in a different time, they change. And so we are called to study our wives that we might serve them.

[14:04] And studying our wives and knowing our wives, it's more than knowing our wives' favorite color. It's more than knowing her shoe size and her dress size, although those are helpful things to know, and I admit I don't know them.

but they're helpful to know, and to you men who do know it, the Lord bless you. But it's called to know our wives in meaningful ways that we make care for them.

And brothers, this takes time. This is not one and done. This is something that we are to be committed to in an ongoing way.

But I think we would all generally acknowledge that sometimes we can be too distracted, we can be too self-absorbed, that we don't spend time with our wives.

We don't have conversations with our wives so that we might understand them better. And brothers, conversations with our wives, both casual conversations or intentional conversations are necessary if we are going to understand them.

[15:24] And we shouldn't expect that our wives will volunteer many of these things that are important for us to know. You know, some of the things that we want people to know, we would rather them learn it by discovery or effort rather than telling it to them.

Of course, sometimes there are times we do need to tell it to them. But the point is that it takes time and effort, intentional effort, to understand our wives.

The reality is that we live in a time with increasing distractions. It's not unusual to go out to dinner, for example, and to watch couples and they're tied to their phones.

sometimes sometimes it's a man predominantly who might be tied to his phone. Sometimes we're distracted by entertainment and all kinds of other diversions and we have time for a lot of things, but we don't find the time to be with our wives and to have conversations with them that we may understand them.

This is what God has called husbands to do. He didn't call wives to do this. He didn't call wives to live with their husbands in an understanding way. He called husbands to live with their wives in an understanding way.

[16:53] This is our task, brothers. This is our ongoing task towards our wives. And so I want to offer to us, and I offer this to myself as well, two conversational questions that can help us to engage our wives and help us to grow in understanding them.

Here's the first question. On a scale from zero to ten, zero being clueless, ten being genius, how well do you think I understand you?

That's what we need to ask our wives. How well do you think I understand you? And then let's listen. Let's listen without defending. Let's listen and use it to learn.

And then here's the second question. What are two or three ways that I can grow in my understanding of you and my consideration for you?

And then you don't want to do it while you're laughing. Shelley won't take that so kindly. We want to seriously say, you know, how can I grow? I want to grow. I want to understand you.

[18:09] I want to grow in my consideration for you. What are some of the ways? Tell me three ways that I can grow. And wives, be merciful to us as we ask that.

And there are probably more appropriate questions that we can ask in the context of our marriages and we know what those questions might be and we should ask them. We should engage our wives. And we should be intentional to carve time out.

Think about how our week goes. When is the best time for you to engage your wife like that? Is it a Saturday? Is it a Sunday? The week days tend to be busy and filled with all manner of things.

But brothers, if we're not intentional, this is not going to happen. We will be racking up time in our marriages and we won't know anything about our wives.

Because to live with them in an understanding way has some basis of knowledge. It has some basis of understanding who they are and what blesses them, what encourages them.

[19:18] And so brothers, let us take this duty seriously and may it help us to live with our wives in an understanding and in a considerate way.

So that's the first duty of godly husbands that we see in 1 Peter 3 verse 7. Godly husbands are called to an ongoing understanding of their wives.

The second duty that we see in verse 7 is this. Godly husbands are called to an ongoing honoring of their wives. wives. The second duty of godly husbands to honor their wives in an ongoing way. Notice it's connected to the first duty. It's connected to this duty to live with them in an understanding way. it's insightful in verse 7 that what Peter says is he says showing honor to the woman.

He doesn't say showing honor to your wife. He says showing honor to the woman. And he does this for a very good reason.

[20:41] in the context that Peter wrote these words, women were considered property.

Women were devalued. Women did not have much worth in that culture. The extent of their value was really to have children and to engage in domestic duties.

That was the way they were seen. And value in that culture. Had Peter simply said show honor to your wives, it would mean only treat your wives this way.

But what he said was you had to treat the women this way. You had to treat them with honor. And so it extended beyond just the wives and extended to women in general.

And here we see how the Bible challenges the culture, challenges the way women are treated, treated, and viewed in culture, and calls us to live in a way that honors what the Lord teaches in his word concerning women.

[21:52] In the original language, this word for honor, it can also mean respect, reverence, or value.

God says, I think, brothers, we need to hear what we are called to in light of what Peter says to wives in verses 1 to 6.

He calls them to submit to their husbands. Submit to their husbands because they want to live lives that please the Lord, that glorify the Lord.

But to the husbands that he calls these wives to submit to, he says you are to honor them. You are to respect them. You are to value them.

Place a value on them. You know, and whatever we value, we appreciate. We take care of. And that is what we are called to do.

[22:59] In verse 7, Peter says that we are called to honor our wives based on our understanding of them and also based on the fact that they are the weaker vessel.

Now, generally speaking, men are physically stronger than women. You may have the odd weight lifter who is stronger than a husband, but generally speaking, men are stronger than women.

Generally speaking, men are braver than women. So, men would tend to face dangerous situations easier than most women would.

And so, Peter says to husbands, you are to honor your wife, esteem your wife, value your wife, appreciate your wife, because she's the weaker vessel.

I remember a number of years ago, I was at a high school, small high school, talking to some boys, and I was talking to them about biblical manhood and what manhood from Scripture calls us to do.

[24:13] and I gave them this illustration. I said, suppose one morning you see a family coming in, a husband and wife coming to drop off their child, and the car just turns off, has a problem.

And the husband says to his wife, okay, I'm going to stare, you go out and push. And they fell off their chairs, because that is so contrary to what it is that husbands are actually called to.

It's contrary. We know that it's contrary. That doesn't show care for our wives if we treat them in such a way to put them on the hard end of any endeavor.

Peter says we are to honor our wives, treating them as the weaker vessel. Again, our society is different, so this doesn't land on our heirs in the same way it would have landed on the heirs of those who heard Peter write these words 1960 years ago.

Again, the society where women had no rights, women had little value beyond pleasuring men and bearing children and attending to domestic duties and they were treated with little dignity and they were abused and taken advantage of in so many ways.

[25:55] ! And so Peter's writing these words in that context to the wives and you think about it, Peter told them in a context where they were mistreated, where they were devalued, where they

were not respected, he said, you submit to your husbands.

women and then now he says to husbands who live in a culture where women are basically tolerated for these two basic duties of bearing children and doing domestic tasks, he says, no, you elevate them to a place of honor and esteem and value and respect.

And so really what he's doing is he's calling both the women of his day and the men of his day to live contrary to the culture in which they lived.

And you can imagine how difficult that must have been because women would be laughing, you're going to submit to your husband? Or men would be saying, why are you honoring that woman? Why are you being so attentive to her and so considerate of her? And the reason is because the gospel changes everything. The reason is because the women that Peter was addressing and the men that Peter is now addressing, they had come to Christ.

[27 : 19] And Christ had transformed their lives. And that was supposed to be evident in terms of how they lived every aspect of their lives.

Peter was calling both of them to turn their back on the culture in which they lived. and they were to live out the culture of God's word.

But you know, whatever culture we find ourselves in, whether it is the culture of Peter's day, or the culture of our own day, or some other day, what we have in Genesis 2, 18 to 25, which was the first scripture that was read this morning, we have an enduring picture and a vision of what biblical marriage is supposed to look like.

In Genesis 2, we have this beautiful picture of God giving to a man a wife as a gift. God describes the woman that he gave to Adam as a helper who is fit for him.

The idea is, you know, you can go into a store and you can purchase a suit. You can purchase a suit.

[28 : 37] Once, you know, it's your size, you purchase a suit. That's not the idea about this wife, this helper that God gave to Adam, and indeed that he gives to every man who has a wife.

The idea is like going to a tailor and the tailor makes a suit that is for your unique body. And that's what God does in his providence.

And put aside all the thinking and the wondering that I marry the right person, not marry. Listen, the providence of a sovereign God was at work in your marriage to bring you and your wife together. And you by faith need to receive that woman as a gift from God, as a helper to you, a helper who was suited for you.

That's what God did in the first marriage. That's what God does in every single marriage, where he brings a woman to a man who is a gift. And to disregard the gift that God has given to us is to disregard the giver of the gifts.

[29 : 49] To not appreciate the kindness and the goodness of the Lord, the Bible says the one who finds a wife, he obtains favor from the Lord.

And so God gives two men in marriage the gift of a helper. And Adam's response in verses 23 to 24 should be all of our response.

It should be the way we view our wives. It says, then the man said, this is at last bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.

She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man. Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife and they shall become one flesh.

In these two verses what we see is the one flesh union between a man and his wife and it's these two verses that the Apostle Paul draws from in Ephesians chapter 5 when he calls husbands to love their wives as they love their own flesh, as they love their own bodies.

[31 : 14] and he appeals to husbands in chapter 5 of Ephesians. He says, no one has ever hated his own flesh. No one has mistreated his own flesh.

But he nurtures it and he cares for it. And that's the kind of nurturing care that is supposed to be happening in the marriage union between a husband and a wife.

So, what we see in Genesis 2 is God's unchanging design for marriage.

This is God's unchanging design. That a wife is given to a husband as a gift, as a helper who is suited for him.

And after the fall, though those roles didn't change, though sin was injected and sin distorted them, the gospel calls us back to them.

[32:19] So, this is why Peter is saying to wives in verses 1-6, you are to submit to your husbands. And this is why he's saying to husbands, you are to live with your wives in an understanding and a considerate way, honoring them as the weaker vessels.

Because in the gospel, we are called back to Genesis 2. And by the grace of God, we are able to live with our wives and towards our wives in these cherishing, understanding, nurturing ways.

See, our wives, brothers, they're made in God's image just as we are. They're the same worth, they're the same dignity, they're the same value as we do.

And this is what God calls us to recognize. We should never diminish them in any way. Again, let's notice that the commands that Peter gives to wives in verses 1-6, and the commands that he gives to husbands in verse 7, these are connected.

these are connected because it's easier for wives to submit to a husband who's living with her in an understanding way, who is honoring her as the weaker vessel, it's easier for her to submit to him.

[33:56] And it's also easier for a husband to live with his wife in an understanding way, and to honor her when she is submitting to him.

And so these are hand in glove, these are actually connected. But it's important to see that they are still unconditional. They're not conditional in the sense to say, well, if my husband lives with me in an understanding way, and he honors me, then I'll submit to him.

Or if my wife submits to me, then I will live with her in an understanding way, and I will honor her.

No, it doesn't say that. These are stand-alone, separate duties that God gives to men and to women in marriage.

I think the question comes, what comes first? Does the submission of the wife come first so that the understanding and honoring of the husband would come after?

Or does the understanding and the honoring of the husband come before the commitment of the wife to submit to her husband?

[35:09] I think when we understand that men are called to model Christ, to follow the example of Christ, and remembering that Christ made the first step towards us.

He didn't fold his arms and wait for us to come to him. He came to us in mercy and grace. I think it follows that we husbands are called first and foremost to live with our wives in an understanding way, to honor them as the weaker vessel.

So, fellow husbands, how are you living with your wives? Are you living with them in an understanding way? are you honoring them?

If we would have a conversation with our wives this afternoon, what would they say to us? As we ask them, do I live with you, with consideration and understanding?

Do I honor and value you? What would they say to us? what would you say? But if you're drawing a blank as to what your wife might say, let me just share some ways that we can show that we honor and we value our wives.

[36:41] Because our wives are honored when we value their opinions. it doesn't mean that we obey their opinions all the time, but what it means is that we must value their opinions enough to listen attentively, to listen thoroughly, and to engage them concerning their opinions.

And you know, brothers, because God has given us our wives as helpers, any man who has not listened to his wife, who does not listen to his wife, his wife has not been able to say anything valuable to him, that's a man who doesn't listen.

That's a man who's disregarding his wife. That's not a man who's honoring the helper that God has given to him. If we listen, sometimes we will heed our wives' opinions, and in so doing, we would show them that we do honor them.

Our wives are honored when we value their sacrifices. Husbands, if we're honest, we would all admit that our wives have an unusual ability that I would dare to guess none of us has, to sacrifice for us, sacrifice for our families, and many of them do this while holding a full-time job.

And they sacrifice without complaint most of the time. They sacrifice in an ongoing way to serve us.

[38:34] And we show them that we value their sacrifices when we are mindful of all that they do. And we come alongside them, chipping in, helping where we are able to, helping with the household responsibilities.

And if we can't do it ourselves, ensuring that they get the help that they need around the house.

And brothers, if we are like our children, creating more work for our wives, leaving our clothes where they shouldn't be left, leaving things where they shouldn't be left, and they have to treat us,

coming after us like our children, we're not honoring them.

We're not honoring them. I remember seeing a picture some time ago, and it was a depiction, this man is showing his son, the wedding picture of his son's father and mother.

son's son's parents' wedding day, and the son just remarks, oh, is that the day when mommy came to work for us? And sometimes, brothers, we could easily think that we have a glorified household servant.

Let us not treat our wives that way. They do what they do, and thank God for what they do, but let us not treat our wives as our personal servants.

[40:04] Let us value their sacrifices. Let us communicate that to them. Let us try to make life as easy as we can for our wives.

We honor our wives when we value their personhood. And by this, I mean that sometimes, as husbands, we could overlook that our wives are persons.

We can devalue our wives to an object. And if the audience was different this morning, I would tease out what that means. But our wives, like us, are made in the image of God.

They bear the image of the true and living God. They have the same worth, the same dignity that we do. Our wives are honored when we respect them.

And brothers, let us labor by the grace of God to respect our wives. And we respect them by how we speak to them, publicly and privately.

[41:22] We respect them by how we speak about them. One of the things that Peter says to husbands in the letter of Colossians, he says, husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

It is interesting that that is a command that Peter is able to give to all husbands. Love your wives.

Don't be harsh with them. Why? Because we have a tendency to be harsh with our wives.

Brothers, let us not be harsh with our wives. Let us respect them in how we address them, how we speak to them. Our children will learn how to respect our wives from us or how to disrespect them.

And husbands, if we are committed to honoring our wives, we should not let our children dishonor them. So those are the two duties that we are called to.

We are called to this ongoing duty of living with our wives in an understanding way, and we are also called to show honor to them in an ongoing way. Why does Peter call us to do these two things, brothers?

[42:41] He gives two reasons in verse 7. The first is, he says, because you're heirs together of the grace of life. The reason we as husbands should live with our wives in an understanding way and show honor to them is their fellow believers.

They are heirs with us of the grace of life. Christ died for them as much as he died for us to make it possible that we can all come into saving faith.

And before our wives were our wives in marriage, our wives are sisters in Christ. And that is the way we are supposed to see them.

Foundationally, we are brother and sister in Christ before we are husband and wife. wife. And so Peter says you are to be relating to your wife, honoring your wife because you are heirs together of the grace of life.

And this clearly indicates that together in marriage we are to be living on the Christian life. As husband and wives we are to be living on the Christian life.

[44:01] And brothers, the responsibility is on us to lead. The responsibility is not on our wives to say, hey, come, let's pray. That is our responsibility to say to our wives, to say to our children, come, let's pray.

Now, certainly if we fall down wives, do tell us, come, let's pray. But brothers, that's not the way it ought to be. The way it ought to be is we are to be the ones who are leading.

Paul says, Peter says, you are to relate to them. Honor them because you are heirs together of the grace of life.

We are to do this privately, we are to do this publicly, worshiping together, reading God's word together, talking about the things of God together. We are heirs together of the grace of life.

That's the first reason he gives. And then second, and finally, the second reason he gives for us living with our wives in an understanding way and showing them honor is so that our prayers may not be hindered.

[45:13] Peter assumes that we're praying. Peter assumes that as godly husbands, we are praying. And he's not saying that your and your wives' prayers may be hindered.

He's saying, you husbands, if you're not living with your wife in an understanding way, honoring her, treating her as God's daughter that he has entrusted to you, God is going to listen to you.

Your prayer is going to fall to the ground. God, this is a serious warning and we should take it to heart. Next Sunday, the Lord willing, we're going to move on to the next section in 1 Peter.

And what we see in this passage is that the Lord turns his face away from those who do evil. Peter doesn't address this in what he says, but I think it's easy to see that if we're mistreating our wives, it's going to affect our praying together as well.

Because the only way that I can mistreat my wife and then hold her hands to pray is I must have a hard heart to do that. But it's a way of making our hearts tender towards the Lord.

[46:46] It's a way of repenting. Sometimes you'll go to pray and be convicted of the Lord. that something you did or said was not kind and you can confess it right in that moment.

And your prayers can then be lifted up to the Lord. And so brothers, it's twofold duty that we have in marriage. In verse seven of 1 Peter chapter three, we're called to understand our wives in an ongoing way, honor them in an ongoing way.

As I conclude, wives, this morning is different from last Sunday because last Sunday you were primarily being addressed, and this morning husbands are primarily being addressed.

So let me close and say this to you wives. I encourage you to guard against becoming an expert, a demanding from your husband what we see in verse seven.

I encourage you to guard against evaluating your husband every move from what you see in verse seven.

[48:01] Instead, my encouragement to you is focus on verses one to six. Focus on what you're called to do, and you'd be surprised that as you do that, God will be working in your husband's heart and life as well.

I recognize that some of you this morning, you're neither husband nor wife. I pray that God will grant the gift of marriage to all who are single, all who desire marriage.

But let me just say this, this is more than about marriage. This is ultimately not about marriage.

These instructions that we find to wives and these instructions that we find to husbands, they are more than about marriage.

They are ultimately about God. Because wives and husbands are called to live their lives in honor and glory to God who saved them.

And so ultimately, how we behave in marriage, how we behave in life, is really about the Lord. And this is what He calls us to.

[49:13] He calls all of us who have been saved by the blood of Jesus Christ to live lives that bring glory and honor to Him.

And so may God help us, whether we are wives, whether we're husbands, whoever we are, wherever we are, to seek to live for the honor and glory of God.

And with the help of the Holy Spirit, we can. Let's pray. Lord, thank you for your word this morning.

We confess that we need your help. Would you draw near to us in our various points of need?

Would you help us as husbands to live with our wives in an understanding way, to honor them?

Amen.