

“The Believer’s Duty”

Part 7

1 Peter 2:11-3:12

Introduction: We are currently in a section of 1 Peter that is revolving around several verses.

1 Peter 2:9-12

⁹ *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;*

¹⁰ *Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*

¹¹ *Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;*

¹² *Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

We are to live in a way that others see that we have went from the darkness into the glorious light of God and that as they see the change in us, they will glorify God by eventually coming to the light also. Let us understand that the way we live is a major part of our witness. Man is attracted to the darkness, and he would remain in the darkness if the Lord did not draw him out.

John 3:19-21

¹⁹ *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

²⁰ *For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.*

²¹ *But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.*

Here in verse 21 we see that the believer comes to the light so that his deeds will be made manifest/plainly known that they are accomplished in the power of God.

Now, in our study of Peter he gives us three areas of life where these deeds are to be lived so that others can see them.

1. In society
2. In the work place
3. In the family

It is the family which we started to look at last week.

I. A believing wife with an unsaved husband.

Part 2

Notice 1 Peter 3:1-7

Last week we talked about why there are six verses given to the woman and only one for the man who is saved, and his wife is not. Life for saved wife with and unsaved husband could be very difficult. She would be seen as rebelling against her husband's beliefs as he was committed to the worship of the pagan gods. There would have been many questions in her mind as she started her new life in Christ.

- **Should I leave my husband?**
- **Should I change my behavior towards him?**
- **Should I assume a superior position to him because now I am in Jesus?**
- **Should I submit to him since he is not a Christian?**

With his pen, Peter will provide answers to such questions. He addresses first of all:

A. Her Actions

Notice 1 Peter 3:1

Peter begins by telling the wife that she needs to be submissive to her husband. He may not be saved but under God's plan for the family he is the head of the family. The question that many people raise here is, "What does it mean to submit?"

To submit is to place yourself under the authority of another. This means the woman is not to be critical of her husband, she is not to function independently of her husband, she is to look to him as the head of the family. She is to look to him and respect the fact that he is the head of the family because that is God's divine order. Let us notice a list of the orders of submission.

1. Demons submitted to the disciples (Luke 10:17).
2. Citizens should submit to government authority (Romans 13:1 and 5, Titus 3:1, 1 Peter 2:13).
3. The universe will submit to Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:27 and Ephesians 1:22).
4. Unseen spiritual beings submit to Jesus (1 Peter 3:22).
5. Christians should submit to their church leaders (1 Corinthians 16:15-16 and 1 Peter 5:5).
6. Wives should submit to husbands (Colossians 3:18, Titus 2:5, 1 Peter 3:5, and Ephesians 5:22-24).
7. The church should submit to Jesus (Ephesians 5:24).
8. Servants should submit to masters (Titus 2:9, 1 Peter 2:18).
9. Christians should submit to God (Hebrews 12:9, James 4:7).

The bottom line is that the saved wife was not to dominate her unsaved husband. She was not to see herself as superior to him.

One of the reasons why she was to submit was so that she could win him to the Lord with her new lifestyle and new character and not through trying in her power to "nag" him to salvation.

Notice 1 Peter 3:1-2

The saved woman was and is to live a life of purity and reverence and respect toward her husband. The word "chaste" means purity. The idea here is that the saved woman was to live a life of righteousness before her husband. She was to live in a way that he could clearly see that there was now a difference in her. Whatever sin she had practiced before was to be cast off and now she to live out her new life in Jesus.

B. Her Attitude

Notice 1 Peter 3:3

This verse does not mean that it is a sin for a woman to braid her hair, wear jewelry and to wear nice clothing. She should make herself presentable for her husband. That is not what Peter has in mind here. What he desires for his readers to know is that true beauty is not on the outside, but it is on the inside and it will manifest itself in the attitude of the woman.

"According to William Barclay, in the world Peter lived women often arranged and dyed their hair. They also wore wigs, especially blonde wigs made with hair imported from Germany. Peter had this in mind speaking of the adornment that is merely outward. Peter

did not forbid a woman fixing her hair, or wearing jewelry, any more than he forbade her wearing apparel."

This outward "beauty" was the major focus of many women in Peter's day just as in our day today. Someone has said that there is roughly \$17 billion spent on beauty products every year in the US. That tells us how much attention is given to the outward appearance. It was no different in Peter's day.

There is a saying that fits well here: "If the house needs painted then paint it, and then go inside and fill it with beautiful furnishings."

Notice 1 Peter 3:4

The hidden man of the heart is a reference to the new nature of the believer. This is calling on the believer to be controlled by the Spirit and not by the flesh. Peter then points out two characteristics of being under the control of the Spirit.

a. Meek spirit.

Meek is "power under control". The idea here is that a beautiful woman in the eyes of the Lord is a woman who is under the control of the Spirit, and she has her emotions, her actions and her tongue under control. This is a person who bears the wrongs of another.

Let us consider this in context of who Peter is writing to. The wife who was meek was truly a wife who was long suffering. He saved wife in Peter's day would surely face some difficult times since her husband was still committed to the pagan gods. If this woman was going to be meek, she would also need to be long suffering. Let us see this meekness and longsuffering in action.

Luke 23:33-37

³³ And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

³⁴ Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

³⁵ And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

³⁶ And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

³⁷ And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.

This is meekness and this is long suffering. It is enduring the harsh treatment from others so that they might be saved.

Notice the example which is given by Barclay:

"Aristotle, the great Greek thinker and teacher, has much to say about meekness. It was his custom to define every virtue as the definition between two extremes. On one side there was excess of some quality, on the other defect; and in between there was exactly its right proportion. Aristotle defines meekness as the definition between being too angry and never being angry at all. The man who is meek is the man who is always angry at the right time and never angry at the wrong time. To put that in another way, the man who is meek is the man who is kindled by indignation at the wrongs and the sufferings of others, but is never moved to anger by the wrongs and the insults he himself has to bear. So, then, the man who is meek is the man who is always angry at the right time but never angry at the wrong time."

Meekness and long suffering are not easy to practice but if we desire to see a loved one or an acquaintance come to the Lord we can see right here that it is what the Lord uses to reach the lost.

b. Quiet spirit.

"Quiet" here is the opposite of "loud." A loud, outspoken woman can be very annoying and is by no means a good representation of Jesus Christ. The wife who is loud and critical will only drive her unsaved husband further away. The wife who shows forth a quiet spirit will listen far more than she will speak. This is NOT the "silent treatment" that often happens within a home. The quiet spirit is not brought on by anger or frustration. The quiet spirit is the result of being controlled by the Spirit.

These are things which the woman of God is to focus on. This woman is not to be consumed with the outward appearance, but she is to be consumed with the hidden man of the heart. When a woman is beautiful on the inside, she will be beautiful on the outside also.

The wife/person who is meek and quiet sees everything as coming from God and accepting it without murmuring and without disputing. Notice the following illustration:

"Charles William Eliot (1834-1926), former president of Harvard University, had a birthmark on his face that bothered him greatly. As a young man, he was told that surgeons could do nothing to remove it. Someone described that moment as "the dark hour of his soul." Eliot's mother gave him this helpful advice: "My son, it is not possible for you to get rid of that hardship. But it is possible for you, with God's help, to grow a mind and soul so big that people will forget to look at your face."

Now we move on to the example which Peter gives.

Notice 1 Peter 3:5

Here Peter points to the women of the Old Testament who adorned themselves by submitting to their husbands. Now if we look closely at this verse, we can see the key to their submission. **THEY TRUSTED IN GOD.** These women walked by faith and in their faith as they trusted God they submitted to their husbands.

Application:

This is what is needed today to live a life of submission. One of the reasons is because submission is contrary to what the world teaches. When a woman today is going to live in submission she is going to be viewed by the world as being mentally disturbed. The world today teaches the woman is to stand independent of her husband. But the Bible tells us we are not to follow the world but here in this passage the Bible tells the saved wife to look to the submissive wives of the Old Testament as examples to follow. Peter even gets detailed in the next verse.

Notice 1 Peter 3:6

Sarah is the model wife. Notice the end of the verse where Peter tells the wives to submit and not be afraid with any amazement. This means to not be afraid with any fear. But what is Peter talking about? He knew the pressures of society and the Holy Spirit knew how society would look on the submissive wife in Peter's day and our day. There would be the danger of being intimidated by society and fearful to submit. Peter encourages the saved wife to not fear what society says but walk in obedience to God if you desire to win your unsaved spouse.

II. A believing husband and an unsaved wife.

Notice 1 Peter 3:7

Now Peter addresses the husband and there would have been questions in the husband's mind who got saved. Should he remain with his wife? Should he get rid of her and find a wife who was also a believer? How should he treat her?

Peter tells the believing husband that he is to "dwell with her according to knowledge". This means he was to be sensitive to her needs and he was to give her honor and respect. This was completely contrary to how women were treated in the Roman Empire. They were simply viewed as the man's property. He could dispose of her when ever he desired. Now however, as a believer, he was to be sensitive to her needs. We can only imagine what a woman who was viewed as the property of her husband thought as he began to treat her as

a fellow heir of the grace of life. This is most likely a reminder to the husband that the wife also shared in the gift of physical life just as he did. They were both created in the image of God.

Peter also reminds the husband that the way he treated his wife had an impact on his prayer life.

Conclusion:

If your husband or wife is not saved, then Peter clearly instructs you as to how they are to be treated if you desire to see them saved. It should be your goal to see them come to a saving knowledge of Jesus.