

Peter moves on to another area of a believer's life where subjection is called for, marriage. These admonitions are not just for those married to believers, but those who are married to unbelievers. Paul has spoken about this in 1Corinthians 7 and reminds us that believers should only marry another believer. Yet through various circumstances a believer might have an unbelieving spouse. Becoming saved while married, or marrying while away from the Lord, etc., will lead to difficult times. There is no guarantee the unsaved spouse will eventually be saved. First the wife is to be subject to her husband, whether he is a believer or not. A husband is primarily to be won by the silent witness of his wife's chaste manner of life and her fear (unfeigned respect) and love for him. This is the same principle as given in chapter 2:15. The Christ filled life, a meek and quiet spirit as He had is "in the sight of God of great price." While referring specifically to women here the principle is universal. The inward person is what counts with God, and with most other humans

Matthew 11:28 *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

We, male and female, are to be as meek and lowly at heart as was the Lord Jesus. There is nothing wimpy about Him. Machismo has no merit before God. Men are to be masculine, neither machismo or effeminate. Peter was a hard working fisherman. He was strong and courageous, ready to fight with his sword for his Lord in the garden. But as the Lord's disciple he was not aggressive or domineering. He was the most obviously masculine of the disciples yet he knew and respected women. Unlike some of the disciples he was a married man. (The Lord healed his sick mother in law.) Later, as an apostle, he took his wife with him while traveling, 1Corinthians 9. He warns women against trivializing their lives by being preoccupied with outward appearances, hair, clothes, jewelry. This has been the way of the world since before Noah. Brothers, our attitude toward women has a great influence upon how our sisters in Christ adorn themselves. Fathers who ignore or downrate their daughters as compared to sons, unwittingly move them to dress and act to attract men. Men of the world tend to choose a wife primarily by her looks, sometimes an object of his lust or his desire to gratify his pride displaying this showpiece. This is not according to the knowledge given godly men. Is she to dress like a showpiece, a trophy wife, displaying his prowess? This denigrates her and undermines her integrity and responsibility to walk becomingly before the Lord. This practice stumbles younger girls, tempts other

men, and impedes other women from seeking Christ. On the other hand, there is no merit in lack of care for the body, shabby or dirty clothing and unkempt hair. Our bodies are the temples of the Holy spirit, 1Corinthians 6:19, and we are to present our bodies a living sacrifice to God, Romans 12:1-2. Simple, neat, becoming and modest clothing that does not attract undue attention but conducts interest to the face, not the body, is appropriate.

As our example, Peter cites Sarah the mother of us all spiritually whether of Jewish or Gentile descent. Did Sarah obey Abraham? When did she refer to him as "my lord?" It was a very significant occasion. When the Lord and two angels appeared to Abram and he served them a meal He promised Abraham Sarah would bear him a son in about a year.

Genesis 18:12 *Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?*

She was reacting in disbelief to what was to her a preposterous promise, but in doing so she, almost incidentally, referred to Abraham as her lord. The words just came out, out of her heart. Nothing hypocritical, just a genuine respect. It was not putting up a godly front. She was out of sight and just mumbled it to herself but the Lord heard it and called her on her quiet laugh. She had little reason to respect her husband. He had denied her twice to save his skin, jeopardizing her and God's promise. Meanwhile she had failed her husband once in coaxing him, against faith in God's promise, to take matters regarding a son into his own hands. Ishmael was born to her handmaiden, to Sarah's later shame and chagrin. But now, thirteen years later, she is found to be in the proper humble spiritual condition to miraculously conceive. She was to bear the promised son who was to father God's chosen earthly people from whom the Jewish saints, to whom Peter was writing, descended. He would be called Isaac ("laughter") because of her laugh of disbelief when she overheard the Lord's promise, and their laugh for joy when he was born. She is referred to as one of the "holy women" of old time. They adorned themselves with a wonderful meek and quiet spirit. Who are some others? Jochebed, Ruth, Abigail...

There is more to the story of Sarah. See the box below.

Now we husbands have a "likewise" to heed. Our demeanor and conduct is to adorn the doctrine and honor the name of the Lord as well. Our attitude and treatment of our wives speaks much of Christ to the observing world.

The husband is to dwell with his wife. Simply put, to ordinarily come home after work. Dwell with her as your companion. This is according to our knowledge of why Adam was given Eve. Plan recreational activities around the family's needs. The traditional domineering, self

serving, worldly man is to be set aside. She is not a slave, though she may indeed be totally devoted to you. She is not a servant, though she in her deep love for you uses her energy and many talents to serve you. See Proverbs 31 for the description of the woman of excellence you have been blessed with, or if single to look for in the Lord.

Proverbs 18:22 Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the LORD.

31:28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Her husband rises up in honor to her.

So we men are to honor our wife. Honor her as a weaker vessel, under the care and protection of her man. (It doesn't say she is weaker.) As a weaker vessel, but really a coequal in the marriage, in the home, over the family.

And serve her. Even if she is strong and capable, open doors for her. Carry the groceries in from the car. Walk together, let her be ahead of you when going into or out of a building or room. Be courteous with her and in her presence. Be respectful of her when with her and when with the guys. Help her with her coat, or her boots. All that little stuff that marks a real man, and marks her as a woman of worth. Never stop courting her. After all you are partners together, not only now but heirs together of something. The grace of life! What is that? You will be together, as close or closer to each other for eternity with the Lord in glory. Meanwhile in the here and now, our prayers may be hindered to the extent that we do not respect and honor her.

By Ron Canner, January 5, 2005

The Story Behind Verses 6 and 7

While Peter barely mentions Sarah he clearly was thinking of Abraham and Sarah's systematic denial of each other, and of their marriage, at least twice. Sarah was so beautiful that they had **fearfully** agreed early on in their marriage to claim Sarah was his sister when in the presence of men who might kill Abram to get her. Despite her willing part in the deception, how **frightened** and forsaken she must have felt when they carried it out. But all this was based upon **unfounded fear** due to their faltering faith in the God who had called Abram, and promised him an heir. Peter admonishes women as her daughters to emulate her faith but not copy the **fearfulness** that led her and her husband to deny each other twice (v.6). Husband and wife are to live together despite perceived threats to one or the other.