Living to Display God's Grace by Godly Submission in Marriage (Part 3)

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Date: 24 July 2022

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[0:00] chapter 3, we spent two sermons and six verses with them. You're going to get one sermon in one verse, but buckle up. It's very good and very challenging. The title of my message, overall, Living to Display God's Grace, I know that that's something that we could title every sermon, for every verse of scripture, because all of scripture is about living to display God's grace in our lives as he leaves us here on this planet. But I'm particularly interested in that title as it applies to submission, godly submission in our lives as we live together as brothers and sisters in Christ. We've looked at how that godly submission relates to the government, civil authority. We've looked at that submission as it applies to the workplace, being in submission to our employers. We've looked at Jesus's example of submission as he willingly laid down his life and went to the cross, died a torturous death, submitting to the father.

We've also looked at a wife's submission, a believing wife's submission in the marriage. And now Peter comes in chapter three, verse seven of first Peter to the husbands. And it reads this way, 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. This is where we find ourselves this morning in this text. Peter will have just a little bit more to say specifically about submission, a few more verses, and then he moves on. He'll jump in and out of that as he moves through the letter. But this this will conclude this and the next few verses will conclude this section that he's dealing with on how we submit to each other as we submit to Christ. And now it's applied to husbands. I'd like for you to think about this with me. Good men make a difference. Good men make a difference. I think we can improve on that.
Let's say that in a way that gives God the glory and more accurately portrays the difference God makes in a man's life. So let's say it this way. Godly men make a good difference.
Godly men make a good difference in their families, with their wives, their children, in their communities, in the workplace, wherever godly men carry Jesus Christ. Godly men make a good difference because God is good.
Godly men are good. Living in them. In our men's ministry here at Grace, this is just a little bit of a an infomercial, if nothing else. In our men's ministry here at Grace, we aim all of our efforts at one primary life defining goal.
[3:25] And that is to follow the command that we find kind of couched for us in 1 Corinthians 16, 13 through 14. I'll put it up here for you.

Be on the alert. Stand firm in the faith. Act like men. Be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. Now, there are many verses that we study together in our men's ministry. There are many verses that we can choose that can kind of characterize what it means for us as men to follow the Lord. We could go to all kinds of passages, even Philippians 2, to talk about denying ourselves, considering others more important than ourselves, following the Lord.
There are all kinds of passages. We have centered on this one in our men's ministry over the last probably couple of years at least, Greg. And we've talked about this and reminded the men about this.
[4:22] This is Paul's call for manly maturity in men who follow Jesus. Godly men who make a good difference.

Godly men who act like men as they follow the Lord. In the issues of life, Jesus himself was spiritually alert.

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And Paul tells us to be that, to be alert. Jesus stood firm and faithful for truth. He was a man of strong convictions, which he held courageously, even to the point of dying on the cross.
But perhaps Jesus' most manly characteristic was that he loved deeply and sacrificially. Now that's something that the world doesn't understand.
The world doesn't look at the cross and see love. They see weakness. They consider it foolishness. 1 Corinthians 2 tells us that, doesn't it?
[5:25] They see foolishness in all of this, 1 and 2. But that is the wisdom of God for life. The cross is the wisdom of God for life. Jesus was at his most manly self as a human being as he loved us to the point of giving his life on the cross for us.

It's love that defines Jesus' most manly characteristic. The world wants to convince us through movies, through all kinds of media attention, that manliness is all about taking your revenge. Manliness is about knowing how to handle yourself and chop everybody up into pieces with your hands. It's crazy the kinds of things that the world looks at.
And what's even crazier is how, to me, is how women of our day talk about wanting to be unique and independent as women and free from the yoke of men being over them in any way.
And yet, what do women try to do in all of these movies? They try to make themselves like men. You've heard me talk about this before. They have to beat people up and they have to out-curse men and be more vile than men and all of these kinds of things.
[6:48] The world does not understand the concepts that we're talking about because of sin. Sin blinds people to truth. Jesus Christ was most manly as he loved deeply and sacrificially.

And I want so much, as Greg and I pastor together, for Greg and I to model for our men the love of Christ and encourage you to be a loving man.
A loving man. Well, given Paul's commands in this verse from 1 Corinthians 16, our men want to obey the Lord.
We want to have the Lord teach us to act like manly men as we follow Jesus' example. So nowhere in our lives, I think, gentlemen, is this more important for us, for our families, for our community, and certainly for our church family, than in our marriages.
Now, I recognize that there are some single young men in our church this morning. That's okay, guys. This is good homework for you. This is good prep, right? Because if you get married in our church, we're going to want you to be very sober-minded about what that involves as you look before the Lord and say, I will take this woman into my life and I will cherish her as you cherish your bride, the church.
[8:17] I will love her and give for her and sacrifice for her and I will serve her as you have modeled for me your service to your bride, the church. Every day, all day, until death do us part.

Some guys, that makes their knees knock. That's not a bad thing. Let your knees knock and get married and then go be with your wife and your knees will stop knocking some and you'll be in the bliss and in the joy and in the good and then that'll wear off and then you'll come see us and say, what do I do now?
And we'll help hold your hand and walk you through that thing. That's the way it works and that's a good thing. We need men who are willing and committed to following Jesus Christ in their marriages by denying self and letting all that we do be done in love.
That's what we need. So like Paul, Peter will help us submit to Jesus in our calling to love and honor our wives.
We will submit to Jesus in our calling to love and honor our wives. Verse 7 then, if you look again with me at verse 7 of 1 Peter 3, I'm going to just do this little bracket thing with you.
[9:38] This is just a way for me to help us put our minds around this, to grasp something of the emphasis of the verse. In the first part of the verse, we have you husbands in the same way live with your wives in an understanding way.

So I'm going to refer to this as the will of God for husbands. The will of God for husbands. Now you understand that the entire verse is the will of God for husbands.
So this is just a way for you to help remember some of the principles that we'll look into. Then if you move to the end of the verse, we see the final bracket here, so that your prayers will not be hindered.
We're going to refer to that as the warning of God for husbands. So at the beginning, the will of God for husbands. At the end, the warning. Now go ahead and let you know when I get to the end of my

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message, God willing, I'm only going to mention the warning and say a few sentences about it and then we'll be done.
So as I draw to a close and I only say a few things about the warning, what I'm hoping is that, guys, by the time we get there, this will be very, very clear to you as to why this warning is being given and why we should be sobered by it.
[10:55] We have a lot to cover before we get to that place. Now in between the will of God for husbands and the warning of God for husbands, there are several things that we need to deal with.

Three practical ways to show our wives the love and honor of Jesus as we submit to his will for their well-being in our life with them.
We are submitting to Jesus for their well-being. That's not the only reason that we submit to Christ, but we want to understand Peter's emphasis here.
Three practical ways to show our wives the love and honor of Jesus as we submit to his will for their well-being in our life with them. All right, now hold on to that.
So let's start to unpack this together with the will of God for husbands. The will of God for husbands. We're going to wear this verse out.
[11:57] You husbands in the same way live with your wives in an understanding way. Now as Peter turns from believing wives to believing husbands, he says something like this.

So now you husbands also. Some of your translations have likewise. Mine has or in the same way. Now we need to just say a couple of words about that.
This is simply a connective. It's a connective phrase. All right. We need to know the limits. These ideas, likewise, in the same way.
You husbands also. introduce the next category of persons Peter wants to address. And those people are husbands, believing husbands.
That's all there is to it in that phrase. So this is not a case, and hear this carefully now, this is not a case of Peter teaching that just as wives are to submit to their husbands, husbands, now we're going to talk about how you are to submit to your wife.
[13:11] That is not what this means. Why do I say this? Because this is what some liberal scholars would have us believe, that likewise or in the same way means, and it doesn't.

They cannot support that grammatically or contextually, syntactically. They can't do it. Nothing about the verse supports that idea that just as wives submit to husbands, now husbands need to learn what submission to their wives means.
Look, it wouldn't make any sense, would it? And nowhere in Scripture are husbands told to submit to their wives. So we just push that aside and we concentrate on, well, what does it mean? Husbands are to submit in this verse. There is submission for husbands in this verse. Because Peter does give husbands this clear command, and it's very interesting.
Live with your wives in an understanding way. And men, here is the bottom line we will unpack together this morning. So if you're going to hold on to anything as we move through this, please hold on to this.
[14:20] This will help you, I think. Live with your wife in ways which are informed and designed by her creator for her good and God's glory.

Allow God's will to define how you husband your wife. That you should underline. Allow God's will to define how you husband your wife, which is exactly what your wife was told in the previous six verses.
Allow God's will to define for you how you are a wife to your husband. And now he turns to husbands. Allow God's will to define for you how you are a husband to your wife.
How you live with her day to day as your most intimate partner in life and for life. Now this is interesting. So the clause live with your wives carries the force of a command.
I'll get to the emphasis in just a minute. Hold on to that, alright? This carries a command. Just as wives receive their command to submit, husbands also are being told to submit.
[15:35] Not to their wives, but to Christ. And what Peter wants to do with that submission to Christ is the driving force of what he's trying to say in this verse.

How do you live with your wife day to day as he commands here? Live with your wives. He commands believing husbands to actually or literally dwell with their wives.
That's the literal sense of this. Dwell with your wife with an emphasis on how husbands are to do this. Now why is that important? It's important for several reasons that we camp out here.

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I thought it was very interesting. The imperatival force, the commanding force in this verse happens right here and it's on the emphasis of dwell with, live with.
It's like we have to be commanded to live with our wives. And then he goes on to flesh out what living with him in that dwelling way looks like.
[16:41] But dwelling is the primary idea in the command. And I thought that's very interesting. Why do I need to be told to dwell with my wife?

Well, one of the things that we need to understand is you're being told to dwell with your wife, not your mistress. You're being told to dwell with your wife, not your girlfriend.
You're being told to dwell with your wife, not some other woman like the neighbor's wife or the woman at your job. or whomever.
Now, isn't it crazy that we have to start there? But how many marriages have been destroyed because men did not have in their heart to dwell with their own wife?
You've got to start there. What happens when men don't dwell with their wife and they move away from that command and concept that God wants to burn into their hearts as the beginning place for being a godly husband, a manly husband?
[17:49] What happens? I'll tell you what happens. Men cowered out. Adultery is cowardice. Cheating on your wife is cowardice.

Whether you're a Christian or not. It's running away from the reality that we're told to dwell with this woman for a lifetime. Well, that takes work.
That takes selflessness. Sacrifice. It takes you growing up and becoming a man.
And God will use your wife to help you become a manly man. When I say a manly man, I'm talking about a man who follows Jesus. Who loves your wife as Jesus loves the church.
Whenever I say manly man, don't think Hollywood version. That's as far away from it as you can possibly get. Dwell with your wife. Dwell with or live with then communicates a strong commitment to support togetherness.
[18:55] Gentlemen, are you committed to dwell with your wife in a way where you are cultivating and nurturing togetherness with her? Or is it you do your thing and she does her thing?

I have had many, many counseling appointments prior to coming up to Virginia. I've had a few of those since I've been here. But most of my counseling ministry was prior to coming up here. And I have had so many couples come in that have gotten into their later years in their marriage and they have drifted apart for whatever reasons.
And now he pretty much lives his life and she lives her life. They stayed together for the kids. And the only reason that they're not divorcing now are for practical matters. Most of the time it's for finance.
It's just not financially wise for them to divorce. They can stay together and live separate lives and maintain their standard.
And that's more important to them. There are all kinds of wonderful, wise realities about God telling us to dwell together in a strong commitment to support togetherness.
[20:05] This same verb dwell together, this same verb is used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament when they translated the Old Testament into Greek.

And it refers to sexual intimacy between a husband and a wife. That's how strong this verb is. You'll find examples of this in Deuteronomy 22.13 and 24.1.
This idea is underscored by Peter's next phrase. Let me give it to you. Look now. You husbands in the same way live with your wives, notice, in an understanding way.
Literally, literally this is according to knowledge or in a knowing way or better, to get the sense, better would be according to God's way.
live with your wives according to God's will, according to God's knowledge. So this isn't you being clever. This isn't you making it up.
[21:10] This isn't you reading a psychology book. This isn't you turning to some other guru's ideas. This is you turning to God's word and asking God by the power of the Holy Spirit to help you know his will for living with your wife.

And isn't it interesting, Derek, for example, that brother, you can be married to your wife and go to God's word and you and I will share similar convictions and commands as we live out, but it also can be nuanced.

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So the way that you live with your wife in any season of life might look a little bit different as I live with my wife in my season of life. You guys have been married for how long, Derek?
17 years. We've been married for 38 years. Going to be 39 years. We're at a little bit different season. We've launched all of our little guys. And so we're empty nesters.
But the way that I love my wife and you love your wife, there will be some things that will be fixed in concrete and both of us will do those. There will be other ways that I'm loving my wife at this stage of life that will look a little bit different.
[22:19] And the Bible allows for that. That's why the Bible is saying, dwell with your wife. Your wife. You've got to know your wife.

Isn't that wonderful? You can't outdate or outgrow or outmaneuver the Scripture. The Scripture will give us our foundation for what this means.
And the world misses it due to blindness because of sin. So live with your wife in an understanding way according to knowledge. Sometimes, I told you this is also supporting the idea earlier of dwelling together, cultivating a togetherness even to the point of this referring to intimacy and marriage.
Well, that's exactly what this concept is about too. Sometimes this word to know was used metaphorically to refer to marital intimacy.
So, gentlemen, you are to know your wife. You see? And you keep that knowing within the confines of your marriage.
[23:28] You safeguard it. You protect it. You nurture it. You see it grow. That is on you, gentlemen. It is not your wife's responsibility in the primary sense to nurture and cultivate your marriage.

It's yours. It begins with you. It is rooted in you as the head of the wife. And too many marriages, even in the church, are carried by the emotional nurturing of the woman.
That is not healthy. We need to be very, very careful about how we think about this, gentlemen. We need to let who our wives are and what they bring to the marriage be a blessing to the marriage and not tax that thing because we're cowards, because we are selfish, because we are lazy, because we are undisciplined.
Undisciplined. None of those things are excuses for us to lay by our responsibility to sacrificially love our wife, my wife, your wife.
That's what we're being called to do. You are to know your wife. Now, this knowing of your wife takes in then the physical, the sexual, the emotional, and the spiritual aspects of your relationship with her.
[24:55] This is a full-orbed, full-bodied reality for your marriage. So, gentlemen, the bar is high that we are to make sure that we're not letting anything fall through the cracks in our relationship of, listen to my language here, right from the scripture, serving our wives.

Isn't it a wonderful wisdom that God can spend six verses telling our wives to submit to us and he comes to one verse and he says this to us as husbands, serve her.
Serve her. Do you hear submission there? I do. But it's not submission to your wife.
You're not submitting to your wife, you're serving her. You're submitting to Christ and serving your wife as an expression of that submission. submission. That's not, that's not, what do you call it when you mince words, when you, people say, what's the phrase?
What is it? Yes. Semantics. Just went right out of my, that's, that's not semantics. It's scripture. It's scripture.
[26:11] All right. So here's the main emphasis. I put that up there because I thought some of you will want to, want to write it. Here it is. I hope that didn't lose the impact of it. The main emphasis of this knowing you are to apply with her is this.

Husbands, you are to relate to your wife from your own awareness of God, from your own reverence for the Lord, from your own walk with God by what you know of God and his will for you in Christ Jesus.
Now, is there a man in this room to include your pastors who husband this perfectly, without flaw? No. There's not a, so ladies, if you're married to a man and part of you right now is thinking that there's some weakness here in your husband, well, if you want to know if that's something that you can move through together that, you know, give me some hope, go talk to my wife and ask her over the 38 years, have there been times in Jeff's life when he hasn't lived this to perfection?

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And then listen to her. There's hope. Guys, there's hope. We're in this together. We are all looking to Jesus as flawed men, but our flaws are not excuses for our failures.
Do you understand what I'm saying? Our flaws become reasons in Christ for us to run to the throne of grace and find help in Christ Jesus and in truth.
[27:48] And so, gentlemen, we need each other. We don't need to lone ranger our marriages. We need each other. I need you to come to me and say to me, Jeff, will you pray for me?

Greg, will you pray for me? This is what I'm dealing with in my life right now as it relates to me being a husband and a father. And I'm struggling with this. Sometimes I've heard it's pornography.
I understand that. I understand the temptation and the lure. One of the things that Satan wants to do most with men is draw them away from a purity toward their wives and ruin your prayer life.
It's going to be really hard for you to have a prayer life with your wife if you're chasing impurity. You understand that? That's at the end of the sermon. There are all kinds of other ways that Satan uses to draw your heart away from being this kind of man for your wife.
All kinds of things. So ladies, that's real. Brothers, we need each other. We need to come alongside of each other. We need to talk about these things together. We need to pray for each other.
[28:54] We need to lock arms and walk together through this thing called life as we try to be married faithfully in Christ. There's nothing wrong, nothing unmanly about you and I seeking the help and support of each other in this church called Grace Church.

Oh, I hope that you will find here much grace. Now look, we will preach hard where the Bible's hard. We will preach soft where the Bible's soft. Right now, this is kind of a hardcore reality that's in your face as a man.
And it's this. Step up and man up. Because our church's life is at stake. Your marriage is at stake. The heart of your children is at stake. The witness to the world is at stake. And so Peter's main emphasis here is that as we walk with the Lord as husbands, we turn to minister to our wives out of our own walk.
Now listen, look at this. This is why this is so, so important for you to grasp before we move on to some of the practical. See, I get this. I'm a guy. I'm a married guy.
[30:12] It's like, give me the practical stuff, man. Tell me how to do. We're going to get there. I get that. But before you grab to the practical, all of you guys, you fixers, I understand that.

Conquer the yard. Conquer the mower. Conquer the drive. The trip. I get it. I get it. Before we do all of that, I want you to understand what you need to have as the baseline for doing these practical things.
We don't want this to become an issue of works for you. I don't want this to become something for you that you do in order, out of fear of your wife, the fear of man, to gain the approval of your wife, to prove to your wife you're a man.
None of that stuff is why you do this. You don't even do this to make your wife happy. What you're concerned with in your marriage isn't primarily your wife's happiness.
It's her holiness before the Lord. Let the happiness follow on the holiness. All right? So, look at this. The most critical knowledge you hold about faithfully dwelling with your wife comes from your own relationship with the Lord and from your own understanding and application of God's will revealed to you in Scripture.
[31:38] God's will. So, this isn't Jeff's will or Greg's will or this is God's will for your life. This isn't the will of the latest, greatest self-help book out there that gives you, you know, this many love languages.

Okay? I'm going to tell you right now, you don't need to know your wife's love language. The Bible's already told you what it is. His name is Jesus. Minister Jesus to your wife. Now, I say that.
It's not as simple as saying it, is it? Do you know what I have found in my marriage? ministering to my wife is the greatest challenge to my spiritual walk with Jesus that I know.
Because ministering to my wife reveals the cracks and crevices in my walk with God. I'll just let you think about that. That's a good thing, but it can be a hard thing.
So it needs to be stewarded in the love of Christ and in the wisdom of Almighty God. That's the most critical knowledge that you can have about faithfully dwelling with your wife.
[32:50] Believing husbands must dwell with their wives according to a husband's knowledge of God's design for him and for his wife.

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Don't make the mistake, guys, if you already have, repent of it. Don't make the mistake of trying to love your wife like a man wants to be loved.
Have you done that? Love your wife like a woman wants and needs to be loved. You with me? Some of you guys are looking at me like, what?
That's okay. We'll do some more with this. That's one of the things that you don't want to do is, well, this is what I want, so I'll do that.
Go to the scripture. It's just not rocket science. The Bible will tell you how to love your wife as Christ loved the church. Look at how Jesus loves the church and follow him. We need each other to do that.
[34:01] it all starts there. Hear the way I say this. To live consistently close to your wife, you must live consistently close to the Lord Jesus.

Do you understand what that means? If you're not living close to Jesus, you will not live close to your wife. It won't happen.
And you'll feel it and she'll feel it. This is God's will for husbands. Now, how does Peter tell you to do this with your wife?
Is this everything scripture says about how to do this with your wife? No, this is what Peter wanted his readers to understand right on the heels of what he told wives. So that's the context.
So Peter's not going to give you an exhaustive list of what this looks like for you to dwell with your wife in an understanding, knowing God's will kind of way. But he'll give you important principles.
[35:03] In fact, I'll say this to you. In a scenario where, say, you were discipling a guy or just meeting with a guy, maybe from your church or another church or some context in life, maybe even from work, and maybe the guy's not even a believer, and he comes to you and he says, man, you know, I saw you with your wife now a couple times and everything and you guys just seem to have something, I don't know, I don't even know what to say it is or whatever.

A believer might say, hey, will you help me walk with the Lord as I'm married? But an unbeliever might just say, I see something. Well, let's say you meet with a man like that.
You're over coffee, you're going to want to tell, and so you're going to give him something of a primer on married life and being a husband.
I would encourage you to turn to this verse. What I'm about to tell you is the reason why. Because this verse will give you a focus, it will give you a laser look into being a godly husband in your marriage.
Again, it's not everything the scripture will say to you, but it will give you a really strong focus that will help you help this man grasp the main thing.
[36:28] That's what you want. In those moments, help him get the main thing and then work with him from there. Go here. That's my encouragement to you. You don't have to do that. Just an encouragement.

All right? So, again, how does Peter tell you to do this? To dwell with your wife? He's emphasizing that it's about living with her and not around her.
There's a difference. Peter is emphasizing how you live with your wife, how you cultivate togetherness with your wife, not live around your wife.
So, it's about you ministering to her, serving her, and cherishing her. Peter is going to help you understand how to cherish your wife as you follow Christ.
All right? Here it is. Look. You serve and cherish her by taking God's transforming work in your heart and applying it to hers. you start there.
[37:31] Which assumes here that you, first of all, have a relationship and a walk with Jesus. The weaker your walk with Jesus, the weaker your marriage.

Axiomatically, right? If we're turning that over, the stronger your walk with the Lord, the more likely it is that you'll have a strong marriage.
A growing marriage. As you are growing in the Lord, you'll be in a better position to grow in your marriage. I'm just trying to put forward to you, gentlemen, that you can't have one without the other.
You cannot have a growing marriage if you're not growing in Christ. Why? Because your marriage can't grow apart from Christ. The absence of you growing in the Lord will mean an absence of you growing in your relationship with your wife.
If you don't believe this, and I hope you do, you don't have any reason to doubt it yet, look at the end of the verse where he talks about your relationship with your wife as it's so umbilical to your

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spiritual walk that God won't even won't even abide your prayer life if you're at odds with your wife. [38:50] Now, I personally will tell you I find it difficult to pray if I'm at odds with Suzanne. If I go to pray to the Lord and I have, and I know, I'm aware of something going on with me and Suzanne, I have to leave that thing and go find her.

Isn't that what it says? Go find your brother. Make it right with your brother. Well, that's so much more important in a marriage. Have you experienced that?
Yeah. I think that's just a normal way to think about being spiritual. You serve her, you cherish her by taking the transforming work of grace that God is doing in your life and you minister that to her. You just minister out of what God's ministering in you, doing in you. That's genuine. It's powerful. All right, now, minister God's transforming grace to her.
Look now, minister God's transforming grace to her. Here's the first practical reality under this will of God for husbands as to her frame, as to her frame.
[39:58] What are you talking about? You husbands in the same way dwell with, live with your wives in a knowing, knowing God's will kind of way. Look, as with someone weaker, as with someone weaker.

So you minister her, minister to her as to her frame. That is, as to someone who is weaker. Now, grammatically, gentlemen, grammatically, the text's emphasis here is on her physical weakness compared to you.
All right? This is typically the case in most marriages and this is an important knowledge to act on. This is not outdated, it is not outmoded, it's not old-fashioned to think about what I'm about to say. One verse that might shed some helpful light on this for us is Psalm 103, 14. I'll put it up here. In rehearsing God's mercies to us, David says this, for God himself knows our frame.
He is mindful that we are but dust. Now that's how God considers and condescends to us as our king and our savior. He knows your frame.
[41:17] The hairs on your head, every weakness, every thought, right? Well, we can't read the thoughts of our wives. Sometimes they wear it really well on their face and we get it.

She didn't have to say anything. But we can't see into their hearts. So there is a limit here. But the idea is the same. That we would know our wife's frame, her makeup, right?
Who she is as a person. And we're mindful. God is mindful that we are but dust. We're weak. We need to keep in mind that reality about our wives.
What do I mean? To know our wife's frame is to have a godly mindfulness about her so that we never exploit her, take advantage of her, and we fight against taking her for granted.
We understand her weakness to us, and we are careful. Again, the primary emphasis here is this physical weakness that they're not as strong as we are.
[42:26] Now, I know that there are slight exceptions here and there, but on the whole, we're trying to grasp this thought that Peter wants us to grasp that we are considering our wives in a God's will knowing kind of way, and we're taking into consideration that this person that I'm married to is not as physically strong as I am.

So you understand, we don't use our physical strength to intimidate them. We don't use our size and our strength to control them. that is not what we have it for.
Okay? Do you understand why we have to start there, why Peter would be practical about this? Think about what time period he lives in. Women were property.
Men could do whatever they wanted to to them. They could slap them around, beat them, put them in time out, take stuff away, you know, whatever.
Peter said, the first thing you need to do is you need to get rid of this idea that you can just do whatever you want because you're stronger and in a superior position to them in the culture's eyes because you're not in God's eyes.
[43:44] You're not superior to them in the eyes of the Lord, and that's where we need to go next. We need to understand her weakness to us and be careful. Look, this weakness, I'm going to put it up here for you to see, this weakness that Peter is speaking of is not an inferiority to us as a lesser person.

Our wives are not lesser people than we are in the eyes of the Lord. That's not what this is. We know that scripture teaches spiritual equality and value between men and women in God's sight.
I am going to ask you to turn to Galatians 3 with me, if you will, just so that you can reference this in your Bible. Galatians 3, beginning in verse 26, and the thought here that we're emphasizing, is that

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women are not inferior to men in the sight of God.
In fact, the opposite is true. Women are the spiritual equals to men in the sight of God. Look at verse 26, for you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.
You just start right there. All believing men and women are equal in the sight of God. We are all sons of God daughters of God.
[45:00] Verse 27, for all of you who were baptized into Christ Jesus, whether men or women, have clothed yourselves with Christ. So men and women who have come to faith, they are all clothed equally in Christ.

We all came to salvation through the same person, and we're all loved by that person. there is neither then Jew nor Greek.
So he goes right to these cultural separations. No, whether you're a Christian Jew or a Christian Greek, you're still a Christian. There is neither slave nor free man in the sight of the Lord.
There is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ. Now he's not eliminating the fact that there are slaves and there are masters, there are Jews and there are Greeks, there are men and there are women.
He's simply pointing out that in God's sight we're spiritual equals. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.
[46:03] That's all of us who believe in Christ. All I'm trying to say is this, women are the spiritual equals of men. This is not a treatise that is outlining any kind of moral inferiority in our wives.

This is not outlining some type of spiritual or even emotional inferiority in our wives to us. That's not what this is.
A husband serves his wife from the knowledge that she is precious to God. She's not perfect, she's precious.
So the main idea is that you use your manliness, gentlemen, to protect what is precious to God. So Peter starts with strength, physical prowess.
Use your physical strength to protect what is precious to God. Invest your physical self in protecting your wife, she's precious to God. Relate to her that way.
[47:15] Start with the fact that God made you a man. And use your manliness to safeguard what is precious to the Lord. Start there. Start there.

That's a good start. But that's not where you stop. Then you're carried along as you relate to the Lord. Here's the next one.
As to her, there's, I know there's so many more things we could say about her frame, but that's the basic idea. Then as to her femininity. Notice what the text says as we move clause by clause, phrase by phrase.
As with someone weaker, since she is a woman. That's not a slam. Any more than since she is weaker is a slam. These aren't slams.
These are realities. This connects closely with knowing her frame. They go together. They bleed over into each other. Notice that Peter doesn't say this, gentlemen.
[48:12] As you study the Bible, try to become adept at recognizing these nuanced ways that the Bible uses comparison and contrast. The way the Bible says different things within a short span of verses or clauses.

Notice what Peter doesn't say. He doesn't say wife. He doesn't say she is your wife. He says she is a woman. So what he's doing is emphasizing your wife's femininity.
He is exalting femininity. He's holding it up as a good thing, a godly designed thing. So while the world works hard in their rebellion against God to obliterate his distinctions, his distinctions between men and women, Christian husbands are charged to actually uphold those distinctions in service to their wives.
We're supposed to actually be creatively nurturing the feminine distinction in our wife, in my wife, in your wife.
Yeah. She is distinctly woman. And let me tell you guys, as I say that, all glory be to God for this blessed reality. Yeah.
[49:36] Amen. Somebody say it. Amen. Amen. I ought to get that kind of amen. Thank God for women. Thank God we're married to women.

She's feminine. Husbands are to appreciate and encourage this in their wives because God designed it into them. So we consider precious what God has made precious.

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And that's precious. They're not masculine. They're feminine. And isn't it true? Our daughters and our sons need to see mom caring for and carrying her femininity with much grace.
Amen. It's just nothing more beautiful and attractive than a gracious woman. Suzanne, you'll remember this. I didn't mention it to you. I meant to.
Talk to her about this. Do you remember Chet and Millie? So when we were dating, there was a couple in our church and she just had the most natural beauty.
[50:40] Right? She just, her hair, I could just sit and look at her hair. I just, and, and, but you know what? She didn't wear a lot of makeup or anything like that, right?

Did she? She, she just had such a natural, but you know what I think drew me more to her in that way than anything else? She just, she just wore such a piece on her face and she just had such a gracious way about her.
Right? And you might say to yourself, how in the world? I did. I'm a new Christian and, and I'm looking at that, at her and her, and I'm thinking, wow, wow, what an example of, of God.
That's what I would have said then. God in somebody's life. Right? Then you meet her husband. Then you meet her husband. Chet. One of the most meek, soft-spoken, humble, God-focused, Christ- loving men I have ever met in my life.
And when I met Chet, I went, bang. I get it. This is a woman who has a godly man making a good difference in her life.
[52:04] It's not to take anything away from her. It's just to say, what a couple. And I see to this day, I still remember them. In the example, were they perfect people?

No. No. But I know that Chet nurtured and honored his wife as a woman.
And I watched him do it. And I learned from him. I learned from Chet. I watched his life. When he was at church, whenever I was around him, I just observed his life with his wife.
He was so considerate of her. Everything, when they were together, everything Chet did was mindful of his wife being next to him. So guys, yes, this can include opening the door for your wife. Don't let the world tell you these conventions are antiquated. There are reasons that our forebears had these little kinds of things going on in their life. These were ways that helped them express and nurture a very caring preciousness toward their wife.
[53:09] What women today who don't care about the things of God will tell you is, I don't need nobody to get a door for me. I'm perfectly capable of getting my own door.

Well, you think I am. Look at me. Yeah. Right. I could. Do you get it?
I could go on and on. Okay. Okay. You find ways.
You find ways. You find ways to nurture femininity. Our sons and daughters need to see this while they also see dad caring for and serving mom in her femininity.
That's where I am right now. It can include things like opening doors. It can also involve things like this. You take on and do the sweaty grunt work in and outside the house.
[54:14] You know, I don't want to go too much with this, but you get it. You notice and compliment her about her attire. You know.

Be thankful that your wife nurtures modesty. Let her know that. Let her know that it means something to you that she's not out here trying to draw attention to herself the way she dresses. Guys, our wives and our daughters need to hear us telling them that. Because the world isn't. They can't go on television. They can't read magazines where women are being rewarded for being modest.
Can they? But the church needs to do that. And it needs to start with the men. The men need to set the example in the bar. This is preaching.
This is. Small things. Compliment her on her form. Hug her.
[55:19] Tell her you love her. Look her in the eyes. And especially then her spiritual attributes. Her spiritual attributes displayed in her life in the unique ways of a woman.

Oh my goodness. It's intoxicating. It's so beautiful. It is so beautiful. It's something to be cherished when a woman is in touch with her femininity in the Lord and she's gracious graciously displaying those attributes those that fruit of the spirit in her life as a woman.
It's wonderful. I'm very thankful for that. Well gentlemen this takes intentionality. If you want to write down another word intentionality.
Okay. The world throws that around so much. You have to notice and you have to notice regularly. To notice you have to observe.

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There's a difference between noticing and observing. You have to notice regularly. You have to observe in order to notice. And to observe you have to be thoughtful prayerful and self-forgetful. [56:34] The thing that will get in your way the most in treating your wife as precious before the Lord is you. I didn't get any amens on that one. That's okay. I'll move on.

Of all human beings on the planet of all human beings on the planet Christian husbands should far and away be the most thankful for God's gift of womanhood.
Why do I say that? Why? Why? Because the companionship of gracious womanhood is the most beautiful most powerful most honoring blessing to godly manhood on this earth.
And redeemed men are gifted by God's grace to most enjoy that blessing. Amen? It's just wonderful. To know your wife as a woman gentlemen is as much an invitation for you to know bliss as it is a command for you to bless.
we must set our hearts to steward God's gift of womanhood as we minister to our wives as women. [57:50] As women. Now again I won't camp here. I know the world wants us to believe that the path to true freedom and fulfillment and fulfillment for women is for the women to try and be as much like men as possible and then to even go beyond and outperform men in every area of life.

I'm just going on record. It's a lie. This is the time to say it and I'm saying it. It's a lie. That is a lie. Women don't need to try to be like men or better themselves by being better than men.
Women need to do exactly what men do. Follow Jesus and be like Christ. Be like Christ. You're never more a woman than when you're like Jesus.
You're never more a man than when you're like Jesus. Isn't that a miracle? That's just marvelous. Christian men who love Jesus and their wives do not want she-men for wives.
I'm just going on record. The word Peter uses for woman has the idea of that which belongs to, that which is characteristic of, that which is unique to.
[59:10] Women. There's a uniqueness here gentlemen that we need to help safeguard and nurture. We are in a fight.

The world doesn't want this. And they are fighting. Well, that's what it means to be feminine. To be uniquely female.
That's God's design. That there are unique characteristics to femininity. This is what husbands need to value. We need to uphold.
We need to affirm in our wives as women. I would just ask you this before I move toward a close here. Where do we think the current gender rebellion sprang from?
It sprang from the roots and the rottenness of feminism. It sprang from the lie that to be a woman you need to be like and then surpass men.
[60:11] It's the only way. Feminism and femininity are enemies. God designed femininity and man's wisdom came up with feminism.

Feminism's roots grew the idea women now have that they can make better husbands for each other than any man can. So they marry each other.
perhaps the most effective and God honoring way that we can battle the aberrant ideology of feminism is for Jesus loving husbands to honor their wives in Jesus' way.
And that's exactly what Peter stresses next. The final idea is as to her friendship. I told you we give three practical ways that Peter expresses this idea of dwelling with your wife.
This is what it looks like in Peter's nuanced way for you to dwell with your wife. You consider her frame. You consider or you know God's will for her femininity.
[61:22] This is all God's will. God's will for you as you relate to her in terms of her frame, her makeup, your wife as a woman, her femininity, the unique characteristics of her as a woman and that you reward and protect her as a woman and lead her as a woman.

And then finally as to her friendship, her friendship, the Bible says, and show her honor and notice gentlemen, as a fellow heir of the grace of life.
Do you see there's no inferiority here? There's no hierarchy here. Ladies, your submission to your husband does not mean that God looks on you in some inferior or lesser way.
That's not true. He would never then say all of these things to a husband about cherishing what God says is precious and honoring what God says is precious if there was some type of inferiority in the text.
It's not there. There's no threat here, ladies. There's no threat. Gentlemen, this is the best way for you to keep your authority in check as a husband.

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[62:40] Your love for Christ flows into love for her which follows in your honor for her. Do you see where that starts? Guys, I want to point it out now before I move on.

Look, look closely. Your love for Christ is where it begins. Then it flows into love for her which follows in your honor for her.
Do you see the foundation for this? It's love. This is why I'm saying to you the Bible teaches that manliness is about love and we see it in Christ.
We see it in Christ. Notice the phrase with me and show her. My Bible says since she is a woman and show her.
Show is important. It means to render what is due or to pay what is owed. You got that nuance? Show her.
[63:37] Render to her. So to show her is to give her what she is due given the high value, the precious value she is to God.

Guys, I hope you're grabbing this. This helps us better understand what God means by honoring our wives. Honor literally means of high value or of high price.
You show your wife the honor of your own reverence for God. Listen, you show your wife the honor then out of that reverence, out of your own reverence for God that it demands as you value what he values.
Your high and holy reverence for God demands that you reverence, that you put respect on, that you consider precious what he considers precious.
So you bring that holy awe in your relationship with God, your own fear of the Lord before him into your married life and how that looks, how that fear of God and that holy reverence for God in your life looks as you translate that, remember I said you are using the transforming work of God in your heart to apply to your wife earlier on, you take that and you move that into your marriage as you honor her.
[65:09] So your reverence for God in terms of her being precious to God looks like you honoring her. As you honor your wife, you are showing reverence for God.

win-win! Win-win! Win-win! Amen! Amen! You show her the honor she's due in the beauty and the wonder of God's design for men and women because she's your fellow heir of the grace of life.
What does it mean? She is your companion. sharing in God's grace for living. So gentlemen, honoring your wife as your truest and closest friend in the wonder of God's design for marriage was a huge contrast to married life in the Gentile world of Peter's day.
love of love. Look at this. The grace of life as a fellow heir of the grace of life, the grace of life is friends forever sharing in Christ Jesus now and forever.
And that is all due to God's undeserved favor on our lives as married couples. God takes these mandates so seriously that he provides a warning then for husbands as motivation for our careful and prayerful obedience to what he's laying out for us here as we relate to our wives.
[66:54] And the warning, I told you just a couple sentences, the warning so that your prayers will not be hindered. So very simply, guys, listen to this now.

Very simply, if you are at odds with your wife, you are at odds with the Lord. If you are at odds with your wife, you're at odds with the Lord.
Now this is a principle that you can see in Matthew, several other places in Scripture. If you're at odds with another person, what does God say to you about the altar, the altar of prayer and worship?
Leave the altar and go make it right. As much as it depends on you, be at peace with all men, Romans 12. So this is what we're talking about here. You need to be at peace with your wife because to be at odds with your wife puts you at odds with the Lord.
The Lord's going to want you to make that right with your wife, your life partner, the one person he's telling you that you are to cherish. It's reflected in your prayer life and your heart for your wife.
[68:06] Listen, your heart for your wife should be tuned by your heart for Christ. It doesn't go the other way. It goes this way. Your heart for your wife is tuned by your heart for Jesus.

you need to keep that a priority. Prayerfully seek God's wisdom and grace to honor your wife as you share in life with her, gentlemen.
To honor her is to consider her precious and to treat her as precious in the ways that would be consistent with what God has designed in her as a woman and given her to you as a wife.

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That's where we live. Amen? That's where we live. And I, guys, I know, I know that there's, this room is full of men who want to live that life with their wives.
Now, here's where we are. Every man in this room at this point is in some way under conviction about needing to bolster up and beef up your married life with your wife as you lead and I know that. [69:20] How do I know that? Because I wept tears doing this research, studying this. And I went to my wife.

So I'm saying to you now, you're in good company if you need to just get out of Dodge and get her out in the car before you even get out of the parking lot.
Okay? I get it. It's okay. It's okay to be under conviction. It isn't okay to stay in sin. So repent. Repent. And if you don't know what to do and you don't know how to put one foot in front of the other in terms of this, that is not something that you need to be ashamed of. Come to your brothers and say, how do I do this?
Help me step this out. Okay? And we'll help you. We'll help you. We'll be here with you. If we don't know the answer, we'll find it together.
[70:19] But don't neglect this. All right. Let's pray together. Father, we thank you so much for the convicting power of the word of God as it speaks directly into our hearts and lives in the day-to-day that we experience.

We thank you for our wives. what a blessing and a gift. What a precious, precious treasure you have given to us in women, in wives, in daughters.
Thank you, God, that in the wisdom of your design, you made us male and female, and you made us to come together and compliment one another and share with one another and be one soul together in marriage.
I pray for all of our singles, our single young men and our single young women who perhaps are anticipating being married one day. I pray that you'll help them to carefully and prayerfully consider these principles of what marriage is and what it looks like.
There's no way for them to grasp all of the difficulties and nuances and blessings of marriage now, but we pray, Father, that you'll help them to think soberly as they approach the potential for marriage in their lives.
[71:41] And we pray for our sons and daughters that you would bring that partner into their life that would be the compliment for them on this earth, that they might live godly lives displaying the character of Jesus to a lost and needy world and be a blessing to each other.

We thank you, dear Father, for the goodness of your grace working in the lives of our husbands. sins and we ask almighty God that you would help our men to grasp this, to commit themselves to it and to take whatever measures are necessary in their spiritual lives to be faithful to what you've taught us this morning.
Thank you for Jesus. Though he was never married, he is the perfect example of a perfect husband as he loves his bride, the church, with such sacrificial, wonderful, beautiful love.
It's in his name that we pray and for his glory. Amen.

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