

Living to Display God's Grace: A Husband's Submission to God

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Preacher: Jeff Jackson

[0 : 00] my title up here if I'm ready. Ah, no. I may back up one. No. All right. Where did I go? Come help me. Thank you, brothers. They have my back. So they tried to give me the wand of power in Vermont.

They had never done this. And so I asked Femi before I went, I said, how do you guys advance the slides? I do slides most of the time I preach. And he's like, oh, advance the slides. What's that?

So they went out and bought stuff to make it all work. And so I went up there and hit it. And the first one came up when I went to hit the next one. Nothing. So I preached the rest of it without it.

Well, here's what I didn't know. The whole time I'm preaching and saying, man, I had a great slide for this one. I wanted you guys to read. The guy was tracking with me up in the booth in the second story, and he was bringing them up while I was preaching. And nobody told me. So the whole sermon, I'm making excuses for all this. And he's right there with me, just putting them on the screen.

It was wonderful. The Lord knows. So this is what we're going to be dealing with this morning, gentlemen, living to display God's grace, a husband's submission to God. And we're in first Peter. So if you're not there, let's get there. The book of first Peter.

[1 : 14] I'm going to begin reading right at the beginning of chapter three and walk you into the context of what chapter seven or chapter seven, verse seven has to say to us in the way of husbands loving their wives and leading their wives in the way that Peter will instruct us here. So chapter three, verse one in the same way. Now that automatically throws us back into a question about the previous context in the same way of what? And we'll get there in a moment in the same way. You wives be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be one without a word by the behavior of their wives as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. Your adornment must not be merely external braiding the hair, wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses, but let it be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is notice precious in the sight of God. For in this way, in former times, the holy women also who hoped in God used to adorn themselves being submissive to their own husbands, just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord. And you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear. And now for this morning, our verse, 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. And so thematically, what we're talking about this morning, gentlemen, is how our submission to Jesus Christ dictates and defines the way that we husband in the Lord. That's what we're concerned about this morning. Now, let me throw this at you and see what you think about this. Non-Christian men can have some basic morals, a basic morality that can help them make a difference, a positive difference in their marriage, a positive difference in their marriage, a positive difference in their marriage.

But you would say, quote unquote, they're nice guys. Right? And we kind of know what you what you mean by that. They're nice guys. They're they're good, quote unquote, to their wives, you know, and their kids and they're they're good at work kind of thing. And we understand that. But here's a phrase that I'd like for you to think even more about as it carries us into this verse we're dealing with this morning. I'm going to put it up here for you to see it so you'll know exactly what I mean. Godly men make a good in God difference. And that is a difference that is critical. It is a heavenly difference.

Godly men, men who are seeking to be God like in the way they live in their marriage, the way they husband, as it were, their wives, they make a good in God difference because God lives in you as a believer. A good God living in you makes it possible for you to make a good in God difference.

in the way that you live, but particularly in the way that you are related to your wife. In our men's ministry, we aim all our efforts at one primary life defining goal as we follow the command of first Corinthians 16, 13 through 14. Let me just read it for you. Be on the alert.

[5 : 40] Stand firm in the faith. Act like men. Be strong. And then verse 14 gives us this. Let all that you do be done in love. Love. That is so critical to our understanding of what it means to be on the alert, to stand firm in the faith, to act like men and to be strong, that we do all of that as we follow the Lord in love. Now, this is Paul's call. What I'm reading to you now from first Corinthians 16 is Paul's call for manly maturity. In men who follow Jesus. So we're talking about manly maturity defined by heaven.

What does that look like? Well, I'll tell you right now. It looks very different from what the earth earthly values tell us about being a husband, being a dad, what it means to love your wife. It's going to look a lot different from what our culture says. You would expect that, wouldn't you? So this isn't going to be any big shock to you to find out that there are ways that you and I need to throw off the culture and put off or lay aside the old self. Maybe ways we used to think patterns we used to have habits we used to engage in before we came to know the Lord Jesus and what it means to walk with him and be a husband following him in faithfulness. So again, this is Paul's call for manly maturity and men who follow Jesus. Godly men who make a good in God difference in the way they're married. Jesus Christ himself was spiritually alert to his world. Jesus stood firm and faithful for truth. And Jesus held to his convictions courageously, graciously, and uncompromisingly. You would say amen to all of that.

Jesus' true manliness was best seen in that he loved deeply and he loved sacrificially. Doesn't the cross show us that? This is what we're talking about this morning. So given Paul's commands from this verse in 1 Corinthians 16, given Paul's commands, our men here at Grace want to obey the Lord and have him teach us to live like manly men as we follow Jesus' example for us. So this is not a manliness defined by culture. This is a manliness that we take from the example of the Lord Jesus and from Paul telling us, let all that you do be done in love. This is particularly true in our married life. As our marriage is supposed to exemplify the relationship that Jesus has with his bride.

Nowhere in our lives then is this more important for us, more important for our families, our community, our nation, our church, than how we practice this in our marriages. Laying the foundation for all of these other areas of our life by how we are married. Now single men don't feel left out because unless God's given you the gift of singleness, we're talking about something that could be in your near future. And I know there are a couple of guys in here who are praying for that.

So pray for them. They are praying that God will bring them a godly woman to be their life partner in doing ministry together. Godly men need to now, please hear me, gentlemen. Godly men need to lead the way.

[9 : 37] In the high cost of denying self. So that our commitment to Jesus will help us do everything in love.

In marriage, that commitment begins with living in love for and to your wife. So all we're saying is we are trying to live out the example of Jesus' love for us in the way that we love our wives.

And Paul would explain that as well in Ephesians chapter 5. Now like Paul, what I want to do here with Peter is allow Peter to help us submit to Jesus in our calling to love and honor our wives.

So verse 7 is comprised of what I'm labeling the will of God for husbands. That's at the beginning of the verse. Look at that with me.

You husbands in the same way, notice, live with your wives in an understanding way. And then toward the end of the verse, we've got this capped off.

[10 : 47] So this would be the way we bracket it. The will of God for husbands at the beginning of the verse. Then at the end of the verse, what I'll call the warning from God for husbands.

Now in between, here's what we have. Peter is giving us 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 marriage.

So gentlemen, this is about your ministry to your wife, isn't it? It's about how you minister to your wife. And it's beautiful. It's powerful. It's exactly what you'd expect from the wisdom of Almighty God.

So here's how we'll begin. And I'll spend most of my time on this first point. We'll do the last point at the very, very end of my message because it's a very clear point we won't have to say a lot about.

So here's how we'll start. We'll start with the will of God for husbands. Now this is all the will of God in the entire verse, but I'm going to separate this off a little bit just so I can focus on and highlight a few ideas about it.

[11 : 55] The will of God for husbands in this first part of the verse. As Peter turns from believing wives to then believing husbands as a topic, he says, you husbands, notice, you husbands in the same way.

In the same way. So this is a phrase connecting the content about wives with Peter's instruction for believing husbands, Christian husbands.

Now the question is this. How are we to understand the connection? What's the connection between these two? All right. Peter is building on his theme of humble submission to authority.

So this is the theme running into chapter three and then moving from wives to husbands. If you look with me, for example, in 2.13, 2.13, submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether the king or anyone in authority.

So we have submission here to human authority for the sake of the Lord. Then you'll notice in 2.18, servants be submissive to your masters with all respect.

[13 : 10] So slaves be submissive to your masters. Then you come to chapter three, verse one. In the same way, you wives be submissive to your own husbands.

And then in 3.7, you husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way. So we are to humbly submit ourselves to God's will by living with our wives in an understanding way.

This is God's will for believers in marriage. Now, let's focus a little bit more. We'll keep narrowing it down, boiling it down. Live with your wife in ways which are informed by and designed by her creator for her good and God's glory.

We're talking about you submitting yourself to God's will and how you live with your wife day to day as your most intimate partner in life and for life, gentlemen.

So the idea of live with jumps off the page at us because that's the command. You husbands in the same way, in that submissive attitude, that humble submissive attitude, live with your wives in an understanding way.

[14 : 32] Live with. This is a participle phrase carrying the force of a command. It's imperative. It's an imperative. So we have a command to live with our wives in this way.

As with wives submitting, Peter then brings equal weight to the command that believing husbands literally, literally live or dwell with their wives.

You think, man, why does he have to tell me in a command to live? I'm with her every day. So I'm living with her, Lord. I'm right here kind of thing.

No, we've got to understand what he's talking about here and the way of bringing these concepts together and helping us flesh out what it means for us to minister to our wives, even in ways that Jesus is ministering to our heart.

How do we turn that around now and offer that to our wife in the way of a shepherding ministry for her? So the idea here of live with or dwell with communicates, which is a more literal rendition, dwell with, communicates a strong commitment to support togetherness.

[15 : 50] Togetherness. So this isn't just doing the minimum. That's what we're talking about. This isn't just doing the minimum to keep the peace or to get along as if you were living together as roommates.

Now, you've come across this. You may even be tempted to do this at times. I'm just trying to keep the peace, dude. I'm just looking down and buttering my own waffle and doing my own thing, you know, kind of thing. No, that's not what this is.

Anything to keep the peace. Anything to keep her happy. Happy wife, happy life, as that comedian says. No, that's not what this is. This is something very different. In passages, in fact, like Deuteronomy 22, 13 and 24, 1, just reference those for you.

The verb form for live with is used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament to refer to sexual intimacy between a husband and a wife.

What does that tell us? This is an intentional closeness. I could say it this way, guys. What we're talking about here and you living with your wife, dwelling with your wife, is a cultivated closeness.

[17 : 00] This is what we're getting at. It's a cultivated closeness. And this is underscored by Peter's next phrase, in an understanding way. He just builds these concepts on top of each other in an understanding way.

Literally, according to knowledge. Or in a knowing way. Even better, according to God's way. According to God's wisdom.

God's truth. Now, sometimes, this word to know was used metaphorically to refer to marital intimacy. Just like dwell with or live with.

So, gentlemen, you are to know your wife. And you are to know her in this understanding way, through this cultivated closeness that moves into this very understanding, intimate way.

In an understanding way. So, this knowing is, I would say, this is how I understand this, as this is being pulled out of the text.

[18 : 08] This is a whole person response to your wife. Because she's not getting a little piece of you during the week. This is a whole person response.

And you're starting to probably catch on. This is going to take some time. And effort. You might even say, this is going to be hard. Yeah.

Yeah, so I'm going to make a statement right off the bat. Christian marriage ain't for manbies. It's for men. Who are following Jesus Christ. And that's the point that we want to make throughout the message this morning.

You are to know your wife in a whole person response to her. It takes in the physical, the sexual, the emotional, the spiritual aspects of your relationship with her.

Your response to her, to her, begins with your response to the Lord Jesus and to his truth in Scripture. Now, did you hear that?

[19 : 15] Your response to your wife in this way begins with your response to the Lord Jesus Christ and his truth in Scripture.

This is very convicting. So now, again, continuing to help us narrow this down and really begin to focus in on what we're dealing with. the main emphasis of living with her in an understanding way, according to Peter here, is to relate to her from your own reverence for the Lord, your own high and holy reverence for God, the fear of the Lord.

It comes from your own walk with God by what you know of God and His will for you in Christ Jesus. So guys, notice what I say here at the end.

We are not called to cluelessness. Now, you know what I mean by that? Because sometimes we joke about this and I get what we mean. Right? We say things to each other like, yeah, you know what?

Women are a total mystery to me, man. I don't get them. I don't get, I don't even try. I stopped trying a long time ago. It's just easier for me to be clueless about that. The less I know, the better.

[20 : 23] Who wants to get into a woman's head? And we make jokes about our wives like that. I'm sorry, we just do. And we shouldn't because, because the Lord is not calling us to a life of cluelessness toward our wives.

We can't cop out on that because it's hard or whatever. This is very, very different from an attitude like that.

Now, at this point you might say, alright Jeff, what is this understanding specifically that I'm supposed to pursue with it? I mean, what am I supposed to understand about and apply to my wife if she's a woman?

She's very different from me. Perhaps you would even say, you know, God brought us together and it's true that opposites attract because we don't have me. I mean, we're just, she's over here and I'm over here, you know, and all that kind of stuff.

Maybe you'll share some similar, that's not what we're talking about. Alright? It's not, we're not talking about your love language here. That's not what we're talking about. Okay?

[21 : 27] We're talking about something very, very different from all of that. Well, what am I supposed to understand about her? Alright, look, here's where we'll start. It's a two-fold kind of knowledge.

It's very basic but very important. It's a two-fold kind of knowledge. First of all, you are intentionally applying a spiritual, do you hear what I'm saying? A spiritual understanding.

That means, of the Holy Spirit. That means, of the truth, of the Scripture. As the Holy Spirit is your counselor to enlighten the eyes of your understanding, to help you know God's will for what He has for you being a husband.

What does it look like to husband in Jesus? I mean, what do I know without Christ? I don't know. This is what we're talking about. You're intentionally applying a spiritual understanding, first of all, of Christ.

Of your own walk with the Lord Jesus Christ as you grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. And then, secondly, you apply that spiritual understanding to your wife in your marriage relationship.

[22 : 33] So you're growing in your knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, you're spiritually growing in that, and you're growing in your knowledge of your wife. Those are not two things that we hold out here in opposite parts of the spectrum.

Those things are together. As you walk with and grow in the Lord, as you come to know Jesus, as you learn of Him as a disciple, a follower, you're also learning your wife.

And you're applying that walk with the Lord in your walk with your wife. They're not mutually exclusive. They're not done at opposite ends of this thing.

They're done together. This is the beauty of what God's created in this one soul union. So, here's what we'll say again.

Continuing to boil it down. Look, the most critical knowledge you hold about faithfully dwelling with your wife comes from your own relationship with the Lord.

[23 : 33] From your own understanding and application of God's will about marriage revealed to you where? In the Scripture. In the Scripture. Believing husbands must dwell with, command, must dwell with their wives according to a husband's knowledge of God's design for him and for his wife.

The question is, are we doing that? You know, and I know, that you can't take your wife where you haven't been. So, what is this called for us to do? It calls for us to get out in front.

Guys, is this familiar language to you from our last men's meeting? We're talking about a philosophy of ministry and discipleship. We can't take people where we haven't been. Right?

We can't tell people things that we don't know. So, it calls us as men in the way of our leadership to get out in front. That means discipline, diligence in our walk with the Lord.

And again, what's this coming back to? It's not for manbies. This is for men. It's hard. And it's hard because it's selfless. You have to deny self to live like this.

[24 : 47] So, what does that bring us back to? It brings us all the way back to our walk with Christ. Our love for Jesus overflowing in our love for our wife that I'm denying self in order to be able to live with another sinner and love her through her weaknesses, her moments, my moments.

somebody's got to lead the way. And we, as men, are called to be that way. It's follow me as I follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

And you guys have heard me say it before. As I stumble, as I make mistakes, as sometimes I act selfishly, foolishly, even rudely, please forgive me. And so, what does that call us to?

That calls us to a life of repenting, doesn't it? See, you will never, ever get to a place where you're doing this mistake free. So you have to be willing to turn to her as soon as, Lord, please, please forgive me.

I'm such a knothhead. When will I learn? You know? And then you, Suzanne, please forgive me. Please forgive me, hon. Thank you for loving me through this.

[26 : 01] Thank you for standing with me. Come on. Let's go. Then you go. But you go in Jesus. You go in Jesus.

And so this is by God's design. Let me say it another way. Guys, listen now. To live spiritually close to your wife, you must spiritually live close to the Lord Jesus.

It's a both and. This is God's will for husbands. Now, how does Peter tell you to do this with your wife? That's what you want to know. Well, how does he tell me to do this?

Well, Peter's emphasizing that it's about living with her and not around her. And what I want to make sure we understand this morning is the difference. You are commanded to live with her, not around her.

All right. I'm going to stop right here and say you know what's going to happen. All right. I see it in your faces. None of us are living this a hundred percent.

[27 : 07] Right. So every guy in here right now, ladies, keep those elbows where I can see them. Because every man in here right now is going, oh man, he said he was going to hammer us.

The word is telling us this is our calling. And you guys know, just like I do, the number one reason that we fall and falter at this is self.

So we're not pointing fingers at our wives, are we? Hmm? Okay. Every single man in here who's married is feeling the sting of conviction right now, including your pastor.

And so we're, and I'm sure this pastor, I won't ask you to raise your hand, Greg, but I know my friend. And we pray for each other. We're just men. But we're men trying to follow Jesus.

So guys, hang on with me. Greg and I are with you in this. This is the way that we talk to each other when we gather as men and we do men's ministry together. We talk to each other like this to build each other up in our faith.

[28 : 11] All right. So how does Peter tell us to do this? Well, again, you live with her, not around her. Here's another way of saying that. And this is what we're going to now flesh out in the middle of the verse.

You minister to her. Now think about that. You shepherd her. You learn to cherish her.

Now, isn't that what you're doing in your walk with Jesus? Do you love Jesus today as much as you want to love Him tomorrow? If you have a tomorrow? Aren't you growing in your love for the Lord?

Aren't you learning to love the Lord more as you know Him more, as you live with Him more? Right? That's the same thing with your wife. You minister to her.

You shepherd her. You learn to cherish her in the process of time out of your own walk with the Lord. So I'll throw this up there for you.

[29 : 10] You sacrificially love and cherish her by applying God's transforming work of grace in your heart to her heart. Say, Jeff, what do you mean by that? God is doing a work of grace in your heart.

It's at the heart level. The mind, will, the emotions, the desires, the affections of your heart. He's teaching you to say no to idols and yes to Christ as Lord of your heart.

And so out of that transforming work of grace that God is doing to sanctify you in your walk with the Lord, you turn out of your own heart to minister to her heart, to shepherd her heart in the same way as Jesus is shepherding your heart.

How does Jesus shepherd your heart? With great patience and long-suffering. How does Jesus shepherd your heart when you sin? He forgives you. He loves you.

He reminds you. Isn't this what our wives need in their moments? So the same grace by which you are being ministered to, that's the grace you want to minister to your wife.

[30 : 22] That's what I'm talking about. So minister, minister God's transforming grace to her. Here it goes. Now we're getting into the meat of this thing.

As to her frame. That's where we'll start. Now he's trying to help you understand what it means item by item in this verse to live with your, to dwell with your, to intentionally be close to your wife in an understanding way.

What kind of understanding way? Well, it starts with this. You need to understand her frame. That is, notice the verse, you husbands in the same way live with your wives, dwell with your wives in an understanding way.

Well, what do you mean? Well, first of all, as with someone weaker. As with someone weaker. Now grammatically, this isn't real complicated.

Grammatically, the text emphasis here is on her physical weakness, yes, compared with her husband. We understand that. Husbands or men are typically physically stronger than their wives.

[31 : 31] You know, we're the people that come to and they say, honey, will you open this for me? Just a minute. And we get it open. We do stuff like that. Will you carry this in for me?

Right? I don't want her to see me do the tap, tap, tap thing. I just want to grunt the thing out and get it done. Yeah. No, it's typically the case that we're stronger.

But that's, look, let's take it apart a little more and see if there's more of a nuance, because there is here, that helps us understand better. What is it that I'm to understand about her frame, Jeff?

How am I to live with her in an understanding way, taking into consideration this someone weaker concept here? Because it's more than just the physical thing, right? Yes, it is. All right? One verse that might help shed a little light on this for us in Scripture is Psalm 103, 14.

You don't have to turn there. I'm going to put it up on the screen. So, in rehearsing God's mercies to us, King David says this, For He, God, Himself, knows our frame.

[32 : 35] He is mindful that we are but dust. That's helpful. Conceptually in Scripture, as I think about God doing this with us, which is what I'm preaching out of right now, our own walk with the Lord being the most important aspect of how we serve, minister, shepherd our wife.

As God understands our frame, it means that He Himself personally knows us. He considers us, gentlemen, in our weaknesses, our limitations. God considers us in our tendencies, strengths, and abilities.

And thank the Lord, He doesn't leave us in that. He empowers us through the Spirit. So, to know our wife's frame, listen now, to know our wife's frame is to have a godly mindfulness.

You know, the Bible invented mindfulness a long time ago. This is for you and I, as husbands, to have a godly mindfulness about our wives, about my wife, about Suzanne.

I'm to have a godly mindfulness about her. Now, go to the opposite. Go to the antithesis of that and think about what that means. You're not apathetic.

[33 : 46] To have a godly mindfulness about her frame, you're not apathetic. You're not distant. You're not distracted.

I'm just trying to help you flesh this out a little bit. You're not uninvolved in her life. No. Instead, you are caringly invested in her overall well-being.

You consider her frame. All right? Now, look. Not to get too fine a point on this or too personal. You guys know, as our church, because you pray for us and you pray for her, Suzanne has this kidney disease.

Part of me understanding her frame is to understand how this disease works in her life. How it affects our marital life, our ministry, when we were raising our kids, et cetera, et cetera.

And so that has to be something that I proactively engage in for my wife. You may not have that. Your wife doesn't have a kidney disease or whatever. But what is it about your wife's frame as this someone weaker?

[34 : 52] It goes beyond the physical. That's a physical example, but beyond that. How are we caringly investing in our wives' overall well-being so that we're not distant?

Look, we're not allowing our hobbies to carry us off into some distant world and give us some me time away from all this.

No, we stay in the trenches. And so we stay connected. We're not distracted by our jobs and all that. We don't allow those kinds of things to trump our mindfulness about who our wife is day to day.

What is she facing? What's going on with her right now? What's happening? Greg and I have two wives who've just poured their heart and soul for weeks, if not months, into getting this conference off the ground.

You don't think we don't think about that? I saw it in her last night trying to talk to her. Hey! Hey! So you think about these things.

[36 : 01] Now look, here's what this yields for us. This kind of investment yields a knowledge that helps us understand her, particularly in this difference thing, in relationship to us as men.

So we're carefully and prayerfully considering this difference. We humbly relate to our wives in this understanding way, taking into consideration her frame.

Now, what is this not? Let's throw that up there and make sure we're clear about this. Look, this weakness is not an inferiority to us as a lesser person because we know that Scripture teaches spiritual equality and value between men and women in God's sight.

They're not lesser people. They're not lesser Christians or anything like that, according to Galatians 3, several other passages. No. Look, a husband serves his wife from the knowledge that she is precious to God.

She's not perfect. She's precious. The main idea is that you use your manliness to protect what is precious to God. You share in the treasure of God for your wife.

[37 : 23] She becomes valuable and a treasure to you because you realize and know that she's a treasure to God. She's precious to the Lord. So how dare we mess with what's precious to the Lord?

It's the same kind of concept we bring to His Word. We are careful with God's Word because God's Word is precious to God. And how dare we monkey with what's precious to God?

So we're careful students of the Word of the Lord. Now one aspect, I'm not going to harp here. I try not to harp.

One aspect of this protection involves safeguarding your wife and my wife from your sin. So I want to safeguard Suzanne from my sin.

Don't you? Want to safeguard your wife from your sin? You don't want to sin against your wife and live in that sin. Not seeking forgiveness. Not allowing the Lord to deal with your heart.

[38 : 25] To change you. To help you grow in grace. To sanctify you. That's what we're talking about. Part of what we're talking about here is helping you protect your wife from you.

I don't mean in your clumsiness. I don't mean in your stumbling along efforts to lead her. We all, we all understand that. They do too for the most part. I'm talking about when we're not walking with the Lord and we're sinning against the Lord in some way.

And now they're going to bear that. You understand, right? They're going to bear that. It's going to show up in my relationship with my wife. So what does that mean?

That means that that just draws me into a richer and deeper commitment to the Lord Jesus to walk with, walk closely with Christ. There's just so much at stake with that.

All right? Let me get to this second middle part that Peter's going to deal with. as to her femininity since she is a woman. This connects very, very closely with knowing her frame so that they go together.

[39 : 36] Now I want you to notice, guys, Peter doesn't say wife. He says woman. Isn't that interesting? He's emphasizing your wife's femininity. So while the world works hard in their rebellion against God to obliterate his distinctions between men and women, Christian husbands are charged to uphold them in service to their wives.

As I sacrificially serve Suzanne, as I consider her frame, as I take into consideration her femininity since she is a woman, I am to hold that distinction high in the Lord.

He made them male and female for a reason. So I don't want that distinction obliterated. She is distinctly woman in all glory to God for that wonderful distinction.

Amen? Amen. She is feminine. She is feminine. Husbands are to appreciate and encourage this in their wives.

Honey, I love it that you're feminine. I love it that you're a woman's woman. You're not trying to be a guy. Is it just me? Or have you noticed if you scroll through all of the offerings on Netflix and Amazon and all that, if you do that kind of thing, is it amazing how many movies have been out in the last decade with a female lead who is more man than woman?

[41 : 03] Have you noticed that? This is a not-so-subtle attempt for the world to train everybody to think that that's what femininity is. That's what womanhood is. You've got to be bad.

You've got to be willing to take out the bad guys as well or better than the guys can kind of stuff. So you know all the moves. You do all the, you know.

And so nobody wants to mess with you. Well, that has nothing to do with what we're talking about here. Your wife is feminine and we need to encourage that.

Look, we could say it this way and I think the ladies in here understand this and I see them practice. Our daughters, our daughters need to see mom caring for and carrying her femininity with much grace.

Amen. Our daughters need to see that. Mom's a woman's woman. Mom's a feminine woman. That's a good thing. That distinction is being held high.

[42 : 06] But our daughters need to see us as dads and husbands holding that bar where scripture holds it and keeping it there no matter what the world says.

Don't let the world tell you that's old fashioned if it's in the scripture. If we're doing what we're doing to honor the context and the teaching and the heart of scripture, you keep moving forward in it.

You set the bar, set the tone. Don't follow the culture. Here. This could include, I'll just give you this real quick.

This could include small things like opening the door for your wife. Do you ever remember the first time you opened the door for a woman and she blessed you out for it?

I do. I think it's only happened a couple times. I remember a lot of other times where I've opened the door for women and they've looked shocked and they've said things like, thank you and looked that.

[43 : 08] I remember one time I was opening the door for Suzanne somewhere out where we were letting her in and all and a woman walked by the front of the car and she looked over at me and literally hollered out across the parking lot, chivalry is not dead.

And you know what I said? She's worth it. Yeah. That's what Jesus tells me anyway. She's worth it.

She's precious to the Lord and I need to care about that. It might be you doing some of the sweaty grunt work around the house.

It may be noticing and complimenting her about her attire or her form or particularly her spiritual attributes displayed in her life in the unique ways of a woman.

It's such a beautiful thing. Now, you would say right away, well, that's going to take some intentionality. Yeah. That's going to take some presence of mind.

[44 : 15] That's going to take some diligence and some discipline in my life. I'm going to have to get beyond me. I'm going to have to become more self-forgetful and more wife-thoughtful.

And you know where that starts, right? It starts with Jesus. It starts with your walk with the Lord. Jesus will teach you how to be that man.

You have to notice. You have to notice. And to notice, you have to observe. To observe, you have to be thoughtful and prayerful and humble and self-forgetful.

Now, of all human beings on planet Earth, I think Christian husbands should far and away be the most thankful for God's gift of womanhood. Why? Why should Christian husbands be the most thankful for womanhood?

All right? Look, because the companionship of gracious womanhood is the most beautiful, most powerful, most honoring blessing to godly manhood on the Earth.

[45 : 24] And redeemed men, redeemed men are gifted by God's grace to most enjoy that magnificent blessing of God's heart to men. You say, wow, Jeff, this is just really elevating this whole concept of one-soul union in Christian marriage.

Yes, that's right, friends. That's what it's supposed to do. It's put the bar where it's supposed to be in God's design for men and women in marriage. It's supposed to make you more dependent on the Holy Spirit.

This isn't something you gut out, and this is certainly not something that's intuitive to us, gentlemen, right? We need Jesus to teach us how to be these kind of men.

And then we need to come alongside of each other and encourage each other in all of this. That's why. So to know your wife as a woman is as much an invitation for you to know bliss and blessing as it's a command for you to minister bliss and blessing in your marriage.

So, look, set your heart to steward God's gift of womanhood as you minister to your wife as a woman. As a woman.

[46 : 38] I think this is the point here. Now, I know the world wants us to believe that the path to true freedom and fulfillment for women is for them to be as much like men as possible and then to outperform men in all of life.

But you and I know that's a lie, right? So Christian men who love Jesus and their wives don't want she-men for wives. Do we? I don't want a she-man.

I want a woman. According to God's design. The word Peter uses for woman has the idea of, here, that which belongs to as a woman.

As that which belongs to. As that which is characteristic of or according to. That which is unique to women is what he's trying to say.

And that's what it means to be feminine. It's to be uniquely female. By God's good and gracious design, there are unique characteristics to femininity that we need to hold to.

[47 : 44] We don't worship this. We uphold it. We thank God for it. So this is what husbands need to value, uphold, and affirm in their wives as women.

Now, where do we think the current gender rebellion sprang from? It sprang from the roots and rottenness of feminism. And feminism throws off humble submission and asserts itself as a liberation movement.

How do you like that? Women's lib. And that's a lie. Because it offers anything but freedom. It's bondage to a lie.

A great, big, fat, satanic lie. Feminism and biblical femininity are enemies. God designed femininity. Man's wisdom came up with feminism.

Feminism births disorder and evil. And so, according to James 3, it is natural, earthly, and demonic. Now, let's call it what it is. Let's call it what Scripture calls it.

[48 : 49] So, please, gentlemen, don't cave to the idea that you can have some kind of hybrid and take the wisdom of the world and feminism and marry it to biblical femininity and come up with this really wonderful thing.

Don't mix the oil and water. Don't mix the lie with the truth. We need to uphold this. And so, I'm going to offer this to you now. Let me put this up here for you.

Perhaps the most effective and God-honoring way we can battle the aberrant ideology of feminism is for Jesus-loving husbands to honor their wife in Jesus' way.

So, you humbly and graciously serve your wife as to her frame, her femininity, and now finally, as to her fellowship. What does the text say? And show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life.

So, this, for me, this is the best way for you and I to keep our authority in check as husbands. So, what I'm saying is your love for the Lord Jesus flows into love for her which then follows in your honor for her.

[49 : 58] But don't miss where it starts. So, the idea here from Peter, you husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way.

First of all, is with someone weaker. Secondly, since she is a woman. And then finally, show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life. Now, look at how this breaks down. Show here, show has the idea to pay, to bestow what is due or what is owed.

So, to show her honor is to give her what she is due given the high value or the precious value she has to God. So, what's the point?

Well, let me get to honor and then I'll tell you. Honor, here, show her honor, honor of high value, high price, to revere. That's very straightforward. You render to your wife the honor your own reverence for God demands.

As you learn to value what He values. Why do I value my wife in the way that I do? Why do I want to value her biblically in the way that I do? Because I'm just following the Lord and what He values.

[51 : 09] I'm learning to value what He values. I'm learning to hold high what God holds high. I'm learning to consider what is precious by what God says is precious.

How many times have you heard me say, what is most precious to God on the earth? His Word and His people. What's going to survive everything burning? His Word and His people.

This is what's most precious to God. Are we giving ourselves to what's most precious to God? Now look, I'll say this. You don't worship your wife, guys.

You don't worship your wife. Don't go to the other end of this thing. You don't expect your wife to be what only God can be for you and in you. No. That's setting her up for failure.

You're asking her to be God. Don't do that. Instead, look, you show her the honor she's due as your fellow heir of the grace of life. Your spiritual equal.

[52 : 09] Someone who's going to share heaven with you. Someone who's God's affection is shed upon just as it is upon you. Someone living in that unmerited favor of God that she got saved the same way you did by the same God.

According to the same need, forgiveness for sin. So in the beauty and wonder of God's design for marriage, she is the single greatest and closest companion of your own soul as she shares in God's grace for life with you.

Boy, doesn't that make you want to treat her in a precious way? She is your most treasured soul companion on the face of the planet. And that's by God's design.

That's precious. That should be something that you safeguard very carefully. And the first way that we do that, guys, is by walking close to Jesus.

So that Jesus is constantly dealing with me. Now what that means is when I turn to deal with my wife in some aspect of weakness or sin, I'm fresh off the forgiveness grace thing with Jesus.

[53 : 22] Jesus. So what am I going to minister? Yeah. And if it doesn't work out that way, then I'm the one that goes back to the throne of grace and says, Lord, please forgive me.

Let me take another run at that. Now this is all very hard and very counterintuitive, right? This instruction is framed in Peter's discussion about suffering well for the Lord.

Did you notice that from the very beginning? This whole discussion of you being this kind of husband is couched within the context of suffering well under difficult circumstances and difficult people.

I'm not saying your wife's difficult. I'm just saying this is the context. So what are we saying? Marriage is hard. In a fallen world with fallen people, marriage is hard, but it's also delightful, even though it's difficult.

In the first century, this teaching was night and day different from how the world worked. Honoring your wife as your truest and closest friend.

[54 : 28] Yeah. Doing life together as equal partners of God's grace. Yeah. Sharing in the wonder of God's design for marriage made for a huge contrast to married life in both the Gentile and Jewish cultures.

Both of them. So Peter's writing something revolutionary here. And it's the same way with us. We need God's divine favor in Christ Jesus to live out this reality with joy, with a contentment, and with a godly, heavenly purpose.

So the grace of life here, this phrase is a beautiful phrase, revealing a very unique reality about Christian marriage. You can't say this about unbelievers unless you're talking about a common grace in the Lord.

But this is the grace of life. Living in the unmerited favor of Jesus and sharing that together as Christians is a beautiful thing.

Now I'm aware we have a few people in our congregation who are married to unbelievers and you don't know what an inspiration and encouragement you are to Greg and I. We try to tell you as we see you walking faithfully in Christ as we see you bearing up under the difficulties and hardships of your spouse not loving the Lord and following the Lord.

[55 : 54] We understand and we want to support you and come alongside of you but just know how much of an encouragement you are to us as you walk faithfully with the Lord.

I hope you let some of our people know as they pray for you in that reality. So Christian marriage is a life lived in God's grace and His divine favor so that we reflect a very rich fellowship of sharing in Christ together now and then forever.

Forever and eternity as we go to be with the Lord. As your wife stands with you in the company of people who are honoring Jesus Christ.

There she is right there with you right alongside of all these other people as we honor the Lord together. no marriage in heaven but there she is because she's saved and she's faithful.

She's a fellow heir of the grace of life. Finally let me give you this last one and I told you it will be very very brief. So that your prayers will not be hindered comes to point number two the warning of God.

[57 : 00] Now again this is all God's will but just to break it down for you a little bit. Peter adds this little little clause here at the end. So that your prayers will not be hindered. Very simply.

Guys if you're at odds with your wife you're at odds with the Lord. God will not allow Christian husbands to live in hypocrisy. So you come you're on your way to church and you've been giving your wife the silent treatment for the last couple days.

You better get that right. With her. Sit out there in the parking lot. Grab her hand and say I'm a knothead.

And then confess to her call it what God calls it. I've been rude. I've been unkind. I haven't been gentle. I certainly haven't been patient and forgiving towards you. Will you please forgive me? Look I'll just throw this up there before I make a couple more statements.

Your disobedience to the Lord to humbly live with your wife in an understanding way which we've been told live with in a command. It's imperative to relate to her heart to heart as your fellow heir of the grace of life.

[58 : 12] All of that not that will spiritually subvert or sabotage you in your own walk with the Lord. It will. Talk about something sobering. How can you say that your heart is in tune with the Lord when your heart is out of tune with your soulmate?

She ought to be first in line. Husbands your heart for your wife has to be tuned to or put in harmony with your heart for the Lord.

So it all keeps coming back to the same place doesn't it? Actually it all keeps coming back to the same person. You can't grow in grace with your wife if you're not growing in grace with the Lord Jesus.

So prayerfully seek God's wisdom. Seek his grace to honor your wife as you share in life with her.

I hope that you'll make every effort to come to the men's meetings that we have. We're trying to do them at least monthly right now. As we talk about a philosophy of ministry we're talking about discipleship and we're trying to emphasize how you are to walk with the Lord as men and how that translates into your married life, your role as a father and the different aspects of how you live out your Christianity, the different relationships.

[59 : 35] Well thank you for your kind attention. Let's pray together. We'll sing and then Greg will come to dismiss us. Dear Father in heaven we thank you for your wisdom as ministered to us through the Apostle Peter and his writings in 1st Peter.

Thank you for this wonderful testimony of submission to authority as our men, our husbands look to you to submit to your authority so that we will understand how to be a husband who honors Jesus Christ, who brings much glory to you in the way that we shepherd our wives.

I'm very aware Father as a husband myself of the convicting nature of these texts. I'm also very aware Lord because I know my brothers and they're my friends that we are dealing with matters here that we struggle in.

But we do struggle Lord. We're not just caving in and giving up. We don't want to be clueless. We don't want to be apathetic or distant. So please help us in the power of the Spirit in our own walk with Jesus to turn then to shepherd our wives with courage, with conviction and with compassion.

Help us to shepherd well Lord because we're called to it as men. And I pray that you will make our church family strong because we have men who are determined and disciplined, very diligent in their walk with you as they learn to do all that they do in love.

[61 : 15] Help us to love our wives as you love the church. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.