Lesson 5 – 1 Peter 3:1-12 The Christian Marriage Relationship
English Standard Version (ESV) Bethel Bible Resources

(1) Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the Word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct.

(3) Do not let your adorning be external --- the binding of the hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear --- but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious. For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.

(7) Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life --- so that your prayers may not be hindered.

(8) Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.

(10) For, "Whoever desires to love life ad see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil." (Psalms 34:12-16)

<u>Think on these things:</u>

1) Today's passage is one of the most misquoted in all of the Bible. The misquote goes like this: "Women must be subject to men." What is the actual wording of "subjection" in v.1?

   WIVES (not women) are to be subject to their OWN husbands (not men or other husbands). Subjection here means accepting/deferring to their husband's home leadership decisions.

2) So, we find this truth: subjection is a CHOICE! What decision does a woman make that puts her in the role of subjection or not? Now if a woman doesn't want to subject herself to any man, how does she do this?

   A woman is only subject to a man (her husband) if she chooses to marry. If she is unwilling to subject herself to a husband's will and decision-making, she should not marry.

3) Actually, this issue arises from the consequences of Adam & Eve's original sin. Take a look at Genesis 3:16. The language may seem unclear, but the Hebrew for "your desire shall be for your husband" means that the woman will desire to rule and lead the family. However, how does the verse end that points to marriage conflict?

   The "man" is to rule over the woman, but the woman will fight this, desiring the right to be the boss of the family (wear the pants…!).

4) Read 1 Corinthians 7:12-16 and 2 Corinthians 6:14-15. Christians should not marry non-Christians…but it seems to happen all the time. Other Christian/non-Christian marriages exist because salvation comes to one spouse as an adult after marrying. Should the two divorce? What counsel is found in these passages?

   According to 1 Cor. 7:12-16, a believer/non-believer marriage should remain together if by mutual consent. It is possible that one might lead the other into a relationship with Jesus. However, if the non-believing spouse wants out (because of this situation), they may divorce. 2 Cor. 6:14 says believers should NOT be yoked to unbelievers (pre-marital counsel).

5) Using 1 Corinthians 7:12-16, what could be the impact of 'living' God's Word in the family (v.1)?

   Believing spouses bring a "holiness" -- set apart for God -- influence upon the family. Children from the union, likewise, begin life under the holiness banner (a Christian home?). The spouse who lives his/her faith respectfully in the home MAY lead other family members to salvation by his/her pure and observable testimony (which may not even be verbal…).

6) Read Proverbs 31:30-31 and verses 3-6 above. What makes a woman "beautiful" and is very precious in God's sight? How is a woman's hope in God expressed in marriage (v.5)?

   God's version of womanly beauty is a gentle and quiet spirit. It has nothing to do with the external aids of hair style, clothing or jewelry. Proverbs cautions that charm is deceitful, and physical beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised! A woman's holiness is expressed by her submission to her own husband, as Sarah did with Abraham.

7) How do husbands contribute to a "good" marriage (v.7)? What is the consequence to them if they fail?

   Husbands must make an effort to understand their wives. They are to value and honor them. Husbands are the protectors of their families and joint heirs of salvation with their wives. If a husband doesn't do these things, his prayers to God will be hindered.

8) From v.7, how are men and women different and the same:

   Physically? **Men are generally bigger and stronger than women (the weaker vessel).**

   Spiritually? **There is no spiritual difference; they are "joint" heirs of salvation by God's grace.**

9) Verses 8-12 can be read about believers in general. However, let's keep the context in marriage. What 5 things are we to "keep in mind" (v.8)? When things turn ugly in the marriage, what can we do (v.9)?

   We are to keep in mind…unity…sympathy…family love…tenderness…and humility. When things in a marriage get tough and ugly, we must "refrain" from repaying evil for evil or reviling for reviling and, contrarily, ask God to bless our spouse.

People and situations I want to pray for this week: