

## Men and Marriage

**January 4, 2015**

Good morning CrossWinds. Welcome to 2015. With the new year we are returning to our series in the book of 1 Peter. When we left off our study, we finished 1 Peter 3:1-6. It was Peter's words to women on marriage. We called the message, "Ancient Beauty For The Modern Women." We saw how a wife makes herself extremely attractive to her husband when she assumes her God-given role of his helpmate. Ladies, if you missed that message, I encourage you to check it out online at [www.CrossWinds.tv](http://www.CrossWinds.tv). When we studied 1 Peter 3:1-6, which was addressed solely to women, I promised the men that we wouldn't ignore them. As soon as we returned to 1 Peter in January, we would study men and marriage. In 1 Peter 3:7 that is what we will do.

Men, before we jump into our study I want you to listen closely. As I speak, you will have a myriad of distractions. You will think of a text message you need to send, a Facebook post you need to make, a tweet you need to read or you will daydream about a football game you can't wait to see. Make a decision now, before the message begins, that you will not allow yourself to be distracted. Ignoring what we are about to talk about will lead to marital disaster. Applying what we will talk about will lead to marital success. It is your life and your wife. Make a decision to stay focused and learn.

We have a lot to say this morning but it comes out of only one verse: 1 Peter 3:7. Let's read it together.

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. 1 Peter 3:7 (ESV)

In this simple verse we find four clear instructions to husbands on how they should live with their wife for marital success. Let's jump in.

**A husband must learn his wife.**

Likewise husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way....

How is a husband to live with his wife? In an understanding way. The word for understanding is an interesting Greek word. It could also be translated as knowledge. It means that as a husband lives with his wife he is to grow in his understanding of his wife and change himself to accommodate her.

Men, when you get married you quickly realize that living with a wife is very different than living with other guys in a college dorm room. In college, you let out a loud bodily noise and you heard cheering from the other guys down the hall. Your wife doesn't do that. In college, you dried your laundry by stuffing a corner of your wet clothes under the edges of the ceiling tiles in your room. You try that with your wife at home and she is not impressed.

The longer a man lives with his wife and the longer he studies her the more he realizes she is very different. A wife is not just different in her plumbing. She is very different psychologically, emotionally and in every way. She is a very different creature.

Men, when you get married, you must study your wife, learn what she is different and accommodate yourself accordingly. Don't tell her she must change and become like one of the guys, you accommodate to her. There are two way you study her.

### **Learn how your wife is different because she is a woman.**

One of the first things a newly married husband learns is his wife is much more emotional than he is. Guys are usually more even tempered while a woman can go up and down like a yo-yo. Guys, you will learn there are certain times of the month your wife needs some space. You learn to accommodate her. She is different than you because she is a woman. Don't expect her to be a man. There are certain times it is not good to bring up tough topics. You accommodate to her.

You will also learn that your wife needs time. She just wants to sit with you and be together. She needs attention. Emotionally, men are like microwaves while women are like a CrockPot. Guys are busy all day at work. They come home late at night and can't wait to be with their wives. They don't understand why their wives are colder than an icicle toward them. That is because a wife is made emotionally different than a man. A husband needs to start loving over over the breakfast dishes. You need to text her throughout the day. You need to let her know you are thinking of her. That may not be needed for you as a guy but your wife is a woman and she is wired differently. Learn that and accommodate her.

You will also learn that your wife, because she is a woman, most likely has more insecurities about herself. She feels insecure about her looks. Guys need 16 seconds in front of a mirror while a wife can take 20 minutes and still be stressing over a hair that is out of place. That is just a woman for you. She also needs constant words of affirmation from her husband over her looks. She

needs to hear, “Honey, you look great.” “Honey, that dress looks good on you.” “Honey, you are beautiful.” She needs to hear continual words of affirmation, whereas a guy typically thinks, “I told you I loved you at the altar. If anything changes I will let you know.” Women are not wired that way. Godly husbands accommodate themselves to the way God made their wives and love them accordingly.

**Learn how she is different than you because she is your particular woman.**

While it is true that women are different from men and a husband is called to accommodate himself to his wife, every woman is different from every other woman. A husband is called to study his particular wife and live with her accordingly.

Some women are night owls. The later it gets, the more energy they have. When Cindy and I were first married, that was her. She used to work the night shift so after midnight the turbo kicked in. Other women are fading by 10 p.m. After 10: at night is not the time to get the credit card bill out and try to itemize the charges because your particular wife may be emotionally shot after 10 p.m.. Husbands, learn your particular wife and act accordingly.

Some women have a great desire for a clean house while other women can tolerate a degree of mess. Find out what your wife is like and act accordingly. If it stresses her out when you leave your socks and dirty underwear at the foot of the bed, don't do it. If it stresses her out when you leave your shoes in a disorganized heap by the door, organize your shoes.

In college, one of the highlights of the weekend for guys is eating super nachos on the couch while watching a football game. Where do college guys wipe their fingers? You guessed it, on the couch. You get married and your wife will not appreciate you using the couch as a napkin. Your particular wife might stress out when you try to eat anything in the living room. Don't stress out over this. Just accommodate yourself to your wife and keep the food in the kitchen. That is the husband who lives with his wife in an understanding way. He has studied her and learned how best to live with her and love her.

Now it is time for a test to see if you understand this point. The classic debate of every married couple is the toilet paper roll. Does it roll from the top or from the bottom? Almost every married couple has a different opinion. Today we will solve that age old debate. Men, what is the proper way for the paper to come off the roll? The answer is whatever way your wife wants. That is the proper way. You accommodate.

### **Learn her love language.**

A few years ago we studied the book of the Song of Solomon. In that study we learned about love languages. Every man and woman expresses and receive love in different ways. A husband that wants to live with his wife in an understanding way will learn his wife's love language and love her accordingly. Guys, what you do when you get home is you take these notes, put them in front of your wife and ask her to circle her love language. If she has more than one, tell her to order them so you know what makes her feel most loved. Learn the

way she needs to be loved and act accordingly. Here are the different love languages.

1. **Words Of Affirmation** — Some wives don't feel loved unless they hear words of affirmation and love from their husbands. They need to hear, "I love you. You are the best wife. You are beautiful. You make me so happy." If words of affirmation are your wife's love language, act accordingly.
2. **Gifts** — Some wives need gifts. When you go on a trip, she is looking forward to the surprise you bring home, like a T-shirt from a souvenir shop. Every time she opens her clothes drawer and sees that T-shirt she is reminded of your love for her. Women who have a love language of gifts are energized when you bring them flowers. She will put them in a vase and every time she sees them throughout the day she is reminded of your love. If that is the way your wife feels loved, act accordingly.
3. **Service** — This means help. Many mothers of young children find service has become their love language. Serving a wife is washing the laundry so she doesn't have to. It is taking care of the dishes after a meal so she can rest. It is reading the kids a bedtime story. It is watching the kids so she can go to the food store alone. If your wife is at a particularly busy time in your marriage, serving her many needs makes her feel loved. If that is your wife, love her accordingly.
4. **Time** — This is one of the hardest love languages for a man to speak. If you are a busy man, your wife may have this love language. She just wants your time. She just wants you to herself. She just wants you to sit with her on the

couch with her and just talk. She wants you to take her to dinner and stare into her eyes not your smartphone. This is the love language of many women. Husbands, this is very hard for us to speak because we always feel we need to be doing something. How do you speak it? To make sure you have time with your wife, schedule time with your wife on your calendar. If you don't schedule it, somebody else will take it. You set aside time with her first. If she is No. 1, schedule time with her first in your calendar. Husbands, if this is your wife act accordingly.

5. **Touch** — Some wives need to be touched to feel loved. She just wants you to hold her hand when you are driving in the car or walking in public. When you are in church she wants you to put her arm over her shoulder so she can snuggle in close. If that is your wife's love language, make sure you are speaking it.

This afternoon, the wise husband will sit down with his wife, give her this sheet and ask her to circle her love languages. If she has more than one, ask her to rank them. The wise husband will learn his particular wife and act accordingly.

### **A husband must honor his wife.**

Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman...

The little underlined phrase in your notes hides some interesting language in the Greek. It says husbands show honor to the woman but the word *woman* is literally "the feminine one". The idea is that a husband should honor his wife because she is feminine. The very femininity of a wife should cause a masculine

husband to show honor to her. When a man doesn't honor his wife, what is implied is he has a lack of masculinity. He is a boy in a man's body. Real men honor a wife because she is feminine, she is a woman. How does a masculine husband honor the femininity of his wife?

### **Honor your wife in your speech.**

Masculine men always speak well of their wives. He speaks well of her to their friends, at work and under his breath. He doesn't call her the old lady, the nag, the witch, or the whine. Masculine men don't just speak well of their wives when they speak to others about her, they always honor their wives in their speech to her. Masculine men never cuss at their wives. They never swear at their wives. Boys yell and scream at people. Masculine men don't yell and scream at their wives. They don't text their wives nasty messages. That is boyishness, not manliness. A masculine man always honors his wife in his speech because she is a woman and deserves to be honored and protected.

### **Honor your wife with your time.**

Masculine men don't become so involved in their work that they have nothing but leftovers to give their wife week after week. Truly masculine men are willing to cancel hunting trips if they haven't spent any time with their wives in a month. A masculine man make sure she knows she comes first in his time. Masculine men give their wives their full attention when they talk. Masculine men leave work at work because they honor their wives by giving them exclusive time.



### **Honor your wife financially.**

Some men are perpetual low achievers. That is not because they have to be but it is because they don't like the hard work and stress that comes with a higher paying job. If they went back to school they wouldn't be able to play video games at night. If they had a more demanding job they wouldn't have as much free time to hang out with the guys.

That is not honoring a wife. A masculine man works hard and improves himself financially so his wife doesn't always have the burden of needing to work so the basic necessities of life are met. Your wife is feminine. If her dreams are to be a full-time wife and mother that gives herself to love, nurturing and caring for your children, husbands you need to honor your wife by doing everything you can to make that possible. You are a blessed man if your wife wants to stay home and give her entire life to caring for your children. Honor her financially by doing your best to enable her to do that.

### **Honor your wife parentally.**

Some men think their only responsibility with children is to make them, not to care for them. They refuse to change diapers. They watch the news instead of reading bedtime stories. They think it is the wife's responsibility to help the kids with their school work while they go play racquetball with the guys at the gym. Newsflash! Parenting is not a wife's responsibility. The educational and spiritual life of the children in the home is a husband's responsibility before God. His wife only helps him accomplish it. The husband who steps away from parental responsibilities dishonors his wife and is disobeying his calling from God

to ensure the spiritual and intellectual growth of his children. Husbands, it is your responsibility to have your children in church. It is your responsibility to have your kids here on Wednesday night for AWANA and youth groups. It is your responsibility to make sure there is Bible reading and prayer in the home. All your wife should do is help you accomplish the plan. Husbands, get involved in your kids' lives. Honor your wife parentally.

**Honor your wife emotionally.**

A wife needs intimacy. She craves full transparency with her husband. She needs to know he is not an onion with layers upon layers she needs to constantly peel back to get to what he is really like on the inside. Husbands, while you crave physical intimacy, she craves emotional intimacy. If you are hiding things from her, if you are hiding your struggles or your fears from her you are sowing seeds of disaster for your marriage. You honor your wife by trusting her with the real you. It is only when she knows the real you and she forgives you and loves the real you that you will experience the kind of love that God has designed marriage to offer. There is incredible satisfaction when you wife knows you as you truly are and forgives you and loves you just the same.

Your wife also needs to know that when she shares herself as she really is and if she is upset and emotional you will still listen to her, love her, and be faithful to her. She needs to know she can share how she really feels and you will still honor her emotionally. Honor your wife by meeting her emotional needs.

**A husband must protect his wife.**

...showing honor to the woman, as the weaker vessel...

This little phrase can get some women upset. They think the Bible is telling women they are inferior to men. What does the Bible mean when it says a woman is a weaker vessel? It certainly doesn't mean a woman is weaker intellectually. Many women are just as intelligent as men. Some wives are much more intelligent than their husbands. It certainly doesn't mean a wife is inferior when it comes to organization or leadership.

What does it mean to be a weaker vessel? This generic description is talking about any way that a woman is not on par with her husband. I thought of three ways where a wife is a weaker vessel than her husband. His greatness in these areas should be used to protect her weakness because she is vulnerable around him.

### **Protect your wife physically.**

While a wife typically lives longer than a husband, she is not as strong as a husband. When a husband and wife fight and things begin to get physical, a wife has a reason to fear. A husband can be like a bully picking on someone who is much weaker. A husband should never threaten his wife physically. A husband should never hit his wife. He should never throw her on the couch. When he is angry, he should never tower over her with his stature, raise his voice or raise his hand as if to strike her. He shouldn't throw things around the house. He shouldn't grab her chin and press his face into hers to threaten her. A husband is to be his wife's protector and provider, not her bully. If that is you, you need to repent of your sin before God right now. You need to get on your knees

before Jesus and get on your knees before your wife and ask for forgiveness from God and from her. You need to repent. Call your bullying what it is. Sin.

When a husband and wife get in an argument, the husband does not raise his voice. He does not threaten and yell and cuss. You know what a masculine man does when his wife is angry and yelling at him? He takes it. He refuses to respond to her anger in the same way. He absorbs her anger like a sponge. He continues to love and treat his wife with kindness. Only a fool is drawn into a spitting contest. The model for true masculinity in the face of conflict is Jesus. Men, Jesus is your hero. He is a truly masculine man. He has the ultimate strength. He created the entire universe by himself. He will one day defeat Satan and all his armies by only a single word, yet look at how he took abuse as he was led to the cross to die for us out of love.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. Isaiah 53:7 (ESV)

True masculinity is strength under control. When there is a fight in the house, a masculine husband follows the path of Jesus and protects his wife from any abuse that would come from his mouth or his muscles. He has greater strength but it is strength under control.

### **Protect your wife emotionally.**

We learned this earlier is the message. A wife is more emotionally delicate than a husband. Guys are better at venting, getting it over with and moving on. You vent on your wife and use hurtful words, you call her names and

say vicious things about her, while there may be no visible marks on her body, you have bloodied her spirit. Your wife is emotionally delicate.

In more than 20 years of ministry I have seen this many times. A husband and wife come in for marital counseling and the husband was consistently mean and vicious with his words toward her. He thinks they have a few things to work through. They have verbal fights but he can get over them. It doesn't work that way for his wife. She holds those hurts on the inside. On the outside she looks great but she is hemorrhaging in her soul. She is hurt. She just can't let the words go. In the counseling the wife just says, "I'm done. I have no feelings for him. I don't want to work on it any more. It is over with." The guy has no idea what happened. What happened is he beat her to a pulp in her emotional world and she is destroyed. The average guy could take it but the average woman can't. This is why husbands must protect their wives emotionally.

Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. Colossians 3:19 (ESV)

As a husband you protect your wife's emotional world from abuse that comes from your mouth. She is more emotionally delicate than you are. You are her protector.

**Protect your wife from misuse of your authority.**

In marriage, the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. That is right out of Ephesians 5. A wife is to submit to the leadership of her husband. Sometimes a husband may ask his wife to do things that are not wrong but they are hard. An example of that comes from our family. As many of you know, my mother recently died of cancer. When she was diagnosed, our

family drove to be with my parents for a few weeks. Even as we left it was apparent that both mom and dad were not well. Only days after we returned one of us needed to fly back to Pennsylvania to help them. I asked Cindy because of her caregiving skills and because I needed to work at church if she would be the caretaker of my mom and dad. She spent the entire summer apart from her children. There was a lot of tears. She missed them terribly but she did it because I asked her. She wanted to be my helpmate and care for my parents in ways I couldn't. A husband has the authority to ask his wife those type of requests. Some husbands take that authority and abuse it.

They use it to serve themselves rather than to serve the family and others. Abuse of that authority is realizing you don't have enough money in your budget for a new motorcycle or fishing boat so you ask your wife to go to work so her income can cover the payments of your new fishing boat. That is misuse of your authority. Maybe your wife wants to be a stay-at-home mother and she wants to bless you with many children but instead you tell her she needs to work so you can live a a higher level of affluence while you deny her desire to bless you by bearing and caring for your children. That is abuse of your authority.

### **A husband must follow Christ with his wife.**

...since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

Most men look at following Christ as a woman's job. The typical U.S. congregation is 61 percent female and only 39 percent male.<sup>1</sup> On an average

---

<sup>1</sup> "U.S. Congregational Life Survey – Key Findings," 29 October 2003, <[www.uscongregations.org/key.htm](http://www.uscongregations.org/key.htm)>

Sunday, there are 13 million more women in church than men.<sup>2</sup> On an average Sunday, 25 percent of married women attend church without their husbands.<sup>3</sup> This is where guys get it all wrong. Following Jesus is not a womanly thing. It is also not an individual thing. It is a couple thing. A husband and wife are to follow Christ together. The health of our relationship with God is so closely connected to the health of our relationship with one another. Husbands, if you let your marriage go sour or you treat your wife, that is one of God's chosen daughters, with dishonor or disrespect, God promises he will not answer your prayers. It just won't work. Your marital life and your prayer life are connected at the hip.

On the flip side, when you have a great marriage that is transparent, genuine and loving, you can expect God to answer your prayers. The health of your relationship with God and the health of your marriage is connected.

As I thought about this, I remembered Genesis 2:18.

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Genesis 2:18 (ESV)

The idea is that a man needs a helper and God created the first wife to be Adam's helpmate. We often think about this in purely pragmatic terms. A wife is great at making dinner, cleaning the house, and being a best friend.

As I thought about this, I began to wonder if there is more to this than meets the eye. Since a husband and wife are so connected to God and to one

---

<sup>2</sup> This statistic comes from Barna's figures on male/female worship attendance, overlaid upon the Census 2000 numbers for adult men and women in the U.S. population.

<sup>3</sup> I came up with this figure by taking the U.S. Census 2000 numbers for total married adults and overlaying Barna Research's year 2000 percentages of male vs. female attendance at weekly worship services. The figures suggest at least 24.5 million married women attend church on a given weekend, but only 19 million married men attend. That's 5.5 million more women, or 22.5%. The actual number may be even higher, because married people attend church in much greater numbers than singles.

another, maybe a wife is given to her husband not just to be his practical helpmate but to be his spiritual helpmate as well. A husband and wife are to follow Christ together.

How do you know if you are following Christ with your wife? Husbands, when was the last time you prayed with her? When was the last time you read the Bible with her? If you can't remember, you are following Christ alone.

I know when I am struggling, I am blessed to be able to text my wife and ask for prayer. When we do our family Bible study, I am always amazed by the insight Cindy brings to our family time in the Bible together. It is things I would never think about. I guess that shouldn't surprise me. God made her different than a man. He made her to help me in ways I can't help myself.

Today is the first day of a new year. Husbands, make 2015 different. Repent of following Christ by yourself and follow Christ together with you wife. Before you drift off to sleep at night, reach over and grab your wife's hand and pray for her, pray for your children, pray for your church and pray for needs of those around you. Let her pray for you and whatever else God brings to her mind. In the morning, before you leave for work give her a big hug and hold her tight. Before you let her go, pray for her. Thank God for her and pray for her day. Turn off the television and read a chapter of the Bible together. Grow in Christ with your wife.



Husbands, learn your wife, honor your wife, protect your wife and follow  
God with your wife, so that nothing may hinder your prayers



Dr. Kurt Trucksess is ordained in the Evangelical Free Church of America. He enjoys reading, writing, time with his family and wrestling with his sons. His favorite topics are preaching and ancient rhetoric. Feel free to contact him at [www.Christ2RCulture.com](http://www.Christ2RCulture.com) ([www.c2rc.com](http://www.c2rc.com))

© You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material in any format provided (1) you credit the author, (2) modifications are clearly marked, (3) you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction, (4) you include the web address (<http://www.Christ2RCulture.com>) on the copied resource.

