

TITLE: "Winning a Wayward Husband" (Part 4)

PASSAGE: 1 Peter 3:4

THEME: *Winning a wayward husband*

NUMBER: 10071PE3.5-6(68)

DATE: October 5, 2007

Read Passage

What a delight to come back to this passage one last time

I love truth. I love God's Word. We who feel this way have at times been accused by nay-sayers, even religious ones, of worshiping the Bible rather than God. That's far from t/truth. God has magnified His Word according to His name (Psa. 138:2). His Word & His name are reflective of His Person, who He is. We love Him for who He is & therefore, love His name & His Word.

I'm also grateful for the many encouraging notes & comments that many of you have given me over t/past few weeks. Several of you have gone out of you way to encourage me to "worry not" about how long I preach or t/number of weeks I spend in a particular passage.

I have a special love & concern for you gals w/unsaved husbands. You have followed this series w/an extra-intense interest. We are sympathetic to t/difficulties you face & we will not cease to pray for you and for t/salvation of your husbands.

Structure of 1 Peter

You might be interested to note that as far as the overall structure of 1 Peter is concerned, there are 5 major themes that work together to buttress the overall message.

The Holy Spirit inspired Peter to address these 5 motifs which I will give you by way of one word each:

1) Suffering; 2) Behavior; 3) Deference; 4) Example; 5) Hope. {repeat}

Suffering

God's notice of how we will all suffer even as JC suffered. We will at times be treated unfairly, but that's ok. Context of persecution (darkness hates the light). When we are hated it's for that reason.

Suffering comes in various forms (1:6 - "various trials"). Sometimes it's t/direct result of living in a fallen universe // we live in a pagan land (2:12) - in that case we suffer for/sake of righteousness (3:14). It is good, as Peter reminds us later in ch. 4, to suffer as "a Christian" (v. 16). Then - suffer at t/hands of t/hosts of hell (5:8-10).

Behavior

God's concern for our behavior. We can't control our circumstances; but as believers, we can control our behavior as we come under control of JC. 1:13-15 - 2:12 - 3:1-2 - 3:16

Deference

God's desire that we defer to others in authority over us. That we submit ourselves, subject ourselves, and respect those that God has placed in positions of leadership whether it be in the state, church, or home. Regardless of whether those in such positions are righteous or unrighteous. As such by deferring to them we defer to God's sovereignty. 1:13; 1:18; 3:1; 5:5.

Example

God's desire that we follow in the example of JC. 2:21. Name "Christian" in 4:16 - suffer as a Christian in that name glorify God.

Hope

We live in t/sure hope of future glory. 1:3, 1:21, 1:13. Hope in JC is t/scarlet thread that holds it all together. It is how we endure suffering // fuel that fires t/furnace of our behavior. To live t/Christian life is to live in hope.

John Calvin, in his Institutes ==>

Some men, not content with [Christ] alone, [go] hither and thither from one hope to another; even if they concern themselves chiefly with him, they nevertheless stray from the right way in turning some part of their thinking in another direction. Yet such distrust cannot creep in where men have once for all truly known the abundance of his blessings.

Here we have 5 motifs {restate} that Peter's underlying message: "Hope for the Hurting."

The hurting, the suffering, and the message of hope is relevant to believing women married to unbelieving men

Remember, 1st c. culture was highly religious. "Atheists" were those who didn't believe in all t/gods (Xns = atheists). Culture was male-dominated. There was no religious freedom recognized for women.

Plutarch said, "A wife should not acquire her own friends, but should make her husband's friends her own. The gods are the first and most significant friends. For this reason, it is proper for a wife to recognize only those gods whom her husband worships . . ." [quote by Schreiner, 153]

Refusing to engage in t/pagan worship that so characterized Rome & an unsaved husband, was costly.

Even today, for a pagan husband, it can be costly. Everybody worships something. Atheists worship t/creature rather than t/creator; Hedonists worship pleasure; Nihilists worship emptiness and despair; Humanists worship man. Materialists worship things.

Even if you're married to a non-religious pagan, he still is going to want to draw you into his pagan worship of things or pleasure.

As a believer, there are going to be times when, out of t/joy of your obedience to JC, you will smile and say "No, I can't partake in that." That itself may incur you husband's displeasure (to say t/least).

So what does a woman, married to an unbelieving husband do?

Does she leave? // resign herself to a life of independence? // reject her husband's position of leadership? // Preach to him? Nag at him? // Constantly tell him to repent and believe? // Stick gospel tracts on the bottom of his beer cans?

What does she do?

God's Word speaks loudly to this question here in 1 Peter 3:1-6.

Ways that a wife will win a wayward husbands to the Word without a word.

I. Winning a Wayward Husband to the Word Without a Word (vv. 1-6)

Heart of the passage is in the first two verses ==>

In the same way, you wives be subject to your own husbands, so that if any [of them] are disobedient to the Word, they may be won without a word through the behavior of their wives, as they observe your pure behavior in fear [of God].

Main point is {cite} & under that are 2 main points ==>

A. Be Subject to Him (1a)

B. Be An Example to Him (1b-6)

A. Be Subject to Him (1a)

1. Willingly, lovingly, place yourself under his unique position of leadership in the family

This is a place that God has given him, even if he refuses to recognize it. So be subject to him, be submissive in your role as his helper (Gen. 2:18).

a. I know the world chafes at that

I was visiting a friend's CH a few yrs ago & he was touching on this subject & a woman who was visiting for t/first time got up and walked out in a huff.

Lost people think like lost people & that's no surprise. You need to be sure you're not falling prey to that mind-set & conform your mind to God's Word, not t/transient whims of our godless culture.

When I was graduating from seminary I had to pass an oral examination before several faculty members. All sorts of questions, from theological to practical. One of t/faculty asked me about me beliefs as to t/role of men & women. I told him. He replied, "Well, what are you going to do if you have a woman in your church who is a CEO of a large company?" I didn't understand t/relevance of t/? Somehow that changes things??!

Here's where you trust in God's wisdom & His providential love for you and you do what may in some ways seem contrary ==>

In the same way, you wives, be subject to your own husbands so that if any [of them] are disobedient to the Word, they may be won without a word through the behavior of their wives, as they observe your pure behavior in fear [of God].

b. Notice - it's to "one's own husband"

Not to any man, not to someone else's spouse.

... be subject to your own husbands ...

This is so important! We see t/same thing in Eph. 5:22 and Col. 3:18

Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

(1) Very personal

This is not the subjection of a slave; there is a sense of intimacy: "Not any husband; not any man; YOUR husband." It's possessive: "The husband who is yours".

(a) There's a sense of mutual ownership in marriage

A sense in which the wife owns her husband & the husband owns his wife.

Paul describes that in relation to sexual intimacy in 1 Cor. 7:2-4

But because of immoralities, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband {does}; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

That's t/kind of intimacy that God has in mind when God says ==>

Wives, be subject to YOUR husbands...

c. Here's one way to win him to the Word without one

You don't fight him. You come along side of him. You adorn yourself w/humility & grace. You recognize that he is, by God's appointment, t/leader in t/home & in your marriage.

Eph. 5:22 **Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.**

Herein is t/call to walk by faith, not by sight // trust in t/Lord w/all your heart, not in your own understanding, acknowledging him in all your ways so that He may direct your way (Pro. 3:5-6).

I. *Winning a Wayward Husband to the Word Without a Word*

A. *Be Subject to Him (1a)*

B. *Be An Example to Him (1b-6)*

Remember, we said that this was one of the 5 major motifs of 1 Peter. How consistent is your life (what you do, say, attitudes) w/your profession of faith.

How do you wear your doctrine? (Titus 2:10)

1. *Focus on your Behavior (1b-2)*

[disobedient husbands] may be won [to the word] without a word through the behavior of their wives, as they observe your pure behavior in fear [of God].

2. *Forsake the Fashion Show (3-4)*

And do not let your adornment be [simply] external– braiding the hair and wearing gold– or the wearing of dresses.

But [let it be] the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable nature of a gentle and quiet spirit which is precious in God's sight.

a. Forget the fashion show & focus on t/jewels of the heart

(1) Here Peter calls it ==>

... the hidden person of the heart ...

(a) The "hidden man of the heart"

All of you believing women have little man inside of you! Of course, that's not what it means - it's talking about the new creation of your heart. Let that show. Be what you are as a believer in JC.

(b) That new man includes ==>

... the imperishable nature of a gentle and quiet spirit ...

The external, t/hair, t/jewelry, t/nice clothes, none of that lasts forever. That's t/contrast between vv. 3 & 4. Verse 3 is temporal; v. 4 eternal.

i. Beauty quickly fades

All t/externals of appearance; wealth; power are as a vapor. It doesn't last; it's temporal, not eternal & we who live in light of eternal hope are to place our hope on that which is eternal.

When you're 20 beauty is on display; when you're 50 it's only a light switch away.

Nobody in t/eschatological K.D. is going to be bragging about how good they looked or how much stuff they owned.

We will have eternal bragging rights for 1 thing ==>

2 Corinthians 10:17 **But he who boasts, let him boast in the Lord.**

Galatians 6:14 **14 But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.**

1. Focus on your Behavior (1b-2)

Not words or tactics, but behavior.

2. Forsake the Fashion Show (3-4)

Not outward adornment, but inward, behavior.

3. Follow in Sarah's Example (5-6)

For in this way in former times the holy women whose hope was in God used to adorn themselves . . .

a. Peter's moving from the general to the specific

The "holy women of former times" would bring to mind t/Matriarchs of Israel. Including Sarah, but also women whose hope in God was evident ==> Rebecca; Rachel; Ruth and Hannah.

(1) Whoever they were, these models of holiness were characterized by their hope

Their hope wasn't in their husbands or in themselves or in their circumstances. It was where?

b. Peter says, "Remember how they adorned themselves"

(word "adorn" - κόσμεω - brings us back to v. 3 . . .).

(1) Here in verse 5 it's Iterative Imperfect ("used to")

Imperfect tense indicates repetition. Repeated action; a practice; a customary way of behaving.

What was their practice? How did they customarily adorn themselves?

... by submitting to their own husbands.

c. Same verb w saw in verse 1 (ὑποτάσσω)

ὑπο - under + τασσω - to arrange in order. Thus, "to submit or subject yourself under another."

d. All of this is pictured in the "excellent wife" of Prov. 31

{read vv. 10-31}

e. Verse 6 - Here's the specific example that Peter's working toward

Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham . . .

(1) Here we have a stronger word - not ὑποτάσσω (to submit) but ὑπακούω (to listen or obey)

... Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord . . .

(2) What's that all about?!

I've tried to get some mileage out of this with my wife the past few weeks. It hasn't worked.

Last night Giana took her bath & Lois was drying her hair. I was laying in bed reading. I heard t/hair dryer turn off & then I heard Giana ask her, "Mommy, do you like being a wife?" Of course I put my book down at that point. Lois said, "Why do you ask?" Giana said that she was curious. There was a bit of a pause, so I called out, "So what's your answer?" There was another pause & then t/hair-dryer went on again!

(a) κύριος is a word that has a broad range of meaning

Can be used as a title of divinity (confessing Jesus as Lord is confessing that He is Almighty God) to a title of respect, such as "Sir." Translated "sir" in Acts 16:30 - the Philippian Jailer - "Sirs what must I do to be saved?"

It was used as a title of respect to relatives. TAJ uses a feminine form of the word in his 2nd Epistle, 2 John vv. 1 and 5 (translated "lady").

(b) If we go to Genesis 18:12 in the LXX {define}

... Sarah laughed . . . and said [to Abraham], "After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" "My lord" being "my κύριος."

i. What was going on there?

Remember, in Gen. 17 God appears to Abraham, who's 99 y/o. God says to him:

1 "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless. 2 "And I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly."

4 "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.

6 "And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you.7 "And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.

God sovereignly called Abraham, he "elected" or "chose" him out of t/rest of mankind. And God established his covenant w/him, what we call, "The Abrahamic Covenant" - t/sign of which was circumcision.

This was a unilateral covenant. God would unconditionally make from Abraham a great people (the Jews) out of which would come t/Savior of the World.

That Savior would come by way of Sarah ==>

15 Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. 16 "And I will bless her, and indeed I will give you a son by her. Then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall come from her." 17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?"

That sets the stage for chapter 18.

God and two holy angels appear to Abraham. What we have is called in theology a "theophany" - God appearing in a representative form - God is spirit (here as a man).

1 Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. 2 And when he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the earth, 3 and said, "My lord, if now I have found favor in your sight, please do not pass your servant by. 4 "Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; 5 and I will bring a piece of bread, that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on, since you have visited your servant." And they said, "So do, as you have said." 6 So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it, and make bread cakes." 7 Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf, and gave it to the servant; and he hurried to prepare it. 8 And he took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed it before them; and he was standing by them under the tree as they ate. 9 Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" And he said, "Behold, in the tent." 10

And he said, "I will surely return to you at this time next year; and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him.¹¹ Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing.¹² And Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?"

(c) This is the only record of Sarah specifically referring to Abraham as "lord"

The Jews commonly referred to this event. John Gill cites an example from antiquity which reads:

"the wife ought to take care of the family, to educate her children, to serve and minister to her husband in all things, "calling him her own lord"; which is what we learn from the example of Sarah, who called Abraham her lord, saying, "my lord is old"." [Sepher Musar apud Drus. de Quaesitis, Ep. 54. & in loc., Cited by Gill]

i. Clearly, Peter had this event in mind

But I don't believe this is the only event he has in mind. When he writes here in 1 Peter 3:7 ==>

Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham . . .

He uses a "constative aorist" which would indicate that he's not focusing so much on a specific situation, but rather as a pattern of life.

Then in saying ==>

. . . calling him lord . . .

Peter uses a present participle. It's a present tense. It's not "she called him lord" as in that specific instance of Genesis 18:12, but she customarily referred to him in that way.

(3) Peter is looking beyond the words to the behavior (v. 5)

Winning a wayward husband to the word without a word.

We don't have time to get into all the aspects of Sarah's life and behavior. Like most all of the OT saints, she was far from perfect.

One writer observes ==>

"Let's be honest: there are times in the biblical account when Sarah comes off as a bit of a shrew. She was the wife of the great patriarch Abraham, so we tend to think of her with a degree of dignity and honor. But reading the biblical account of her life, it is impossible not to notice that she sometimes behaved badly. She could throw fits and tantrums. She knew how to be manipulative. And she was even known to get mean. At one time or another, she exemplified almost every trait associated with the typical caricature of a churlish woman. She could be impatient, temperamental, conniving, cantankerous, cruel, flighty, pouty, jealous, erratic, unreasonable, a whiner, a complainer, or a nag. By no means was she always the perfect model of godly grace and meekness." [MacArthur, 12 Extraordinary Women, 27]

He goes on to say ==>

"Sarah's faults are obvious enough. She was certainly fallen. Her faith, at times, grew weak. Her own heart sometimes led her astray. Those shortcomings were conspicuous and undeniable. If those things were all we knew about Sarah, we might be tempted to picture her as . . . relentlessly self-centered and temperamental. . . . Fortunately, there was much more to Sarah than that. She had important strengths as well as glaring weaknesses. Scripture actually commends her for her faith and steadfastness. . . . Although there were those terrible flashes of petulance and even cruelty (reminders that Sarah was an embattled, fleshy creature like us), Sarah's life on the whole is actually characterized by humility, meekness, hospitality, faithfulness, deep affection for her husband, sincere love toward God, and hope that never died." [MacArthur, 12 Extraordinary Women, 29]

We read about the faith of Abraham in places like Romans chapter 4 and Galatians chapter 3.

Hebrews 11:8 **By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.**

Keep in mind that when Abraham was called by God from Ur to a place of which he knew nothing, Sarah, in faith, went with him.

Prophet Isaiah connects both Abraham and Sarah in 51:2

“Look to Abraham your father, And to Sarah who gave birth to you in pain; When he was one I called him, Then I blessed him and multiplied him.”

So, not only is Abraham enlisted in the Hebrews 11 Hall of Faith ==>

11 By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised;

f. Peter concludes by saying ==>

... and you have become her children if you do what is right ...

(1) Gals - when you submit to your husbands and adorn yourself with Christlike character - you become Sarah's offspring

But, note this (condition attached) ==>

if you do what is right ...

(a) Back to behavior

"Doing right" is a favorite theme of Peter.

2:15 For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. (true even if that foolish man is your husband).
2:20 For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer {for it} you patiently endure it, this {finds} favor with God.
3:17 For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.
4:19 Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

... and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

(b) Peter is likely paraphrasing the thought of Proverbs 3:25

Do not be afraid of sudden fear, Nor of the onslaught of the wicked when it comes.

What does this mean {restate}?

Do the right thing and don't be frightened by any fear (word means "terror"). This isn't fear of God. It's fear of man. What man. Specifically, your unsaved husband.

Prov. 3:25 Do not be afraid of sudden fear, Nor of the onslaught of the wicked when it comes.

In this case the "onslaught of the wicked" would be intimidation from unsaved husbands who are hostile to your commitment to do good.

There will be times that a believing wife's "doing good" will involve obeying God over that of men (her husband) & that may incur his anger. Yet, she is to place her hope (and trust) in God, not being frightened,

knowing that He rewards those who obey him. He will vindicate you on the last day.

1 Peter 3:13-17.

Abraham (Romans 4) the father of all who are justified and walk by faith. Sarah, here, who is the mother of all women who follow in her example.

I. Winning a Wayward Husband to the Word Without a Word

A. Be Subject to Him (1a)

B. Be An Example to Him (1b-6)

1. Focus on your Behavior (1b-2)

2. Forsake the Fashion Show (3-4)

3. Follow in Sarah's Example (5-6)