

1 Peter #5 - Honor in Real Marriage

- Alrighty. If you got a Bible, go to 1 Peter 3, we're gonna be in verses one through seven. And the context today is marriage. So the sermon title is "Honor in a Real Marriage". And for the Christian, we don't have a perfect marriage, but we can have a real marriage and give it to God who is perfect. And our good God does perfect work through imperfect people, which is really the hope for marriage. And I just wanna start by saying that, I believe in marriage. I love marriage and my wife's gonna be up in a little bit. Hopefully she feels the same, we'll just check in. And I believe that marriage is one of the greatest opportunities that God gives us to learn how to be more like Jesus Christ, because it's about serving. It's about considering. It's about selflessness in a world that really encourages selfishness. And just a little bit of a backstory. My wife, Grace and I met at 17. Every couples got a story. We met at age 17. We married at age 21, and now we've been faithfully married to each other for 28 years. We've got five kids. One of those kids is also married. So we're coming into that next season of life. We've had the honor of teaching on marriage all over the world, doing lots of events and talking in the media. And, recently God has really given us a great opportunity to join Marriage Today. So in light of this sermon, if you're thinking I'd like more marriage resources, our encouragement would be go to Marriage Today, and you'll find an incredible library of resources, from one of our pastors, Jimmy Evans, who's one of our overseers. And in that they've invited us onto the platform. So we've got a real marriage podcast and every week it will be free for you, wherever you find your podcasts. So we just encourage you to sign up for that. And then every week Grace and I, in addition to this message we'll be able to serve you in that way. But today's topic is really significant because it's about the issue of honor. So everything in 1 Peter 2 & 3 is how do you honor those who are under your authority and those who are in authority. And this issue of honor is one of the most important things that is required for a marriage to be happy and to sustain itself. And there's a researcher named John Gottman and he is one of the leading researchers on the earth in marriage. And he did a very comprehensive clinical study over the course of many years, looking at couples in a controlled environment and trying to determine are there certain variables or factors that contribute to divorce? Which couples make it and which couples don't? And his research is quite legendary. And he talks about four horsemen that he calls them. And he says that these are four things that when they are present in a marriage, they almost guarantee the failure of the marriage. And he's able to predict divorce with a 93% success rate, which is pretty incredible. And one of the four horsemen is contempt. And what he's saying is, if any one of these four things are present in the marriage, the odds of divorce go down. The odds of viability are greatly damaged, that the marriage can't sustain itself when there are these four things, and one of them is contempt. And contempt is when someone has no regard for you. They don't respect you. They have no honor for you. They don't appreciate you. We've all been around people that have contempt for us. And it just shows in their body language, their vocal intonation, just their response. They're almost disgusted by us. And when that is present in a marriage, ultimately it's in the process of dying. And the reason that I tell you this is because in 1 Peter, he's gonna give us the anecdote. And that is honor. If you respect, honor, regard, cherish someone, it actually enables you to fight against contempt,

which can ultimately destroy the marriage. And when we're talking about honor, we're saying that contempt is when you are literally criticizing the worst things about your spouse. Honor is where you're encouraging the best things in your spouse. And what it is, it's calling them to the fullness of who they could be and the kind of relationship that you could have, if both of you would honor God by honoring one another. So we'll just jump right in. And for those of you who are note takers, he's going to have instructions for married couples, where one is a Christian and the other is not. A difficult circumstance. And then he's gonna have specific things to say to the wives on how to honor their husbands. And then he's gonna save the final word for husbands on how to honor their wives. So he kind of hits everybody in all kinds of marriages. And he starts by honoring your non-Christian spouse, in 1 Peter 3:1-2 likewise wives be subject to your own husbands so that even if some of them do not obey the word. So this is a Christian woman married to a non-Christian man. They may be one without a word by the conduct of their wives when they see your respectful and pure conduct. So he's talking here about a specific marriage where the wife knows Jesus and the husband doesn't, and this makes a very complicated set of circumstances. How do you get into this? Well, for those of you are single, don't date anyone who's not a believer. If you're a believer, don't marry anyone who's not a believer, if you're a believer that ultimately you can't both build a life together, if you're starting with different foundation. If you love Jesus and believe the Bible and they don't love Jesus and don't believe the Bible, then whatever you build is going to have a hard time staying up because the foundation is not the same. And so for those of you who are single, don't even consider a romantic relationship with somebody who's a non-believer. That's not God's best for you. And if they don't understand Jesus in the Bible, the truth is they don't really even understand you. If the most important person to you is Jesus and the highest authority is the Bible. But there are three ways that people get into these kinds of marriages. Number one, a believer is dating and ultimately marries a non-believer. They weren't supposed to, but they did. And now they're married. The question is, well, what do we do? And you're asking for additional grace so that the unbelieving spouse would come to know Jesus so that you can have a believing family. The other way this happens is that two people profess faith in Christ. Maybe they're going to church, Bible study, praying together. And they get married, and then at some point in the marriage, one of the spouses, husband or wife stops going to church, stops reading their Bible, stops praying, stops walking with Jesus. And in that point, it's a real crisis 'cause I thought I was marrying a believer. We started as believers. And now they're not living as a believer. Are they a believer? Are they a non-believer? You know, where are we at? And if you have kids in the equation, this is very concerning. And most of the time, if it is one or the other who ceases going to church and walking with God, it's usually the husband. That there's 60% of church attenders are female, only 40% are male. There's between 11 and 13 million more women than men in church. Which means a lot of them are women who thought they were marrying a Christian man. And then he stopped living for Christ. And so she's going to church by herself and oftentimes trying to get the children to go with her. But sometimes they're also divided, following the example of the father. The third way we get there, two unbelievers marry, your non-Christians, and then one of you gets saved and the other doesn't. And then the question is, well, what do we do now? And so that's what he's referring to here. And so what he says is, first of all, if you're the non-Christian in the marriage, you are looking at the life of the Christian and

you are making a determination about whether you see their Christianity as a benefit or a detriment to the relationship. Therefore, the Christian is sort of the resume for Christianity in front of the non-Christian. So you want to conduct yourself in such a way that you're showing the benefits and blessings of Jesus in the Bible, in hopes that the spouse will also come to maybe open the Bible and meet Jesus. Give you a little bit of cultural context. Most of the time, if a wife converts, the husband does not. Not to discourage anyone, but to say that statistically, it is opposite that if a husband converts, most of the time the wife does. And so what he's writing to here, it can apply to a husband or a wife that's married to a non-believer, but most of the time, the unbeliever, if there is an unequally yoked marriage to use Paul's language from Corinthians, it is the wife who finds herself in this circumstance. And in that culture, the husband was really the ultimate authority in the home. A wife didn't have the same legal rights as we now see in the Western world. Wherever Christianity spreads, the equality of women and the rights of women is elevated. Wherever Christianity does not spread, that is not true. In that day, Christianity had not yet widely spread. So the wife, the woman, she couldn't own property. She couldn't vote. She couldn't testify in court. She was really in some regards, considered the property of her husband. And furthermore, he was the one who would make all the religious decisions for the family. And he would decide what their religion was and how they would practice it. And she really had no say in the matter. She was just to be one who was sort of silent and just sort of followed the leadership of the husband. So that puts her in this very difficult position. But what she has done here, she has talked to her husband about the Lord because it says that he won't obey the word. And what that means is, he's heard the word. The only way you can choose not to obey the word is if you've heard the word and then you choose not to obey it. So what she's done, let's say she's bought him a Bible. She's taken him to church. She's to him about Jesus. She's bought some books that they could read together about Christianity. I mean, she's tried to introduce Jesus into the conversation, but he's just not willing to obey the word of God. And oftentimes for men, the reason is very simple. If I'm a man, particularly in that cultural context that is in authority, I don't wanna come under any authority. I don't want anybody to tell me I'm wrong. I don't wanna tell... I don't want anyone to tell me that I need to change. And so oftentimes for a man, it's an understanding. Man, if I come to Jesus, I'm not an ultimate authority. And if I accept the Bible, I got to change some things in my life. So this is where it becomes a heart problem and a will problem. Which means that the way that the spouse, who is a believer, conducts themselves in their character is incredibly important. So what he's saying is this, believer married to non-believer, you've brought in Jesus, Christianity, Bible brought them to church. You've opened the conversation and they have just sort of dropped the hammer, made their decision, rendered their verdict. My answer is no. I'm not gonna pray with you. I'm not gonna read the Bible. I'm not gonna go to church. I'm out! What he's saying then is, you try to find ways to honor them, to love them, to encourage them, to serve them. Conduct yourself with such character, that even if they are not being very kind to you, they're seeing that you are responding to them in the way that God ordains. And as a result, you're trying to make Christianity as winsome, as encouraging, as motivating as is possible under the circumstances. And I would say this too. He's gonna talk about honoring wife, honoring husband. Both need to honor. And just practically the way you do this is, first and foremost, just ask your spouse. Because sometimes in a marriage, you can try to honor your spouse. You're trying to do

something to love them, to respect them, to appreciate them, to thank them. And then they don't respond with really much gratitude. And that can be very disheartening. I did that for you. I said that to you. I served you in that way. I bought you that gift. I was trying to be good to you and you don't even appreciate me. And oftentimes we are not asking the spouse, what would be honoring to you? What would be loving to you? What would be helpful to you? Because ultimately it changes from person to person. Let's say in a marriage, let's use the wife for an example. One wife might make a certain comment to her husband and her husband would find that very dishonoring. I felt very, very dishonored. Another woman could make that same comment to her husband and he doesn't feel dishonored. And so there's not a list of what counts as honorable and dishonorable. Instead, the best thing is to ask the spouse. How do you feel loved? What do you need? How could I bless you? What would be honoring to you? What would be respectful to you? What would be encouraging to you? And then listening so that they can help instruct you and how to apply what's a very general biblical principle. And ultimately what happens here for the believer that is married to the unbeliever. Sometimes, here's God, here's your spouse. You can get in the middle. You can continually try and push Jesus down their throat. You can continually try and fight with them about Christianity. And what happens is, you're in the middle. And ultimately the conflict is between the unbelieving spouse and Jesus. And by honoring them, what you literally do, you get out of the way. And you let Jesus deal with them. Because if you're in the middle, Jesus can't really deal with them, 'cause you're in the way. And they can't really deal with Jesus 'cause you're in the way. And sometimes the unbelieving spouse really has a problem and a conflict with the Lord, and as long as the believing spouse is putting themselves in the middle, by being dishonoring, by being pushy, by being demanding, by being domineering, by being overbearing, by being wrongly emotional. Then what happens is, Jesus and that person really never get to work things out, because you continually make yourself the issue. By honoring the Lord and honoring them, you get out and you're letting the Lord deal with them. And that's ultimately in hopes that they would be one. And that's what he says the goal is. The goal is not to win the argument, the goal is to win the spouse. Which means that the arguments do matter but sometimes we choose not to have the arguments because ultimately our goal is to win the spouse, and until they know Jesus, all they're going to do is argue with us. Okay. So that's his instruction for those who are married to a non-Christian as a Christian. And if that's you, you're gonna need prayer, support, love. The context of this would have been the church's gathering, and this letter comes and it's read. And they were generally probably smaller congregations, large house churches sometimes. And that would mean that they all knew who was being spoken of here principally, right? All these couples are sitting together and then there's that lady sitting by herself, and she doesn't have a husband. And they all know her husband doesn't know the Lord. The point of putting this in the family of God was so that the family of God would then rally support around that woman. How do we love you? How do we pray for you? How do we support you? How do we encourage you? How do we make church family, a healthy place for you and your children? And then that would encourage the men in the church to pursue relationship with her husband. Because sometimes men can have conversations that go a little easier, than if the wife brings up the subject. And then the church family would be encouraged to support that woman. And the men would be encouraged to pursue that man. And so that's the context of what is going on there and should

happen in all of our churches. He then speaks to wives and he talks about wives who are believers married to believing husbands. What can she do to honor her husband to mitigate against contempt in the marriage and allow it to be as healthy as possible? And so he says that this way, wives honoring their husbands 1 Peter 3:3-6, do not let your adorning be external. Your appearance is not the primary motive for the believer, but it's character. The braiding of 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. And then he gives a case study as Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him Lord, which in that culture was a respectful term. And you are her children spiritually speaking. If you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening. So what I wanna do at this point, I wanna invite up my wife, Grace. And I'm gonna interview her and ask you some particular questions sweetheart, about marriage and honoring, according to the principles here for the ladies, are you ready?

- Sure.

- Okay. Here's my first question. Why does God encourage women to emphasize internal character over external appearance?

- Well, out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks. So God focuses on the heart because on the outside, we, as women can cover up a lot of our flaws and things that we don't like about ourselves to appear holy or godly or good, put together.

- Put together.

- But God doesn't care about that. It's not that we shouldn't care about our appearance, but we shouldn't have that as our primary concern. And so, you know, as we go about our day, we should be concerned with being in the word, being in communication with the Lord so that he can be building our character. And then when we go to speak and invest in our marriages, our children, our friends, other relationships, then we have words of wisdom. We have character to lean on from the Lord so that we can share that with others.

- And so would you agree, he's not saying that your physical health and wellbeing matter just your soul, both matter. But your character is primary and your appearance or your outward wellbeing is secondary.

- Yes.

- How does what he encourages allow something that our culture doesn't? Meaning, when he talks about hairstyles, clothing, jewelry, sort of all of the appearance, that requires a certain income. I mean, you've got to make a certain amount of money to spend your whole day at the spa and wear certain designer clothes and certain jewelry. And instead he focuses on character.

Why is that something that is a more attainable goal for all women than some of the beauty that the culture respires to?

- Because if we're God's daughters, He wants us to have access to that. And we shouldn't have to make a certain amount of money or have a certain job or have kids or not have kids or whatever the life stages. It doesn't matter. It surpasses all of that. We have access to God's word. We have access to relationship with God to build that character. And so He doesn't, make it something that's not accessible to every woman. And so we need to make ourselves prudently invested in that and not just say, "Oh, I'm just gonna, yeah, go to the spa and look nice on the outside." We need to make that investment. And we can. He doesn't want to prohibit us from being close with Him. So He makes it accessible to everyone.

- She about a quiet, he talks about rather the woman having a quiet and gentle spirit. What does that... Don't yell at me. What does that mean? What does that not mean? Quiet and gentle spirit.

- Yeah. It's not something that women usually like to talk about. This section of scripture is not volunteered to speak on by most women.

- And just so you know, this is why I brought you up. I'm not gonna go there.

- I would say that it doesn't mean that we're doormats or mousy or that we don't ever speak up. So I wanna be clear about that. It doesn't allow for abuse to happen in a home ever. And so, but what it does mean is that if we are, again, spending time in the word, spending time with the Lord to build our character, He's going to give us that peace. He's gonna give us that kindness and gentleness that the Holy Spirit gives, the fruit to us. So that's how we can interact with our spouse. That in that scripture that you just talked about, that's how we win them over with a quiet, gentle spirit. Because if they're seeing that they're not gonna wanna be adversarial. There are men that are still angry and struggle with that. But if they look at their wife and their wife is being kind in general, rather than critical or nagging or attacking.

- Yelling, screaming, probably cussing.

- Then they're gonna be more prone to the Holy Spirit has a place to work with them there to say, "Hey, she's not fighting you." But it doesn't mean that we can't be honest about things. It means that we should be able to have respectful, honorable conversations without getting into a major battle about it. And if you aren't in that place in your marriage, it's important to work toward that. And a wife, if she sees this, she's cantankerous and critical, and she's convicted of that. She needs to go first and she needs to start changing that attitude and asking the Holy Spirit to change that spirit in her, to a quiet, gentle spirit so that she has a space to honor her husband with how she speaks and acts toward him.

- When I mentioned at the beginning, the John Gottman research, one of the four horsemen as well just comes to mind, is a harsh startup. Meaning the way that the conversation begins, we've

all got those issues in our marriage where it's like a grenade with a pin pulled, like that's a sensitive issue. I need to approach it carefully, otherwise it always blows up. And what he says is on issues in general, but those sensitive issues in particular, if it starts with a harsh startup, it has a very bad ending. And a harsh startup is dishonoring, raising the voice, negative name-calling, cussing, threatening, starting, you know, very aggressively.

- Tearing down.

- Tearing down. Coming very aggressively into the conversation. And what that does, it causes a fight or flight response from the spouse, the one spouse who then feels like they're being attacked or torn down, they either escalate and now it's a real war of wills or one just leaves. So like, that's it, I'm out. I'm gonna be in the other room. I'm ignoring you. I'm gonna get in the car and drive away. They just literally flee. And in neither occasion, are you really resolving the issue and you're breaking the relationship. And so-

- Right. We had a lot of this to work through because we came from opposite backgrounds.

- Yeah, maybe explain that.

- And so I thought that being quiet in a passive way-

- Not saying anything.

- Not saying anything, was somehow helpful, but that wasn't enabling that was not helping you. It wasn't even honoring you because I wasn't able to express the things that were concerns for me or are hard for me. And so then it frustrated you more and you came from the opposite background. I came from a silent home. You came from an opposite background. And so we had to take years to figure that out. And it was hard.

- Well, 'cause you wrongly thought that quiet spirit meant silent spirit.

- Correct, yeah.

- And it's not speaking difficult things in a kind tone. It was speaking nothing.

- And becoming resentful.

- Yeah, and I'm a strong personality, and I-

- What?

- Yeah, I know. I know. I know. I know. I was gonna tell you that. Sorry I sprung it on you here under the live audience, but then as well, there were things that hurt you that I didn't know that

they had hurt you 'cause you hadn't said anything.

- Right.

- And then I felt horrible because all these years I'm, you know, so when you say that, that really destroys me. It's like, I didn't know that. And you say, why I didn't say anything, 'cause I didn't wanna dishonor you. So part of the honor is honoring the relationship.

- Absolutely.

- And honoring the Lord in relationship, which means we do need to talk about this, but we're gonna talk about it in a respectful way that builds the relationship and doesn't blow it up. And I think that's the heart of what He means by a quiet and gentle.

- Yes.

- It's a respectful tone. It's trying to work through the issue so that you can enjoy the relationship.

- It's wanting the best for each other ultimately, and not just what's best for me.

- And then why is Sarah, He mentioned Sarah, why is she a hopeful example for women? Sometimes when Bible examples get thrown out, we almost turn them into superheroes. Like they were amazing and perfect. And He says, you know, look at Sarah, she's a good example.

- Well like Peter, we're in the book of 1 Peter, like Peter, she's not perfect. In fact, she does some pretty horrific things. And she lies and Peter denied Christ, but Sarah really denied God's promise to her and His power to do the promise to her. And so he had her husband's sleep with another woman.

- That's one of the craziest stories in the whole Bible. The wife says, why don't you go get another wife in addition to me and get her pregnant. What could possibly go wrong? I mean, that was Sarah's idea. And so, you know, I would say, don't be exactly like Sarah. But she had some faith issues where she struggled to believe God's promises. When God told her she was gonna be a mother, she literally laughed at God. So they named their son, Isaac, which means laughter because God always gets the last laugh and is faithful to his promises. But she's not a perfect woman. And there's days that she has some really bad advice and she disbelieves the promises of God. Why is that-

- That's hopeful because we're imperfect as well. And we need to know that God has his mercy and grace for us and his forgiveness for us when we mess up, whether it's big or small. And so again, we need to come to Him, come back to Him and go to Him for the character that He wants to develop in us. And when we do that, then we seek good fruit.

- Well and Abraham and Sarah, they both struggled to have faith in God. They committed adultery. He had a child out of wedlock that was her idea. And the moral of the story is God worked it through with them. And so we now look to Abraham and Sarah kind of like mother and father in the faith. And I think the encouragement there is, man if God could work through that crazy family and figure out that crazy marriage. Then there's hope for your crazy family and your crazy marriage.

- Yes, amen.

- Why is it important? He talks about wives in relationship to their husband. Why is it important that everyone understand but especially the women that when the scriptures talk about husbands and wives, it's not talking in general about men and women. These are not principles for women in relationship in general to men, but just in the context of marriage.

- Well, he specifically says your own husband. And so in the scriptures you just read. And so he's talking about your spouse, not anyone else's spouse, not some general man on the street, because that submission, that respect, it builds trust in your relationship. And you only wanna build that type of intimacy and trust in a marriage relationship. You don't wanna build that with someone else. You can't trust some random... I can't trust some random man to tell me what's best for my life. He doesn't know me best.

- Well, and he's not looking out for your best.

- He's not looking out for my best.

- And that's where I think sometimes people read this and they wrongly perceive a chauvinistically environment, which is the women's shut up and do what the men say. That's not what He's saying. He's saying in the context of a marriage, honor one another and watch your tone so that you can build your marriage relationship. This isn't about men and women in general. It's about one man and one woman in particular.

- It would be really hard to respect all men 'cause amen don't-

- Or to obey all men.

- Exactly, exactly.

- That's the last thing we would tell our daughters.

- No, no, it's actually dangerous.

- As you leave the house, just whatever men say, do that, because they're in charge. That's a chauvinistically abusive environment that sometimes gets wrongly taught in some Christian

circles as a result of a misunderstanding of this scripture. And then lastly, which common fears do women have? He talks about, do not fear and don't give into that, which is frightening. And he's saying that in marriage, oftentimes there are women who do love the Lord and they do honor the Lord in their heart, but then they struggle to really walk out there, their relationship with God, with their husband, because there are things that they're afraid of and caused them to be frightened.

- Well, I mean, for a woman, especially if she has any hurt, which every woman does, trauma, whatever in her history, it can be fearful to have a quiet, gentle spirit. 'Cause we feel like we need to self-protect somehow, even if it's just emotionally. And, I think for women, these words are, we really have to trust the Lord for that emotional protection in our marriage. When we have to be quiet and gentle about our tone, we have to trust the Lord to work on our husband's heart. For me, I had to learn that I can't change you. And actually I don't wanna change you. I want God to change you because I don't, God knows what's best for you. He has the person that He wants you to be. My job is to come along and encourage what God wants for you. And so I had to learn that because I kept trying to push you to be this or that. And it didn't go well.

- Yeah I don't .

- And it ultimately wasn't God's best, even though I loved you, it wasn't God's best for you. And so I had to trust that God was going to interact with you and I needed to be doing what God called me to do. And ultimately you're responsible for what He calls you to do. And when I stand before the Lord, I can't say, "Well, my husband didn't do this. So I couldn't do." It's not... This is my relationship with the Lord. And so when He asks me to do these things, I have to trust and let my faith be strong enough that I know God's gonna use my obedience to minister to you, to minister to my kids, to minister to other women. And I've seen the fruit of that. I can honestly testify to that, that when I'm in my most frustrated times in our history of our marriage, and I say, "God, what do I do?" And he says, "Be quiet. I will act." Or, "Say these things be courageous, but be kind." And He's so faithful, whatever he asks me to do and I respond to that. He's faithful. And I know that now, I still don't do it perfectly, but I know that now. And, and we joke about, you know, I seek God on you.

- Well, your specific line is, you seek the Holy Spirit of it.

- Yes. Because when I- So maybe explain that feminine ministry of seeking the Holy Spirit on your husband.

- That's part of my quiet, gentle spirits that I... I let the Holy Spirit be powerful. Yeah. I just, when I'm frustrated I can't express my frustration or if I do it, won't be quiet and gentle. I spend time in prayer and say, "Lord, I could be wrong in this, convict me if I'm wrong. If he's wrong, then I need you and your Holy Spirit, I need your spirit to interact with that and convict him of whatever he's doing that's hurtful. Or give us an opportunity and my tone to be able to speak about it." I spent a lot of time in prayer when we have those hard times that we're wrestling through

because God's the one that will communicate to us what we need to do in every situation. And so there are a lot of fears. It's fearful for women to think, "Oh, I have to be quiet and gentle and I can't say." That's not what it's saying, but having that, we only get that quiet, gentle spirit from the Lord. He gifts it to us and then we can respond that way to our spouse.

- Well, and I would say from a husband's perspective, if you know, my wife is for me, she's for us, she saved, she's Godly, she's trustworthy, she's helpful. She means well, and she doesn't just yell all the time. But if there is a moment where she's more passionate or intense, you're like, okay, this must be important. 'Cause she's not always, you know, super emotional and high volume. But if she gets emotional, I mean, this must be very important. In the same way too, if she brings something up, she usually does that, if it really is important. She's not nitpicking on everything and nagging on everything. It's when she speaks, it's because it registers of importance. It's significant enough to bring up. And so I think that's part of the quiet in general. It's saying, "You know, I'm not gonna bring everything up and I'm not gonna yell all the time, but there are times that I will bring something up or my emotions will be a little bit stronger. And that's to indicate that this is really significant. And if a husband has that, it's easier to receive because it's not always, if you're living in an environment where it's always emotion and high volume, you never know what's important.

- Yeah.

- And see a man just tends to ignore all of it.

- Yes.

- Which then creates more volume, which is counterproductive. So I'm gonna talk about the men or to the men, and then I'll bring you up to pray for the women at the end. Thank you for helping me. And thank you for enduring me for 28 years. So that's kind of Peter's instructions to the wives. And then he gives instructions to the husbands in 1 Peter 3:7. Likewise, so it's similar, right? God has instructions for husband and wife. And I would just, real briefly just state he's not saying, "If your wife does this, then you do that. Or if your husband does this, then you do that." The wife is responsible in the sight of God for her conduct. And the husband is responsible in the sight of God for his conduct. And if one or the other is not doing what God instructs, then you each need to take the courage to go first. And he says, likewise, husbands live with your wives in an understanding way. That's empathy, compassion, sympathy, looking at it from her perspective. Showing honor equally important, men and women both need honor. Showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life. You're one and so if you hurt her, you're hurting yourself so that your prayers may not be hindered. Just one little line, but there's a lot packed in. First thing he says is understanding, and what that is, it's for a man trying to figure out what's it like to be her? What's it like to live with me. Okay. And just for a moment, all of you men just think about that. What if I was married to me? I'd tell you if I was married to me, one of us would have to die because we couldn't. It would just be too much. So I have to think about not just what is her character, but what is her life

having to live with me? And it's then looking at it from her perspective. Is she working? Has stress? You know, does she have kids and is really busy? Is she physically ill and struggling? You know, does she have drama with extended family or parents getting older and needing attention? It's a husband trying to do something that men quite frankly, most of the time are very poor at. And that's empathy. And what empathy is, it's sitting in someone's seat to see things from their perspective. And frankly, most men it's here how we see it. And we don't want you to inconvenience us. We want you to help us. And understanding way says, no, no, let me first sit in my wife's seat, try to see things as she sees them and try and determine what's it like to be her? So that then when I serve her, when I encourage her, I'm doing so in a way that is most beneficial to her. And this is really the difference between being a servant and being selfish. The Bible has nothing good to say about selfishness. And it has only good things to say about servanthood. This is the way that the husband begins to serve his wife, and not to be selfish. If he doesn't try and understand her, he's going to be selfish. Here's what I think. Here's what I want. Here's what I need. Here's how I feel. Here's how I see it. Serving is, how do you see it? What do you feel? What do you need? How can I learn to be more compassionate, understanding toward you? And then he talks as well to the men about honoring the woman as the weaker vessel. And I believe what he's speaking here in large part is physical. That is a general rule. Men can use their physical strength to intimidate their wives. And most women will tell you that at some point in their life, they've had a man like this and their life. May have been a dad who was intimidating. He was overbearing. He was a little scary. You know, look down on you, get in your face, raise his voice. If they've been in a dating relationship with any sort of guy like that, it's an abusive relationship. And it's a very scary place for a woman to be. And just think about it for the men. Very rarely does a man spend much of his day feeling unsafe. I tend not to feel unsafe. I've been even in some very dangerous environments, I've had guns pulled on me. I've been in third world countries in the middle of all kinds of craziness. And I've never really struggled with feeling unsafe. As a man you tend to feel like, well, if something happens, I can handle myself. And I will. The more I spend time with my wife and also our daughters, I realized that women oftentimes don't feel the same way as men. They feel more vulnerable. They feel like they could be overwhelmed. They could be abused. They could be harmed. They could be intimidated. They could be assaulted. Now think for a moment, if the man who is stronger is not for her, but as against her, then all of a sudden, not only is he there to protect her from harm, he is the one most likely to harm her. That puts the woman in a very horrific environment. It's almost like a prisoner of war. Like I'm stuck in relationship, marriage in house with a man who is dangerous to me. And at any time could harm me or at least use his physical strength to intimidate me, to dominate me. That's a terrifying place for a woman. But many men have found this to be a successful way because they lead through bullying. And some guys are just flat out bullies. And I'll just say this to the men. We learned this in the military. If you find a weakness, what do you do? Expose and exploit it. In sports, if you can find a weakness, you exploit it, you expose it. You use it to your advantage. Same thing in business. If you're in the marketplace, they've got a weakness or a vulnerability. We're gonna expose that so that we can defeat them. What causes a man to be successful in the military, sports or business is the same thing that destroys his marriage. And that is that he finds a weakness or a vulnerability, and then he exposes that to conquer and to dominate. And instead that's where his strength needs to

come in, to protect and to guard. To protect and to guard. And he does that by honoring his wife. And that's exactly what he is talking about. So I'll give you some different ways practically for husbands to honor their wives. Honor her spiritually. And what this means is, you take the initiative as the spiritual leader in the home. You make sure everybody's got a Bible. When it's dinnertime, pray together, ask questions, have conversations. How's everybody doing? How can we pray for you guys? Anything you're thankful about? When it comes time to pick a church, pick one. Don't just say, "Well, you pick it, take the kids. And if you like it, let me know. And maybe I'll show up once in a while, but that'll be your church, not my church, not our church." It also means that a man is taking initiative to pray with his wife. Honey, how can I pray for you? Is there anything I can be praying for you about? Simple things like, Grace had a meeting recently and she's like, "Yeah, I got some meetings today. And got some things going on." She's like, "Could you pray for my day? I got a lot going on." Yeah, hold her pray over her. Right? Just that's it. Sometimes that's all that's needing to be done. This is the man taking the initiative to read the Bible, to pray, to pick a church and to lead the children, if, and when God gives you that gift. And if God has a father leading, what it does, it really honors the wife because he's honoring the Lord and it makes it a lot easier for the wife to honor a man who's honoring the Lord. If he's following Jesus, it's a lot easier for her to come alongside of him and walk together. And what that also does, it sets a pattern in the family where the kids get to see mom and dad worshipping together. One of my favorite things is to hold Grace's hand in church and sing. It sees mom and dad praying together. It sees mom and dad reading the Bible together. It sees mom and dad being under the authority of God's word and being filled with God's spirit. And then the children tend to follow. What tends to happen is, if only the mother is leading spiritually, she's going to church, but the father is not. She's praying, but the father is not. She's got the Bible open, but the father does not. Eventually the children follow the example of the father, not the mother. And this is particularly true of sons who once they reach a certain age, where our boys are, all our boys are bigger than their mom. But if dad isn't walking with Jesus, then it's not manly masculine to walk with Jesus because dad isn't, therefore the boys tend not to follow Jesus, if dad isn't. Because if mom is the only one who's really going to church, praying, reading the Bible, then churches for women and children. It's not for men. And as I make the pivot from child to man, I leave church because that's what my dad does and that's what men do. And that's destroying your entire legacy. That's undermining your whole family. And it happens over and over and over. And statistically, this is why as soon as boys hit 13 years, if they were going to church, they stopped going unless their dad is going. And then they continue going statistically. And I would just submit to you as a father of three sons that ultimately in the teen years and the early twenties, they don't need Jesus less, they need Him more. They need church and Bible more, not less. Now they're making the biggest decisions of their life. You know, am I gonna be an addict? Am I gonna get married? Am I gonna live with my girlfriend? Am I gonna have children out of wedlock? They're making all the big decisions of their life. So I always like to tell people in the context of marriage, that as a father, you want to wanna be the kind of man that you want your daughter to marry. Because she probably will likely marry someone like her dad. So that the dad, if he has daughters should say, "I wanna be the kind of man that I would want my daughter to marry." And the mom should say, "I want to be the kind of wife that I want my sons to marry." Because they probably will. And if they're leading together

spiritually, but the father is taking initiative, it really sets the trajectory for the entire family. Number two, honor her emotionally. What this means is like we talked about empathy, consideration, being emotionally present, some guys are not emotionally present. They don't ask, how are you doing? How can I pray for you? How was your day? And then actually listening. Instead, they just watched TV. They're busy with their hobbies and they assume there's no need to be emotionally present unless the wife or the kids insert themselves and have to interrupt me. Which is not honoring. It's not inviting. And part of this in being emotionally present is also being emotionally safe. Meaning that as a husband, if the wife discloses something to you, be very careful who you share it with. You're not sharing things that are nobody else's business. You're not inviting family or friends in, in a way that is gossiping. 'Cause sometimes the wife will open her heart and share something, and then the husband shares it with someone that has no business knowing. And what he's just done there, is he's proven himself to be emotionally unsafe. Number three, honor her physically. This is being protective. I'm that weird guy who grew up in a dangerous environment. So when we're walking, let's say, this is the street and cars are here. I walk next to the street. I don't make Grace walk next to the street. When we first started dating, she's like, I was like, "No, no, you're going to walk over here." She's like, "Why?" I was like, "'Cause if one of us is gonna get hit by a car, it's not going to be you." I'm just trying to think of how to her physically. Even when we go out to restaurants, I'm that weird guy. I'd like the booth in the back and you sit against the wall and I'll be on the edge and I'll watch the door. And if something goes down, I'm gonna get in the middle. I'm that guy. Right. Probably paranoid, but that's my spiritual gift, it's paranoid. So, but it's always trying to think about, how can she be safe? How can she be safe? Honoring her physically. I don't want her to have to defend herself. I don't want her to be in a dangerous situation. I wanna make sure that she's physically okay. It means a great deal to me. One weird story comes to mind. Can I share the story where I drove out to college?

- [Grace] Sure.

- Okay. Sure. Okay, I got permission. So this isn't gossip. So there was a time that Grace was going to college and it was about a five hour drive away. And I told her, I said, this is before cell phones, as soon as you get there, call me. I just wanna make sure you got there safe. 'Cause it's over a mountain pass and snow and it's before cell phones. And so I wait, and I worked an all night shift, a double shift we were getting ready to get married. So I worked a double overnight shift. And then the next morning she didn't call. She didn't call. I couldn't go to sleep 'cause she didn't call and I didn't know that she was physically okay. So eventually I jumped in the car and I drove five hours and I knocked on her door and she answered the door. I said, "You didn't call." She's like, "Oh, I forgot." And I was like, "Are you okay?" She said, "Yeah, I'm okay." I said, "Okay, well I got to go now. 'Cause I gotta go back to work. My shift was starting." So I made a 10 hour round trip drive to knock on the door for her to smile and giggle and say, "Sorry." That was it. But at the end of the day, honest to goodness, it didn't bother me at all. I just wanted to make sure she was okay. If her car's broke down somewhere on the side of the road, I wanna be there. If something happened, I wanna be there. It's protecting her physically. And it's wanting to know that this daughter of God is going to be protected and should not have

to live in fear because the husband is not the dangerous one. He's the one who will put himself in harm's way for her wellbeing if and when needed. Honor her. Oh, physically, sexually. This would include something, write this down men. Non-physical, non-sexual rather. Non-sexual touch. Men don't even know what that is. I didn't until Wednesday. And then Grace told me about non-sexual touch because for a man, it can feel like with a woman, you gotta be very careful how I say this. But for men it often is like sports. Meaning there's a goal and I'm driving toward it. Okay. There's the end zone. And I'm moving toward the end zone. And I'm not gonna say anymore, but you men know what I'm talking about. And the wife feels like every time he touches me, it's always pushing toward the same result. Non-sexual touches we're just hanging out and it's not to have a particular conclusion that you could fill in for yourself. Okay? Now that being said, what is this look like? This sometimes means holding hands. This sometimes means snuggling up. Right. One of our jokes is that the woman was made from the rib, and so when Grace burrows into me, I always tell her welcome home, right? This is where she came from. This is where she belongs. This includes yeah, snuggling up, holding hands and just asking your wife, "What does non-sexual touch look like?" Sometimes she'd be like, I would just love a neck rub. I would love a foot massage. You could brush my hair or you could just sit with me and keep your hands to yourself. Those would all be examples. And I'm not advocating that. I'm just saying it's something to pray about. Okay. Honoring her sexually is also being a one woman man. It's the wife knowing he's faithful to me and I don't need to keep checking in on him. That in our day, a lot of women are worried. Like, what is he, who's he communicating with privately on social media? How's it conducting himself when I'm not in the room? Is he flirtatious? Is he flirtatious? I mean, worst case scenario is a guy who when his wife's not around, takes his ring off and is sending absolutely the wrong signal. And the Bible talks about leaders being one woman, man, or the husband of one wife and the Greek it's literally one woman, man. And that's where she knows he's faithful to me. He's focused on me. There's fidelity with me. I can trust him. If I'm not looking, he's not wandering. If I'm not present, he's not straying. He's devoted to me. And he's faithful in that regard. That's honoring her sexually. Honoring her verbally. This would include the volume. And sometimes the man intimidates through volume. And it's part of him using his physical strength. Because as soon as you raise the volume and you escalate, you're also physically usually approaching and that means that your wife is now in harm's way. She's in danger. So as a man, especially when you're having really difficult conversations, it's watching the volume. It's also watching the tone and it's watching the words. You start cussing at your wife. You're not honoring her. And this also includes the nicknames. We tend to give nicknames to the people that we love the most and we hate the most. And sometimes in marriage, you got really cute little nicknames. And you've got some really damaging nicknames. And sometimes when you're in a fight or you wanna harm someone, you sort of pull out that nickname, that's pejorative and negative and you use it. And the Bible says in Proverbs that certain people's words are like sword thrusts. There's certain words that literally they're like daggers. There's certain statements that are literally like daggers. And when we pull those out, you can just tell what you just did is you have assaulted someone. They almost recoil. You've hurt them. You've hurt them. And sometimes men will say, "Well, words don't hurt people. Hurt only happens physically." Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words never hurt me. That's not true. Words can do a lot of damage, especially if it's from a husband to a wife,

especially if the husband is a Christian and then all of a sudden his words are attacking the wife. And I would just say, as I say this, this is convicting to me. And I think if all men are honest, we have said things to our wives, that we would be furious if someone said to our daughter. And for me getting daughters was one of the greatest gifts that God gave, because it's like, okay, if her husband said this, what would I do? Right. What would I say? How would I feel? Then why would I say that to her mother? If I wouldn't want that said to her. Okay. It's honoring her verbally. It's also honoring her financially. Some men are just hyper control freaks. And the way that they exercise control is through the finances. Meaning sometimes a man won't work very hard and won't seek to provide for his family. And he puts all of that burden on his wife, meaning, you know, she has needs, the kids have needs and dad doesn't really seem to feel any burden. He transfers that burden to the wife. That's not honoring her financially. Some guys are just frankly lazy. Some guys are selfish. Some guys, they got a new car, she's got a beater car. They've got a lot of hobbies and she doesn't even have a functional home. I mean, I've been in homes where in the garages, you know, a bass boat and golf clubs and hunting rifles and fishing gear. And you go in the house and the heater doesn't work and her car is broken. And they're doing the dishes by hand because the dishwasher broke and it wasn't a priority for him. The washing machine is broken and it's not replaced because it's not a priority for him because he's making the financial decisions. And sometimes men then will get real selfish. And they'll say, "Well, it's, I work. It's my money." No, no, no. We're one! In the same way the wife gives birth to the kids, you can't look at the husband and say, "I had them. These are not your children. These are mine." No, they are our kids. Right? And I didn't birth half the kids. And it's our money, and especially for us, when the kids were little, I was the sole income provider. But honoring your wife financially is saying we're both working and we are one. And that means that financially, we need to have one budget that we agree on and that we need to have dual optics on the account. Some women don't even have access to the bank account. Some women don't know where they're at. The husbands are just high control. That's not honoring her financially. What that is, is that controlling her financially. And sometimes that's the result of just tremendous selfishness on behalf of the man. And so it is planning jointly, spending wisely and then giving generously. Number seven, honoring her practically. And this is part of the consideration, living with the wife in an understanding way. And that is architecting the home and the schedule and the budget and the lifestyle that it works for the husband and the wife. Otherwise the husband says, "Hey, let's buy that house that has a big garage." And the wife says, "But it doesn't work for the kids or for meals or for entertaining." It's trying to architect life so that it works for both of you. And some of that's very, very, very, very practical. Some years ago, I bought a house that I was really excited about. It was architectural unique and very cool. And I thought it was very amazing. And then we moved in and it had brick floors. How many of you women do not wanna live in a house with brick floors? Grace would stand on the brick floors and she would be like, "Man, this is not comfortable. And it's uneven. And how do we vacuum this?" And here's what I had never thought about vacuuming. I'd never, I thought this looks cool. And it reminds me of an ancient castle and she's like, "Yeah, but at some point we're gonna need to vacuum it." I was like, "That's true." These are the things that I don't think about, which is why when you go to make really practical decisions, like where do we live? Where do the kids go to school? What kind of house do we get? What kind of car do we buy? You're

honoring each other practically. And for the husband, it is inviting the input of the wife because she's probably practically thinking about things that you're not. You're not! How many guys are like, you walked into the house and you're like, "Let's buy this one. The garage is amazing." And the wife is like, "I don't spend a lot of time there. That's not my highest priority." That's honoring her practically. In addition, honoring her parentally, this is bringing a unified front to the kids. Kids have a dividing conquer strategy with the parents. They just do. If mom says no, who do they go ask, dad. And if dad says, yes, what do they do? Tell mom that she's been overruled. This is what kids do. Okay. And so it's mom and dad having a unified front, if mom said no, dad says no. And dad can't say, "Well, you know, I'd like to say yes, but you know how your mother is." That's dividing conquer strategy. Okay. And also too what this is with the kids, it's being involved in the parenting as a husband and father, and it's also being involved in the discipline. Sometimes dad is the fun one. And then when there is discipline, it's like, "Well, that's mom's job." When you grow up and go to therapy and complain, I want it to be about mom, not me. So I'm not gonna make any corrections in the life of the child. Honoring her parentally is being involved in the raising of the children and the instruction of the children and the correction of the children and not pushing that all off to mom and what this means as well. It's not speaking ill of mom in the presence of the children. 'Cause sometimes in a family, when a husband and wife are starting to fight, they start recruiting troops into the war. And so they'll air their disagreements in the presence of the children, whether or not the spouse is present and what they're doing, they're dividing, are you on dad's side or are you on mom's side? No, mom and dad should be on the same side. And dad and mom should not be speaking ill of one another in the presence of the children, because ultimately they should have those conversations privately and then prevent division in the family through a unified front, as a husband and a wife. Some of you probably grew up in families where it was mom versus dad. And you had to kind of pick a side. That's not honoring parentally. And then lastly, honoring consistently. God is faithful and God is unchanging. And one of the things that we love about God is, He's gonna be the same tomorrow as He was today, as He was yesterday. The Bible says He's the same yesterday, today and forever. It's not like tomorrow God's gonna be really angry and decide we're not forgiven anymore. Honoring consistently, it allows faithfulness in the relationship. If one day the husband's a really happy guy. And the next day, he's a really angry guy. He's not faithful, 'cause he's not consistent. If one day he's very generous. And the next day he's very stingy. One day, he's very trusting. The next day, he's very controlling. It puts in the marriage inconsistency, which makes it very hard because every day the wife has to wake up and basically ask the question, "Okay, who am I married to today?" Because he changes. And sometimes I'll just tell you as men, this is under stress, pressure from work, financial pressures that who we are can shift into our dark side. And as a result, it makes it very hard for the wife because she doesn't know who she's going to be married to from day to day. And what he's talking about here, I love this fact since the you are joint heirs of the grace of life so that your prayers won't be hindered. What he's saying is this, that number one, the most important thing for your marriage and family is the anointing of God. More important than your income. More important than your lifestyle. More important than anything. The one thing that makes a great marriage and family, is the anointing of God on the relationship. When God created Adam and Eve, before they did anything, it says, "And God blessed them." And it says that God wants to bless you. And God

wants to bless your marriage. And what he's talking about is the anointing of God residing on the home so that God will help those who seek to do what He commands. And then he says, "Secondly, for the man, if you don't do this, God won't hear your prayers." Every man who knows the Lord knows that he needs the help of the Lord. And so what we do, we pray. God help me, help us. And what He says is, "For a man who does not honor his wife, God does not hear his prayers." Why? In the same way that I've got two daughters and one of them is married, but let's say some years down the road, both my daughters are married. If their husbands come to me and say, "I love your daughter, I want to do better. I want to do a great job taking care of her. Will you help me?" What's my answer, as a dad, what's your answer. Absolutely. If your heart is to bless her. Man, let me help you accomplish that goal. If one of my daughters is married and her husband comes to me and says, "I wanna hurt your daughter. Will you help me?" The answer is always, no. I will never respond to that request. Okay. Before a woman is our wife, she is His daughter. And sometimes we look and we say, "Well, that's my wife." And God's like, "Actually, that's my daughter." And if you wanna bless my daughter, I will hear those prayers and I'm gonna help. But if you're not gonna bless my daughter, I'm not gonna hear those prayers. And I am not going to help you accomplish what you're seeking to do. This is why, this is very controversial. And I'm not saying it's true in every case, but there are some men, your career is failing because you're not honoring His daughter. There are some men, your health is failing because you're not honoring His daughter. There are some men, your finances are failing because you're not honoring His daughter. There are some men who feel like God isn't listening to them because God isn't listening to them, because you're not honoring His daughter. Some men feel like God is far away and He's sort of abandoned them and left them. No, it's that you're not honoring His daughter so He can't help you do the things that you're doing because if they are harmful to His daughter, He is loyal to her. He is loving of her. And if you are not joining Him in blessing her, He cannot participate in your life. Many men then they get very frustrated. And this is where they get very embittered against God. Well, God you gave me this woman and life is hard and things aren't coming together and I'm very frustrated. And I ask you for stuff and you don't even answer. You don't even show up. And a guy kind of gets an angry, victim, defensive, blame attitude, it's the wife's fault, kid's fault, culture's fault, boss's fault, government's fault, God's fault. He doesn't even hear my prayers. And then guys can actually blame shift to God. God, look at this horrible life. Like what kind of God are you? And he's like, "I'm the God who loves my daughter. And if you would start there, I would help you fix the rest." And many men are trying to get their whole life together. And what God is saying is, my daughter is your first priority. That relationship with her, loving her, protecting her, providing for her, being emotionally present with her, being faithful to her, being sympathetic toward her. That allows your prayers to be heard because if you're trying to love my daughter, I would love to help you love her better. I think I'll just leave it there. I have more, I always do. But I'm gonna ask Grace to come up and pray for the ladies. And I will pray for the men. Once you pray for the girls first, then I'll pray for the guys.

- Dear Lord thank you for your word to guide us. Lord I pray that as women, we would desire to be honorable toward our husbands. Lord I pray that we would see that marriage is a gift. It's a lot of work and a lot of investment, but it is a gift that you have given and when we do it your

way, God, there's nothing like it. So I pray that we, as women, as wives, would desire to have a marriage that glorifies you, that honors our husbands. And that is a blessing to those around us Lord. Just be with us, give us wisdom and how to do that. Give us time with you so that we can know what that looks like for each of us, 'cause we are all different as women and you call us in different ways to be honorable. So Lord, I pray that we would really have passion to make our marriages incredibly honoring to you.

- Lord, I pray for the men. I believe for some men, this is a very hard word, but it's a very important word for men who are weak and passive and cowardly and blame shifting and burden shifting. They're not honoring you and they're not honoring their wife and they're not honoring their family. For men who are domineering, overbearing, loud, bullies, physically intimidating, selfish. They're not honoring you. They're not honoring their wife. They're not honoring their family. And God, we just thank you for marriage. We believe in marriage. It's the most wonderful, difficult relationship. It's the most sanctifying and revealing relationship. And God, I pray for the men 'cause if the men would have Jesus' heart for their wives and kids, then the environments of their homes and families would be life giving, burden lifting, joyful places. And that's ultimately what we want, Lord God. And that's what you want. And God, I pray against the enemy of servants, their works in the facts that would cause these to be concepts that we hear, but not principles that we obey and live by. And God, I thank you that not only did you make us male and female, you also made marriage. And that if the husband and the wife will obey the scriptures, they have 100% guaranteed opportunity for an amazing and wonderful and enjoyable marriage. And so God, would you please help the husbands and the wives to come under the authority of your word, to listen to the instructions that you give, to obey the commands that you decree. And God, I pray for the husbands and fathers who would hear this, that we would take it to heart. And God I thank you for Grace forgiving me for the times that I did not abide by these principles. I did not obey these commands. And as a result, it caused difficulty for her and harm to our relationship. And Lord God, thank you for the forgiveness that we have in Jesus. Thank you for the power that we have in the Holy Spirit. And thank you for the clarity that we get in the scriptures because the world knows nothing of relationship. Knows nothing of marriage. Knows nothing of family, and we want the kingdom to live in our homes. So we asked for the grace to enjoy one another and to obey the scriptures in Jesus' good name. Amen.