

SMALL GROUP / STUDY GUIDE

SCRIPTURE

Read 1 Peter 3:1–7. Also read Ephesians 5:21–25 as you consider the larger biblical picture of Christian marriage.

KEY TRUTH

Our closest relationships should put Jesus on display.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

(What does the passage say?)

What reason does Peter give wives for submitting to unbelieving husbands?

According to verses 3–4, what kind of beauty does God value?

What does Peter specifically tell husbands to do in verse 7?

How does Peter describe the relationship of husbands and wives before God in verse 7?

What warning does Peter give husbands at the end of verse 7?

INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

(What does the passage mean?)

How does this passage continue Peter's instruction in 1 Peter 2:11–12 to live honorably among unbelievers?

Why is it significant that these Christian wives continued following Jesus even when their husbands did not?

Peter tells wives to “do good and not be afraid.” How does trusting God change the way someone can live in a difficult relationship?

What is Peter contrasting when he discusses outward adornment and “the hidden person of the heart”? What kind of beauty lasts?

What does Peter mean when he calls wives “co-heirs of the grace of life”? What does that tell us about the dignity and spiritual standing of men and women before God?

How does Peter's instruction for husbands challenge the temptation to use strength, authority, or influence for ourselves?

In Ephesians 5:21–25, wives are called to submit and husbands are called to love in a self-sacrificing way, as Christ loved the church. How do both responsibilities require surrender rather than grasping for power?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

(What does this mean for us?)

Most people get the edited version of us, while the people closest to us often get the unedited version. What do the people closest to you see when you are tired, stressed, disappointed, or frustrated?

Where do selfishness, impatience, defensiveness, fear, or the desire for control tend to surface most clearly in your relationships?

If you are married, what does the way you speak to, disagree with, serve, forgive, and honor your spouse communicate about Jesus?

If you are unmarried, who are the people who see the “unedited” version of you—family, roommates, friends, coworkers, children, or others? What does your life put on display to them?

Where are you tempted to focus more on another person doing their part than on your own faithfulness to Jesus?

What would it look like for you to use whatever strength, influence, authority, or advantage you have to serve and honor someone rather than control them?

Peter describes a life characterized by hope in God, doing good, and refusing fear. Which of those do you most need in a relationship you are navigating right now?

What is one relationship in which becoming more like Jesus could make the gospel more visible this week?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Take a moment and ask:

What do the people who know me best see in me?

Am I trying to control someone I need to entrust to God?

Am I waiting for someone else to change before I obey Jesus?

Where am I grasping for my rights rather than choosing to serve?

Do my words and actions communicate honor to the people closest to me?

What would it look like for me to hope in God rather than live out of fear?

In my closest relationships, am I making Jesus more beautiful and believable to the people around me?

PRACTICE FOR THE WEEK

Identify one of the relationships in which someone regularly sees the “unedited” version of you —your spouse, roommate, family member, child, close friend, coworker, or someone else.

Each day, pray: **“Jesus, help me put You on display in this relationship.”**

Then choose one concrete way to practice it: listen instead of becoming defensive, speak with honor, apologize without making excuses, forgive, serve without being asked, surrender the need to win an argument, or encourage the other person.

Don’t make your obedience dependent on whether they respond the way you want. You cannot control another person, but you can choose what they see when they look at you.

Remind yourself each day:

“Our closest relationships should put Jesus on display.”

PRAYER

Thank Jesus for loving us sacrificially and giving Himself for us. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal selfishness, pride, fear, defensiveness, or the desire for control in your closest relationships. Ask God to help married people love, honor, serve, and surrender to Him faithfully, and ask Him to help unmarried people reflect Jesus in the relationships where they are most deeply known. Pray for the courage to do good, the security to hope in God, and the humility to stop asking whether others are doing their part and instead ask, “Jesus, am I doing mine?” May the people closest to us increasingly see Jesus in the way we live.