

## INTRODUCE **SLIDE** 1 PETER

So, if you have your Bibles, and I hope you do,

- please grab them and turn to 1 Peter chapter 3.
- You can open a phone or a tablet to 1 Peter 3,
- or you can use one of the hard-backed black bibles
  - under every single chair.
  - You'll find 1 Peter 3 on page **1015**.

## INTRODUCTION: CONTROVERSY

Alright, let's just get this over with...

I'm gonna read the controversial words from our text today.

- **Wives, be subject to your own husbands.**
- **Wives, don't braid your hair or wear gold jewelry.**
- **Wives, have a gentle and quiet spirit.**
- **Wives, obey like Sarah, who called Abraham lord.**
- **Husbands, honor the women as the weaker vessel.**

Alright...nothing to be worried about in that text, huh?

- I thought I had a landmine passage last week...
  - in submitting to the government...
- but now this!?!

So, I'm calling today's sermon **SLIDE** **WEAKER VESSEL**

## EXPLAIN: HOW WE PREACH

And just so you know,

- this is one of the main reasons
- why we preach the way we do here at Fathom...
  - right through books of the Bible.

We do this because I probably wouldn't pick this exact text to preach on.

And gosh, so many churches are built upon:

- the whims of the pastor...
- or the felt needs of the congregation...
- rather than the steady and ongoing diet of God's Word.

So, that's why we're doing this.

But we also had 7 weddings of couples from Fathom this summer...

- so this is a felt need, too!

## **EXPLAIN: MISUSE**

Now, this text has been abused by people who have...

- taken these words and twisted them out of context
  - in attempts to control,
  - and domineer,
  - and subject women to terrible plights.
- And that is evil!

But in an over-reaction to those abuses,

- there are others who have then said,
- well, these words certainly must not mean
- what they actually mean.

And oh my friends,

- beware of teachers who spend time explaining...
- why the text of Scripture doesn't mean...
- what the text of Scripture actually says.

So, with all that said, let's get into the text.

1 Peter 3, starting in verse 1.

## 1 PETER 3:1a

[1] Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands,

### POINT 1: SUBMIT

Ok, Peter starts by saying *likewise*,

- linking this text to last week's text.

And Peter uses the same word: *be subject to* OR *submit yourself to*.

- 2:13...*be subject to every human authority*.
- 2:18...*be subject to your masters*.
- And now, *wives, be subject to your own husbands*.

So, point 1 for today is this: **SLIDE WIVES SUBMIT**

That might be unpopular to say...but...

- There is a leadership role...
  - that the Bible says husbands have...
  - in the home
- and wives are to SUBMIT to them.

### EXPLAIN: INFERIORITY

But this does not mean that women are inferior in any way to men!

This is where this text has been twisted at times.

- Biblically, men and women are equal!
  - We'll see that there are some different roles they play.
- But women are NOT INFERIOR to men...
- And wives are NOT INFERIOR to husbands.

And this superiority/inferiority piece is where a lot of abuse stems.

- But it's bogus!

Women are equal to men.

- Remember the doctrine of the Imago Dei,
  - the image of God,
- which I talked about last week.

Men and women are equal because we have the image of God.

### **EXPLAIN: TRINITY**

*"Well,"* you say,

- *"if husbands are given a leadership role in the home...*
- *which their wives are to submit to...*
- *then that MAKES them inferior."*

No! It doesn't.

- That's not good logic!

Take the doctrine of the Trinity.

- The doctrine of the Trinity teaches that there is one God,
- but that he exists eternally in three persons:
  - the Father,
  - the Son,
  - and the Holy Spirit.
- One God. Three persons.

But while the Son was on this earth...

- he made it very clear that he was submitted to the Father.
  - Jesus submits to the Father's will.
- There is no Holy Trinity...
- without the order of authority and submission.

Submission cannot imply inferiority or inequality...

because Jesus is fully God AND submitted to the Father.

It is actually a Christological heresy...

- to say that submission automatically makes you inferior.
  - In the Trinity we see perfect equality...
  - AND perfect submission.

## TRANSITION

And marriage is meant to be the same.

- Men and women have different roles within a marriage,
- but they are meant to COMPLEMENT one another
- and to put God's glory on display.

So, wives, you are to be subject to your own husband.

- We'll get to some applications from that in a minute,
- but let's keep going in our text.

## 1 PETER 3:1-2

[1] Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, [2] when they see your respectful and pure conduct.

## EXPLAIN: CONTEXT

So, there is some context in these verses.

- Peter is addressing BELIEVING wives...
- and apparently some of their husbands
- do not believe in Christ.

This was a very common thing in the early church.

- Many women became followers of Jesus,
- while their husbands did not.

And that is true today, as well.

- There are many women who are Christians...
  - with unbelieving husbands.
- And yes, there are believing husbands whose wives do not,
  - but not at the same general rate.

So, let me tell you what Peter is saying:

## **APPLICATION**

Husbands do not change via the nagging of their spouses.

- They might try to conform the best they can...
  - to keep the peace or pacify their wives,
- but they won't be transformed.

Only the Spirit of God can do that!

So, if you are the wife of an unbelieving husband,

- you need to prayerfully ask the Spirit of God to engage him...
  - and then be respectful in how you conduct yourself.

I'm not saying you have to be silent and hope things work out.

- I'm just saying there is a way to approach it that is helpful,
- and there is a way to approach it that is not helpful.

And listen, I've watched this happen...first hand.

- I've watched Christian wives try to manipulate,
- or badger,
- or argue,
- or nag their husbands into the kingdom.

And it never turns out well!

Did you know the Bible says some crazy things...

- about husbands who live with wives...
- who are kind of always nagging...
- and complaining...
- and badgering?

I'm not making this up.

### **SLIDE PROVERBS 21:19**

[19] It is better to live in a desert land  
than with a quarrelsome and fretful woman.

That's God coming to a husband and going,

- "All right, man. Just head out into the desert."
  - "Do I need to get some water?"
- "No. It's going to be better. Don't get any water. Just go."
  - "Am I going to die out there?"
- "Yeah."
  - And it's going to be slow.
  - Probably, before you die...
    - a vulture will start to eat your flesh.
- But listen...it's better than where you are, bro.
- Just get out into the desert."

### **SLIDE PROVERBS 27:15**

[15] A continual dripping on a rainy day  
and a quarrelsome wife are alike;

That's God equating living with a contemptuous woman

- to water torture!
- Like a dripping faucet!

Peter's saying, **SLIDE WIVES SUBMIT** to your husband...

- with respect and honor.
- It's a better way to win an unbelieving spouse.

Then he goes on.

### 1 PETER 3:3-4

[3] Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear—[4] 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.

### EXPLAIN: EXTERNALS

Alright gals in here...

- anybody with braids in their hair? SINNER!
- Anybody wearing gold jewelry? SINNER!
- Anybody wearing nice clothes? SINNER!

Listen, you have to handle texts IN CONTEXT.

And IN CONTEXT, what this is saying is:

- who you are on the inside...
- is more important than those external things.

AND, in the CONTEXT of a wife being subject to an unbelieving spouse...

- it's saying don't use your externals...
- as the way to get what you want from your husband.

Ladies, you've got these tools available to you:

- how you look...
- what you wear...

And listen, those things work!

- But it can be tempting to use them
- to manipulate your husbands
- to get what you want.

But that's not the move you should make!

## **EXPLAIN: QUIET**

Now, the difficult words in these verses are **a gentle and quiet spirit**,

- which some have abused historically
- to mean that women just
  - keep quiet
  - and be docile.

But again, that's an abuse of the text.

- **A gentle and quiet spirit** is not just for women,
  - but is for us all.
- It's a Christ-like character trait.

It's what Jesus says he's like.

Consider Jesus' words in Matthew 11:

## **SLIDE MATTHEW 11:29**

**[29] Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.**

## TRANSITION

Peter is saying,

- **SLIDE WIVES SUBMIT**
- to the leadership of your husband,
  - don't bend him to your will with your external beauty,
- but rather, be like Christ in that relationship.

Verse 5:

## 1 PETER 3:5-6

[5] For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, [6] as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.

## EXPLAIN: OLD TESTAMENT

Now, it said Sarah called Abraham *lord*.

- So, I told Maryse that she was...
- to address me as *lord* this week...
- in prep for this sermon.
  - And...she laughed at me...incredulously...

No. These verses provide an example...

- from the women of the Biblical past
- who Peter's readers would have looked up to.
  - The wives of the patriarchs.

Remember how women were treated in Roman society

- and how they still are treated in many parts of the world.
  - They were property.

And so,

- Peter is actually pointing...
- to a good example...
- of how submission worked...
- in the ancient Jewish context.

We've gotta move on to husbands now...

though there is plenty more I could say on these things.

Verse 7:

## **SLIDE 1 PETER**

### **1 PETER 3:7**

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

### **EXPLAIN: WEAK**

So, obviously, the hard words in that verse are *weaker vessel*.

What does Peter mean here?

- Well, this is not weaker in terms...
  - of intelligence
  - or gifting
  - or leadership abilities
  - or wisdom.
- Remember the Imago Dei, the image of God.
- Women are equal to men.

That's why Peter says *they are heirs with you of the grace of life*.

So, scholars think women as the weaker vessel could mean three things:

## PHYSICAL

First, women are generally PHYSICALLY weaker than men.

- I know this isn't, like, PC to say...but it's just true.
  - Generally speaking,
  - most husbands can overpower their wives.

And someone told me that...

- I should challenge every woman at Fathom to arm wrestle,
  - just to prove my point...
- but I really didn't want to embarrass myself!

But also, remember...

- this is the Roman Empire.
- It was legal to...
  - and expected that...
- men would dominate their wives physically
- in order to ensure their submission.

So, it could be PHYSICAL.

## POSITIONAL

Second, women are weaker in POSITIONAL authority.

So, positionally, they are weaker.

- In this household code...
- But also in the Roman societal pecking order.

## EMOTIONAL

Thirdly, some scholars think it could mean

- that women are EMOTIONALLY weaker.
- Meaning, women are wired differently than men are.

- Women are generally more intuitive
- and sensitive than men are.

And while I think that's generally true,

- I'm not sure I like the term *weaker*
  - if that's what this means...

So, I just think the first interpretation makes the most sense in the context.

- Women are weaker physically...
- thus, they are more vulnerable.

And again,

- weaker here doesn't imply an inferiority,
- regardless of your interpretation of weaker.

### **ILLUSTRATION: CROWBAR**

I heard this illustration.

- Think of women as weaker...
- like you would the difference between...
  - a thermometer...
  - and a crowbar.

Ok? Both are tools, but they have vastly different purposes.

A crowbar is the kind of tool you use...

- to pry a door open,
- or something like that.

You'd never want to try to pry a door open with a thermometer...

- it'd break...
- it's weaker.

But the thermometer is far more powerful in other ways than the crowbar.

- It's able to do things...
- and pick up on things...
- that the crowbar simply cannot handle.

You can't stick a crowbar in your mouth or your rear end

- and find out if you're sick...
- Don't do that!

It's not a perfect metaphor, but that's probably what Peter means...

- when he says that women are **weaker vessels**.

## POINT 2: SERVE

So, the word Peter uses is **honor**.

- **Show honor to your wives.**

**Honoring** means preferring them over yourself.

So, if WIVES SUBMIT.

Then I'd say **SLIDE HUSBANDS SERVE**

- **Husbands, your calling,**
- **with any positional authority you might have in your home,**
- **is to SERVE your wife with that authority.**

## APPLICATION

So, what does that mean? A few things.

Men, you should NEVER lead independent of your wife.

You weren't given this role because you make better decisions.

Frankly, many of you...make way worse decisions!

- You wives may be smarter than you.
- They may be wiser than you.

Your wife is a gift of God to you to help you.

- Listen to her.
- Talk with her.
- Consult together.

If you don't, you're a fool!

I talk to Maryse about everything! Every decision.

- And we always aim for consensus.

Here's an example of how this looks:

### **ILLUSTRATION: CHURCH PLANTING**

It was 2005 when I first had the inkling about plating this church.

- 2005. I was 20.
- I was almost done with college.
- Maryse and I were seriously dating,
  - leaning towards marriage.
- And I told her that someday I wanted to plant a church.

And she said these words,

- *“Not if you marry me!”*

And so we got married!

But over our first 8 years of marriage,

- I would occasionally share my desire for church planting...
- only for her to come to the same conclusion....
  - she didn't feel the same call I did.

Now listen:

- Could I have pulled out the “wives submit” card,
- and played it,
- and planted a church?

- Sure I could.
  - But I'd be an idiot!

That's not a consensus!

When there is not a consensus in something that big in our lives,

- we always punt...
- we always take more time...
  - to pray,
  - and seek wise counsel,
  - and process more.

I never wanted...

- to endeavor at the task of planting a church
- without her complete buy in!

But in 2015,

- when I talked to her about it again,
- she said, "*it's time.*"

I waited for 10 years!

- And I thank God for that decade!
  - Cause it would have been unbelievably foolish for me...
  - to move before she was ready...
    - or to plant a church at 20 years old!!!
      - It was dumb enough to try at 29!

I always seek consensus with her before we move forward in a decision.

## **EXPLAIN: DEMAND**

Listen, in our more than 16 years of marriage,

- I have NEVER once used that SUBMIT card.
  - You know why?

- Men are never told to DEMAND their wives submit.
- Women are told to OFFER their submission.

Every time the Bible lays this principle out:

- it is never his to demand from her,
- it is hers to freely give.

Men, you are to use your authority to SERVE her...

so that it is a delight for her to SUBMIT to your service.

- And so, when you come to a place...
- where you can't reach consensus...
  - 99 out of 100 times...
    - maybe 999 out of 1,000 times...
  - you defer to her.
- That's your calling.

HUSBANDS SERVE.

But what about when we don't reach a consensus?

## ILLUSTRATION: SCHOOLING

So, when COVID hit,

- we started homeschooling Harper,
- and Maryse really enjoyed it,
- so, she homeschooled Harper for 3 years.

But then last year, Harper started talking about going to "real school"...

- which was a hurtful and unnecessary
- slam on homeschool...
  - and Maryse, for that matter...

But Maryse and I started talking about it and couldn't decide.

- So, we made a list of potential schools.
- And then we toured some schools.
- And then we put her on some wait lists for schools.

And Maryse just couldn't make up her mind, cause it really affected her!

- *Do we homeschool?*
- *What about this charter school?*
- *What about this private school?*

And we kinda came to a stalemate.

- *What should we do?*
- *If we go private, how do we afford it?*
- *Maybe we should just stick to homeschool?*
- *But is that really best for Harper?*

We couldn't figure out what the right call was.

So, listen,

- this is when I, as the husband,
- am called to exercise my authority.
  - And listen, I didn't want to make the decision...
  - cause what if I make the wrong one?

**But spiritual authority isn't license to do what YOU WANT to do,  
it's empowerment to do what YOU OUGHT to do.**

So I served my wife...and I made the decision.

- I made the call.
  - Private school.
- How do we afford it?
  - I'll figure out the money.

I didn't make the decision independently from Maryse.

- But I made it.
- And if it turns out to be the wrong decision,
  - I'll bear the consequences.
  - That's not on her!

The great Pastor Tony Evans says it this way:

**SLIDE** *“Spiritual headship is God telling the woman to duck so he can punch the man.”*

Hey guys,

- **SLIDE HUSBANDS SERVE** their wives in a way...
- that her submission to him is a blessing to her.

## APPLICATION

Now listen,

- a lot of men don't lead this way...
- because they've never been put into a position to lead.
  - They've been coddled by their parents...
  - and their schools...
- Listen, all of society is lowering the standards for men!

And then they get married,

- and wives, I'm telling you...
  - by submitting to them...
  - by not letting them shirk their responsibility to lead...
    - you create a leadership vacuum
    - that forces them to act like men.

When Maryse allows me to lead like this,

- it puts the pressure on me.
  - And I can shirk from that,
  - or I can rise up to that.
- I've gotta make the call...
- and I've gotta live with the consequences...
- I've gotta serve her.

This isn't about what women can or can't do...

it's about what men are called to do...

and often time don't.

## CONCLUSION

So, let me end by reading verses 8-12,  
because they sum up this whole entire section.

### 1 PETER 3:8-12

[8] Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. [9] Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. [10] For

“Whoever desires to love life

and see good days,

let him keep his tongue from evil

and his lips from speaking deceit;

[11] let him turn away from evil and do good;

let him seek peace and pursue it.

[12] For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,

and his ears are open to their prayer.

But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

## ENDING

Hey,

- whether it's submitting to an unjust government...
- or submitting to an unjust master...
- or even submitting in a difficult marriage...

Peter says, **finally**...do it Christ's way. Do it the Jesus way.

- With unity,
- sympathy,
- love,
- tenderness,
- humility.
  - Don't repay evil.
  - Don't revile.
- Bless.

This is how all Christians SUBMIT to authority.

Y'all, this is difficult stuff!

- Wives, submitting to your husbands is difficult.
- Husbands, serving your wives,
  - preferring her in every conceivable way,
- is difficult.

But G.K. Chesterton famously said this:

**SLIDE W/PADS** *“Christianity has not so much been tried and found wanting, as it has been found difficult and left untried.”*

## APPLICATION

Hey, to our married people here...here's my challenge for you this week:

- I want you to find some time,
- maybe on date night or something like that...
  - Husbands...
    - Buy her flowers...
    - Make the reservation...
    - Put on some nice clothes...
- but I want you to sit down together for some real talk...
  - I sometimes call these conversations "date wreckers"....
  - where you have the harder conversations...
  - that sometimes wreck a date.

But husbands, at dinner, I want you to start out by asking your wife,

- *Where am I not serving you first?*
- *And how can I serve you better?*

And wives, I want you to be honest with them.

And then wives, I want you to ask him the question,

- *Where am I not submitting to you?*
- *And how can I submit to you better?*

And listen, this might wreck the date...because you need to be honest.

- But it'll move you into the roles...
- that God has established for your marriage.

Let's pray for the marriages in our church.

## RESPONSES:

Well, every week at Fathom we respond in 4 ways:

- COMMUNION – THE LORD’S SUPPER
- GIVING TITHES & OFFERINGS – [fathomchurch.org/give](http://fathomchurch.org/give)
- PRAYER - [fathomchurch.org/prayer](http://fathomchurch.org/prayer)
- SINGING

So, I’m going to read the Words of Institution from the Apostle Paul, we’ll take communion, and then we’ll sing:

### 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26 – WORDS OF INSTITUTION

[23] For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, [24] and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[25] In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[26] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

Love you church, let’s stand and sing together.

## RESOURCES CONSULTED:

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- Greear, J.D. *Marriage and the Gospel*.
- Jobes, Karen H.. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. 1 Peter.
- Schreiner, Thomas R. The New American Commentary. 1, 2 Peter, Jude.