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Series: Marriage God's Way
Message: Guys, Just One More Thing

Transcribed Message
July 31, 2022
1 Peter 3:7

I mentioned last week the continual search for resources depending on what we're teaching on. This summer we've been going through a marriage series so I'm always on the lookout for some good resources. Some of you have been kind enough to send some things my way, some of which I can pass along to the church family and others I'll just keep for myself. But lots of good resources out there. I got a suggestion this week about a book that is entitled *What Men Know About Women*. I did not have a copy of this book so I thought this to could helpful this week. I ran out to Barnes & Noble and there was a kind lady behind the desk. I said ma'am, do you happen to have a copy of this book? *What Men Know About Women*. She looked at me a little bit incredulous I'll have to say that right off the top. She said that must be a rather short book, isn't it? I said I'm not sure. She said I don't know that we have that title, but if we do it would probably be in the fiction section. I could not find it. They didn't have a rare book section so we'll just have to trust that that book exists and it's got some very helpful things in it.

But here's the deal. Guys, I appreciate you so much that I am going to spend an additional Sunday talking to the men, to the husbands, to the young men this morning about what God has to say in 1 Peter chapter 3 and verse 7. We're going to turn to first Peter 3:7. The first 6 verses of this chapter deal with the wife's responsibility and relationship which we covered in part when we did Ephesians as well. But verse 7 says: "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." Our big idea this morning is pretty simple. It is simply to say, your relationship to God can't be right if your relationship to your wife is wrong. Your relationship to God can't be what it is supposed to be if your relationship to your wife isn't what it's supposed to be. Dr. Howard Hendricks used to say this a little bit differently. He said, "If your Christianity doesn't work at home, don't be exporting it to

others.” That's a little bit of the same theme that we see in the 7th verse. Next Sunday, Lord willing, what I'd like to do is to speak to singles. We think of singles as not being very many among us, but there's a lot of singles when you add in the older children, the students, college, and young adults and those that are just in that station of life. I want to speak to singles even in the midst of a series on marriage. Then on the 14th of August we're going to finish this series before we kick off our fall. I want to step back and just look at the whole matter of marriage and sexuality and the confusion that exists in our culture about so many of these things today.

Here's what we're going to start with. What do we know? What we know first of all is that this passage 1 Peter 3:7 is a radical passage. In fact, I think you could say that about almost every passage we've been looking at. You can say that about Genesis 1, Genesis 2, Genesis 3. You can say that about Ephesians 5. These are radical passages in that what the writers of Scripture under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit has given them more difficult things in some respects for the day in which they were given and they are difficult in some respects for us today. I mean there are things that we're reading that just aren't totally countercultural. But the reality is this. The word of God and the world cannot exist in peaceful coexistence. They can't make peace with each other. We can't make peace with the world. The world is not going to make peace with us. We are called in every area of our life to radical discipleship. It isn't just a radical passage here to husbands. There are in every one of these passages that we've looked at a call to radical living for husbands, wives, parents, children, employers, or employees. Wherever we are in our walk with God, God calls us just by definition of being a fully devoted follower of Christ to a radical lifestyle to something that looks very different than the world that we live in. We shouldn't expect it is going to be any different here.

Secondly, there's always a tendency to overreact. That's who we are by nature as humans. We overreact. we swing from one end of the pendulum to the other. In this biblical framework that we've been looking at beginning in Genesis 1 and 2 where God has laid out for men to leave their homes, for men to step into and lead their homes and protect and provide. That's the calling that God has placed upon men. Then He has called women and wives within the context of that home to be supportive, to be

encouraging, to be complementary. That is the calling that God has given to us. What happens when we get to Genesis 3? We have the fall of humanity into sin. Sin has greatly impacted the outcomes that God had intended. So what happens is a wife overreacts. She thinks, what? Me submit to him? Do you know what he's like? I can't possibly submit to him. And so a wife reads the passages of Scripture and says I can't submit to him. No way am I going to do that. She attempts instead to step into the rightful place of her husband's leadership and she pushes against that. That's what we read in Genesis 3.

Well the husband on the other hand, what does he do? The husband I think does one of two things. He abdicates oftentimes authority. He just steps aside. Men, I think a battle that all of us face is the battle against passivity, and that is just part of the struggle that we face. Letting go and just simply releasing and giving up and saying okay, if you want to lead, go ahead and do it. Or the other thing is that men act insensitively and harshly and in a domineering way. When we're reading in Colossians 3:19, as we did I think that very first Sunday, we introduced the series and it said husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. It was almost like why would he say love your wife and don't be harsh? And what he says seems almost out of place. Love your wives and don't be harsh. Because obviously there is this inherent struggle either to abdicate or to be overbearing and domineering and harsh. So the Holy Spirit, using the apostle Paul, gives us that very clear indication of what we might be struggling against.

Thirdly, this is God's plan right here. This is God's plan for life in a fallen world. Right here in this book in the word of God. This is God's truth for marriage for your marriage. The only way to get there is to know the word. It is to apply the word and it is to live it out. It's not enough for us to sit here and nod in agreement with what we think the Bible's teaching about this or that. We have to know it and we have to apply it by living it out in our daily experience. Dan Allender just nailed it when he said this: "We must never be naïve enough to think of marriage as a safe harbor from the fall." Think about that. We must never be naïve enough to think that marriage is somehow going to be a safe harbor from the fall. And then he went on to say: "The deepest struggles of life will occur in the most primary relationship affected by the fall and that's marriage." We've been talking almost every week about the fact that we're sinners married to

sinners. That's exactly what Dan Allender is talking about. He is talking about the reality of sinners married to sinners. I want you to visually think about your marriage and what it means in that context. Think about taking a quart of oil and just pouring out over your marriage. Why is it that we put oil into the engine of a car? Because when those pistons are going up and down hundreds and thousands of times, they need something to fight back against the friction that naturally occurs. That's oil. Do you know what the oil is in marriage? The oil is grace. We are constantly needing to pour the oil of grace every day over our marriages and over our lives.

Let's look at the what, the how, and the why of a godly husband. There are two commands. I said, guys, only one more thing. I guess I should've said, guys, only one more verse, because there's actually a couple of things in here. So only one more thing. In these two commands the very first one that is given to us in that 7th verse is live with her in an understanding way. Live with her in an understanding way. Now some of you are already thinking live with her. I'm doing that already. I can check off this first box already. This isn't going to be as bad as I thought it was. I'm already doing the very first thing that the word tells me to do. I'm living with her in ... wait a minute. I'm living with her in an understanding way. Living with her counts but there's another part of this. I'm going to live with her in an understanding way. We could literally render that part of the Greek text. I'm going to live with her according to knowledge. I'm going to live with her according to knowledge.

The question is what is this knowledge? I'm going to live with her according to knowledge. What is the knowledge that I'm going to need that I'm going to live with? And I'm wondering if Peter isn't intentionally ambiguous at this point and not telling us exactly what that is because it allows us to see it in a couple of ways. I'm thinking that the first thing he wants us to see is that we're going to live with our wife according to knowledge because we're going to know God first of all. We're going to have a knowledge of God. We're going to press into an understanding of His will, His purpose, His way of what He wants from me as a husband in this marriage, His plan for me as the leader of this marriage. What does that look like? We've already seen that developed in Ephesians 5 last Sunday. We could literally turn back to Ephesians 5 and

say this is the will of God for your life, men, and read that and that would be living with her according to this knowledge that God has given to us.

But even more broadly than just the focus on marriage and what does God say about marriage and having a knowledge of what God wants with regard to marriage, I think it's even broader than that. It is simply a knowledge of God, a knowledge of the word of God, knowledge of the doctrines of Scripture. It's all of that. Now I know the men of Covenant and I know that you guys know a lot about a lot of things. We could go to you on any number of things and get all kinds of expert counsel and all kinds of expert help. It's amazing how much you guys know about a whole variety of things. What he's calling us to here is to be understood as perhaps the most important thing that we can know. All of this knowledge that we have is so beneficial, so helpful with providing for our family and helping other people.

But here he is saying to us, guys, we want to be leading in our marriages, in our homes with regard to spiritual things. We want to live with her according to understanding, according to knowledge. That would be the knowledge of God and the knowledge of the Bible. It shouldn't have to be that when something is announced that the women are the first to sign up or the women are the first to desire that or the women are the ones who are out front in terms of spiritual things within the body of Christ and the church. It ought to be men equally with them. I'm not saying it's one or the other. I'm saying that the guys ought to be just as engaged, just as involved, wanting it just as much. Some of you guys might naturally be behind where your wife is in terms of the knowledge of the Bible. Maybe she's been a believer longer than you have and maybe you're catching up to her. And that's good. But what I would be a little bit anxious about is the realization that there are couples and families and marriages in which we've got men and husband and dads who been believers for just as long as their wife but due to a lack of interest and intentionality in their walk with God and in their pursuit of discipleship and of the truth and the doctrines of Scripture, they're lagging far behind. That really shouldn't be that way guys. We should be pulling on that just as hard. We should want that just as much. If we're reading our Bibles right it should be that the guys are the ones that are leading the way. We're step-by-step with our wives leading our family. So we need to know first of all God. We need to know his word. We know what it

says about how to have a family, about how to lead the family, how to live life as men and women, so we're passing that on to our children and our young people.

But it's more than that. It also must be that we must know her. Live according to knowledge. Live according to a knowledge of her. What you guys at times have thought was an impossible task because you have said on occasion, maybe many occasions, I just don't understand you. you can't say that anymore because now you know that God has said to you that you are in fact to understand your wife. You are to live with her according to knowledge. That knowledge is to be about her. God says you can do this. So what does that look like? What does it look like to live with her according to knowledge?

Well, to give you a couple ideas, I think the first one would be to realize that she's not like you. she's not like you. In Genesis 2:18, God has created Adam and He's placed Adam in this beautiful perfect garden environment. God says oh wait a minute here. There's something missing. Adam, it is not good for you to be alone. I will make you a helper. I will make one who will complement you, one who will finish you. guys you're not finished until you're married. That is true. You have someone who is a completer of you, someone who complements you, but someone who is very different than you. She's different than you.

You get together with a group of guys. What happens when a group of guys get together? It's loud usually. It is louder. There's a lot of a lot of joking, a lot of jesting, a lot of kind of mocking each other, a lot of poking, a lot of prodding. All of those things happen when a group of guys who know each other get together and have a good time. They are just kind of beating up on each other in a nice kind of way. That's not the way we're supposed to relate to our wives. We're not supposed to do those things. We don't jab and and mock and jest and do all those things. Why? Because she's different. She's put together different. It's not like getting together with a group of the guys.

One of the things that you read as you see God's design in Scripture is He has called men to be masculine men. We don't have time to get into all of what that looks like as compared to what our world thinks that looks like, but God has called men to a certain way of living and conducting themselves. We refer to that as a biblical masculinity. They are leading protecting providing. They're doing all of those things that

God has called men to do. We believe that the Bible has equally called women to be feminine in their behavior, in their outlook, in their design. There's masculine and there's feminine. That's what God says in Genesis. He made them that way on purpose. As the world is trying to blur all of these differences and to make it seem as if there really isn't any difference, God's word says that there is. She is different from you emotionally. She's different from you physically. She's different from you relationally. She's different from you sexually. She's just made differently than God made you. To live with her according to knowledge is to understand that God has made and wired our wives differently than He has made us as man.

I think with that and secondly you need to be a student. You need to be a student of her. You need to study her. You need to observe her. You need to pay attention. You need to listen. You should know things about her that nobody else knows because you should be her best friend. She should know that she could come to you with any of that because you are her best friend. You know what she enjoys and you know what she doesn't enjoy. You know when it's okay to tease her and when it's not. You need to know what her needs are, what her wants are, what her desires are, what her fears are, what makes her happy, what makes her sad. In other words, Peter is literally calling a husband to be a student of your wife, to study her, to know to be there for her in all of those circumstances. The very first command that Peter gives he says to husbands you are to live with your wife according to knowledge. Live with her according to knowledge.

Notice secondly, the second command is that you are to grant her honor. "Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way..." So you're understanding the things of God. You're understanding how God has uniquely designed her. "...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." Notice that second command. You are to grant her honor. Showing honor to your wife. There are two words that I want to just focus on.

The idea of showing or granting her honor. Those two words. Granting or showing and honor. The first word "grant" simply means to assign something to somebody. If you're showing or granting, you are giving her in effect what she deserves, what is due to her. Then the word 'honor' and this is so cool. The word 'honor' could

easily be translated precious. This word that is here in the 7th verse appears two or three times in Peter's letter. The word appears in the 1st chapter and verse 7: "So that the tested genuineness of your faith is more precious than gold." It's the word "precious". This word to honor your wife and to grant her honor because she is precious. That's the idea of this word. It's used in these other places to speak of something that has great value. Show her great value. Husbands, wives, men, women, parents, children, coworkers – the whole thing.

What is one of the things that we so easily do with each other? We so easily take each other for granted. We so easily take each other for granted. This is the opposite of that. This is pushing back against a mindset of taking each other for granted. A godly husband gladly honors his wife, treats her as precious, treats her as if she has great value. Let that sink in a little bit.

Let me share with you three ways I think we can do that. I think first of all you do it by being a one-woman man. You show your wife, you grant her honor, you show her how precious she is by being a one-woman man. That is right out of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. When Paul lists qualifications for elders and deacons, very high up on the list is he needs to be a one-woman man. When I think of being a one-woman man, there are a lot of different things that come to my mind, but one of them is I have eyes for my wife and only for my wife. I don't have wandering eyes. You can't be a one-woman man and have wandering eyes.

I don't even remember how many years ago, but it was a long time ago. Bonnie remembers she was at the airport going somewhere and there was a guy in the airport waiting area where she was waiting. He was a nationally known guy. If I said his name everybody would know it. He was just sitting there as she was sitting there and a beautiful woman came in to that part of the waiting area. Bonnie just watched this guy and he never took his eyes off of this woman from the time she walked by him to where she walked over to the ticket area to where she walked back over to a seat. He just literally followed her everywhere she went in that setting. It made an incredibly negative impression in Bonnie's mind about this guy. Not a one-woman man. He is married and has his family but he had eyes for other women. We need to be like Job. God, I want to make a covenant before You. I'm going to make a covenant with You that my eyes are

not going to be looking at a woman who is not my wife. That's exactly what came to my mind when I thought how is it that we can honor our wives as being precious. Guys, let me just tell you this. Your wives know if you've got wandering eyes. You may not think they know but they know. And it's hurtful. I think it's deeply hurtful. In that same vein, there's no place for a godly man to be flirting on any level with another woman that he is not married to. We don't need to say anything more about the scourge of pornography. You can't be a one-woman man and viewing pornography. You certainly aren't granting honor to your wife. You're not treating her as precious if you're looking at things you know you shouldn't be looking at.

Here is a real practical thing. You be the one to change the channel when something inappropriate comes on the screen. I mean you've got the channel changer anyway. You be the one to change the channel. Don't wait for her to say something to you. You change it before she even has a chance to say it. You change it. That's a one-woman man. You are delighting only in her and she will be deeply appreciative of that.

Secondly, by the priorities of your life. By the priorities of your life. We talked last week about your walk with God, guys, and how important it is for you to be walking with God in order to do the things that you're called on to do as a husband. Well, that's a priority in your life. Your personal walk with God. And then it's your wife, and then it's your children and family, and then it's your job, and then it's your hobbies. All the things that can take your time. So there is availability. There's communication. There's just a living and sharing of life together because you're putting her first.

You're putting your phone down when she's talking to you. What could be more honoring than just that simple act of putting your phone down when your wife talks to you. What would it be like if you came home from work after a hard day. You've worked hard. You have your own issues. And you walk in and she says hi, how was your day? Try something more than just grunting at her. Try something more than just saying fine. Try something more than okay. Add two or three sentences to that. Then have the defibrillator ready because this is going to take some time to have her adjust. What would that be like? That's honoring her. That's showing value to her. I hope Bonnie's not taking notes on all of this.

A third thing, you do it by words that you speak to her and of her. You do it by the words that you speak to her and of her. Tell her. Tell her that you love her. Tell her that you appreciate her. Tell her that you are grateful for all the things that she does to keep your home going, to keep the house in order, to take care of the children. All the things that you share in together but that she might feel a little bit more of the burden of doing as well. Never embarrass her or speak negatively of her in a public setting. We all know how uncomfortable that is when were in a group setting and a husband or wife says something negative or embarrassing about their partner. It's a cringe worthy moment. We all know how out of place that is, how dishonoring that is. And guys, verbal abuse can destroy your marriage just like physical abuse can. I'm pretty sure that most of you would immediately answer regarding the question would you ever strike your wife, would you ever physically lay your hands on her to harm her. I hope about 99.999% wouldn't hesitate for a moment and just simply say no. In fact, I would hope it would be 100%, but verbal abuse can be just as hurtful, just as harmful, just as destructive to your marriage as the other things that we think of in that regard.

In the passages in the New Testament that are directed to husbands, guys, I want you to realize that there are no verbs, there are no commands telling you to rule your home, to be domineering in your home, to be overbearing in your home, to command your wife to do something. Certainly, there's no commands to you to tell her to be submissive to you. You're called on to lead. Yes, you're to lead in love as a servant leader. You're called on to live with her according to understanding. You're called on to grant her the idea that she's precious to you. Those are the commands that we're given and those are the things that God called us to do.

Now look at this. The last part of this verse. Three reasons why we're to do it. I've already read it but let's look at it again: "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." First thing he says because she is a weaker vessel. Now this is another one of those statements. We go did he really say that? It sticks out and jumps off the page. In our culture, do we really want to say that? That she's the weaker vessel. We don't like the sound of it. Let me say right out again there is nothing negative about this. This is not derogatory. This

is not speaking in any way of inferiority. Notice that he does not say she's the weak vessel. He says the weaker, so he's putting everybody into this category of we're all weak. She is weaker than you.

Now what does that mean? We could look at that and say physically she's weaker. That is a generally true statement. Generally, just the way men are built and structured, their DNA, they're generally stronger. Now that isn't true across the board. I don't think that those ladies that do that MMA and UFC, I don't think of them as being weak or weaker. I have wondered at times how long would I last in the octagon. I'm serious. I think about this. How long do you think I would last against that Nunez lady or that Pena lady. I mean she'd have to catch me first of all. I've got that going, but those are strong ladies. I don't think it should be limited to physical strength. It certainly probably includes that, but here's what I think it is.

In the context of 1 Peter 3 those first six verses they literally informed the 7th verse. So when he talks for instance look at the 6th verse: "...as Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him Lord, and you are her children if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening." Let me ask you a question. Why would Peter at the end of that 6th verse say you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening. What would she fear? Why would he encourage wives not to be afraid? What would they be afraid of? They would be afraid, I think in this context, of a husband who is not acting in the way God has called him to act. I think the whole tenor of the first six verses are calling a wife to put herself in a place of vulnerability. Do you realize that's what Scripture calls on wives to do?

Within God's design, within God's framework, when He calls a woman to submit to her husband, you do realize that she's putting herself in a position of vulnerability. Is this guy trustworthy? Is he going to make good decisions? Is he going to lead our family well? Is he going to be unkind to me or to the children? Whatever that might look like. She is called upon to be submissive to her husband, even to an unbelieving husband. Does a wife in that setting have anything to fear? Of course she does. She has much to fear from a husband who is domineering, obnoxious, overbearing, ungodly. All of that. I think here he's saying there could be these instances where somebody is not honoring and they're not living together according to knowledge. In fact, they're exploiting. That

can never be the behavior of a godly husband, but that is I think what is in view here when he says she's the weaker vessel. It is not predominantly physical. Try having a baby. That's not much fun. But that's the physical part is just a little bit of the story. I think the bigger picture is she's put herself in place of vulnerability.

Secondly, notice because you're spiritual equals. You're spiritual equals. Whatever weaker means in that previous statement, it can't be in relation to the spiritual realm because we have said repeatedly we're co-heirs of salvation. We're co-heirs in terms of our destiny. We're co-heirs in terms of our spiritual accountability and matters of faith. We just said back in chapter 2 verse 9 that we're a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation of people. All of that applies to all of us. We're spiritual partners in that sense.

But here's the third thing. We do it because she's placed herself in a position of vulnerability as the weaker vessel. We do it because we're spiritual equals. Now look at this last one, guys. He didn't say because it will honor God. Will it honor God? Of course it will. But he didn't say do it because it will honor God. He didn't say do this because you'll have a happy marriage. If you live with your wife according to knowledge and understanding, and you grant her and honor her because she's precious you'll have a happy marriage. If you do that I think you will have a happy marriage or certainly a happier one. He doesn't do either of those. Look what he says. Do it because if you don't you literally place yourself under divine discipline. That's what he's saying at the end of that verse. So that your prayers may not be hindered. This isn't an exhortation. This isn't an encouragement. This is a warning. This is an admonition. Peter reminds us that how we treat our wives has spiritual implications. How we treat our wives has spiritual implications. He draws a straight line between our marriage relationship and our relationship with God. Straight to it.

If your relationship with your wife is wrong, the windows of heaven are closed is what he said. Your prayers are going unanswered. If you're not following God's design as a husband loving your wife as Christ loved the church, living with her according to knowledge, granting her favor because she's precious, just think about that. If you're not doing that God says I'm not hearing your prayers. I'm not answering your prayers. I wonder what a guy in that frame of mind, I wonder what he is praying anyway. What is

the guy praying who consciously is disobeying three explicit commands that God has given to husbands. Love your wife. Live with her according to knowledge. Grant her the preciousness that she is due. What is he praying? Is he praying for her? Is he praying that she'll submit better? You can forget it. God is not hearing that prayer. God is not answering that prayer until we get it right. Do you want to know how God sees this? Do you want to know how serious this is to God? This is what He tells us, guys. Your relationship with your wife greatly impacts your walk with God.

Let me put it this way. There's a way to live with your wife that empowers your spiritual life and there's a way to live with your wife that literally hinders your spiritual life. That's about as weighty a word from God that I think as a husband I can hear. The choice is yours. You can flourish in your spiritual life by treating your wife the way God calls on you to treat her. Or you can wallow in spiritual defeat by choosing to go your own way.

What do we take away? Pursuing a God honoring marriage is God's will for your life. Plain and simple. Pursuing a God honoring marriage is God's will for your life. Do this and it will honor God and will please God. It's not easy. We've already said that but it's worth it. But with that I want you to see it's never too late to start doing the right thing. It's never too late to start doing the right thing. I say to myself and I say to each man here start today. Decide right now. God, with Your help enable me to love my wife the way Christ loved the church, to live with her according to knowledge, to grant her honor and treat her as precious to me as I know she is to You. I want to be the husband of 1 Peter 3:7. And wherever we are in our walk with God, wherever we are spiritually, today is the day to start anew, to begin again, to say God I want to get it right. I say to everyone this is the day of salvation. This is the day that God has called us to obedience and repentance.

Let's pray. Gracious Father, thank You so much again for Your word. Father, thank You for the encouragement. I know these can seem like hard things but, Father, they're always for our good. You delight when Your children walk in truth. I pray that the men of Covenant would be greatly encouraged that this area of our lives, that You view it as being so very important. Help us to see it in that same way. Help us to walk in obedience. Father, we pray that we would have an understanding again this morning

that the only way we can do that is by the means of the gospel of Your grace. That gospel that comes to us again and again and it reminds us that there's nothing that we can do to earn favor before You. There's nothing we can do to earn salvation. There's nothing we can do to earn heaven. Father, it comes to us as a grace gift and I pray that Your Holy Spirit will give understanding to each of us this morning again of the preciousness of that gospel and the freeness of that gospel. In Jesus's name, amen